

“Educational Pearls”: 2005 Pharmacy Technician Educators Council Annual Meeting Report

STANLEY J LLOYD

Educational pearls were abundant among the attendees of the 2005 Pharmacy Technician Educator’s Council (PTEC) Annual Conference held in Kansas City, KS, from July 15 to 18, 2005. Over 50 PTEC members, speakers, and exhibitors attended from around the nation, representing the growing number of technician training programs and supporters.

The conference began with returning speaker Rita Carey PhD, Faculty Assessment Liaison and English Professor, Clark College, Vancouver, WA. Her presentation was titled “Creating a Learning Outcomes-Based Syllabus to Document Student Learning.” Dr. Carey led attendees to identify their assumptions about their roles as teachers and students’ roles as learners. With this in mind, she taught how to write clear student learning outcomes and then use them to create an outcomes-based syllabus. She concluded by showing how to locate or construct a rubric for a course assignment.

The day continued with an update on ASHP accreditation of pharmacy technician training programs. Lisa Lifshin PharmD, Manager, Program Services Coordinator, Technician Program Development, Accreditation Services Division, ASHP, discussed the objectives and benefits of accreditation for pharmacy tech programs. She updated attendees on new accreditation regulations and standards and described the application process for those interested in accreditation.

The last session on Saturday was conducted by Catherine C Yu PharmD LCDR, US Public Health Service, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, FDA, who gave a timely and informative presentation on drug safety. She explained how all drugs carry risks and that the risk/benefit ratio of a particular drug often changes over time. She clarified the differences between pre- and post-marketing reviews of drug safety, described new FDA efforts to increase the accessibility of drug safety informa-

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tion, and demonstrated how to obtain that information from the FDA.

The PTEC awards dinner banquet took place on Saturday evening. The Roy Kemp Outstanding Educator award was presented to Don A Ballington MS, Program Director, Pharmacy Technician Program, Midlands Technical College, Columbia, SC. The evening also included the Board of Directors officer installation. The 2005–2006 officers and positions include President: Valerie Wagner, Director of Pharmacy Occupations, Southeast ROP, Cerritos, CA; President-Elect: Dolores Sewchok BA, Director of Medical Training, Bidwell Training Center, Pittsburgh, PA; Past President: Jeanie Barkett BSPHarm, Director, Pharmacy Technician Program, Clark College, Vancouver, WA; Vice President: Sandi Tschritter BA CPhT, Director, Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA; Secretary: Barbara Lacher BS CPhT, Assistant Program Director, North Dakota State College of Science, Wahpeton, ND; Treasurer: Lucien Van Elsen BSPHarm, Instructor, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Brookfield, WI; and Reporter: Mary Ann Stuhan BSPHarm, Program Manager,

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Pharmacy Technicians, Cuyahoga Community College East Campus, Highland Hills, OH. Afterward, 5- and 10-year members of PTEC were honored for their dedication with a ceremony and lapel pin presentation. The dinner banquet concluded with a fun and lively auction that raised over \$1,600 for the organization.

Sunday's sessions began with a spiritually uplifting prayer breakfast. Afterward, Renee' Acosta PharmD MS, Chair, Pharmacy Technician Department, Austin Community College, Austin, TX, gave an update titled "The Exciting and Challenging World of Online Instruction." Renee' walked attendees through the advantages and disadvantages of distance education and online learning and identified obstacles that students and faculty experience in online learning environments. This was followed by a thorough discussion on the development, production, and use of multimedia in these cyber-settings.

The morning continued with a presentation by Mary Mohr BSP Pharm MS, Pharmacy Technician Program Director, Clarian Health Partners, Indianapolis, IN, about sterile products compounding under USP 797. She first described the role of the USP in regulating the compounding of sterile products, then helped differentiate between the risk levels of different compounded sterile products. Sterilization guidelines were discussed, as well as factors affecting the stability of these products.

Next, Hal Pollard, Acquisitions Editor, Acquisitions and Product Development, ASHP, encouraged budding authors with a talk on "Why You Should Publish and How to Get Started." Hal discussed the importance of professional publishing and the various types of publishing that occur. He described the key steps in the writing and professional publishing processes and led each attendee to conceptualize a new publishing project.

An exhibitor-sponsored buffet lunch followed, with informative exhibits that included the following companies: American Pharmacists Association; ASHP; Elsevier; EMC/Paradigm Publishing; Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins; McGraw-Hill Companies; Michigan Pharmacists Association; and Thomson Delmar Learning.

After the exhibitor luncheon, Mary Ann Stuhan and Cheryl Aiken PharmD, Director of Pharmacy Technology, Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center, VT, gave a unique presentation on their experiences titled "Working Together: Collaboration Between Geographically-Diverse Technician Educators." Their talk highlighted the mutual benefits of matching an experienced educator with someone new to that type of position. They

described several methods to identify and meet technician educator colleagues and suggested strategies for successful meetings. They also discussed the value of professional organizations to educators seeking to collaborate with one another.

Sunday's meeting concluded with a motivating talk by Jennifer Danielson BSP Pharm MBA CDE, Coordinator, Pharmacy Technician Program, Pikes Peak Community College, Colorado Springs, CO, titled "Precepting Pharmacy Students: Helping Your Preceptors Improve." Jennifer discussed the qualities of a good technician preceptor. She pointed out common errors preceptors make in helping students learn and described how tech educators can teach preceptors to avoid these errors. The talk concluded with a useful, interactive discussion about helping preceptors manage difficult student situations.

Monday, the final meeting day, began with a talk by Barbara Snyder BSP Pharm on veterinary pharmacy. After describing early veterinary medicine in the US, she discussed the FDA and current controversies regarding the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act's role in regulating veterinary drug products. Also covered was the Animal Medical Drug Use Clarification Act of 1994. The role of the pharmacy technician in veterinary compounding was examined, as well as various resources for veterinary drug information.

Jeanie Barkett continued with a marketing talk entitled "Showcase Your Program: Marketing Is a Good Thing." Attendees explored possible curriculum additions and alternate methods of program promotion. They reviewed many sample syllabi of potential class offerings. Student recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies were also discussed.

The capstone of the 2005 PTEC meeting was a discussion led by Paul Wagner BSP Pharm, Associate Professor, Greenville Technical College, Anderson, SC, simply titled "Educational Pearls." Here, each attendee shared educational experiences and tips with the group. These included information about programs, staffing, accreditation, teaching techniques, and textbooks and publications used to teach various courses.

At the 2005 meeting, PTEC again offered a sea of educational pearls and an invaluable environment for technician educators to meet and support one another. The 2006 PTEC meeting will be held in Pittsburgh, PA. Information will become available on the organization's Web site at www.rxptec.org as it develops.