HURRICANE HARVEY

Following landfall of Hurricane Harvey, TPA was involved in communicating information and coordinating efforts on several fronts. After Governor Abbot declared a state of disaster on August 25, TPA distributed critical information to Texas pharmacists. Coordinating and utilizing information from Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas State Board of Pharmacy as well as other federal, state, and local government agencies, organizations, and pharmacies, TPA informed pharmacists of emergency dispensing rules, claims override codes for emergency situations, immunization guidelines for affected areas, locations and ways pharmacists could volunteer, availability and use of patient medication histories, prescription assistance programs, limited supply issues, and product supply donation options and procedures. In addition, TPA helped coordinate public information about pharmacies that were open for business in the disaster area and provided information about how to setup a temporary remote pharmacy in the disaster area.

The Texas Pharmacy Foundation created the Texas Pharmacy Disaster Relief Fund, which has received donations both from inside Texas as well as other states, including other state pharmacy associations. These funds will be used to assist pharmacies in affected areas to help communities in Texas have access to pharmacy services.

If you would like to contribute to the Texas Pharmacy Disaster Relief Fund, please visit www.texaspharmacy.org.

OCTOBER WAS AMERICAN PHARMACISTS MONTH

TPA celebrated American Pharmacists Month in Texas during October. Our fall edition of our Texas Pharmacy magazine featured articles about pharmacy month tips, celebrating pharmacy technicians, and a student perspective on American Pharmacists Month by Shawn Ahmad, a P4 student at the University of Houston College of Pharmacy. TPA made extensive use of social media to distribute daily tips and information for American Pharmacists Month, reaching thousands with the positive message of the value of “your personal pharmacist”.

TPA’s Faces of Pharmacy feature was a great success with pharmacists and technicians throughout Texas posting their pharmacy staff pictures on Facebook. TPA was proud to provide the venue for our members to “put a face” to their practice and highlight the personal touch and incredible service that pharmacists and pharmacy technicians provide the citizens of Texas.

PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

Building on the success of prior TPA programs, like the Medicaid MTM pilot, TPA continues efforts promoting pharmacist services. Working with the University of Texas at Tyler College of Pharmacy, the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Community Pharmacy Foundation, the Texas Hypertension Adherence Program (THAP) was created in three communities: Wichita Falls, Tyler and Jasper. The program’s design and early success has resulted in new discussions around similar efforts for possible programs in 2018 in west Texas with Texas Tech University Health Science Center and in south/southeast Texas with Texas A & M College of Pharmacy.

TPA is utilizing a workgroup to provide information, input and direction in developing the protocol, education, and skills training for these programs. The workgroup is comprised of pharmacists in active clinical practice, community pharmacy practice (chain and independent), recent managed care experience and academia. The program is based on a Healthcare Team practice environment which utilizes, in part, a bidirectional referral system where physicians refer patients with difficult drug therapies to a qualified community pharmacist in a chain or independent setting. Pharmacist payments are based partially on fee for service and also include a performance payment, if a patient’s treatment outcomes are achieved.
LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY EFFORTS

Health and Human Services Commission is Beginning to Move to Value-Based Payments
HHSC is making progress on a multiyear transformation of provider reimbursement to performance-based or outcomes-based payment linking health care payments to measures of quality and/or efficiency and value. While HHSC’s initial focus and discussions have been with the Managed Care Organizations, HHSC has met with other provider groups to solicit input, ensure clarity and expectations, assess progress, identify and take advantage of opportunity areas, and to remove barriers.

TPA and a number of the other pharmacy organizations participated in a meeting of the HHSC Value-Based Payment and Quality Improvement Advisory Committee (VBQPI) hearing in Austin. This forum promoted public-private, multi-stakeholder collaboration in support of quality improvement and value-based payment initiatives for Medicaid, other public funded health services and the wider health care system. Key presentations were made by Dr. David Lakey, Chief Medical Officer and Associate Vice Chancellor at the University of Texas System, Lisa Kirsch of Dell Medical Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and Jami Snyder, HHSC Associate Commissioner of Medicaid and CHIP Services.

TPA had Meet and Greet with HHSC and Vendor Drug Program
TPA’s CEO Debbie Garza and other TPA staff met with Andy Vasquez and HHSC Staff. The meeting provided a great opportunity for Debbie to get reacquainted with old friends and to build new relationships with HHSC staff and to share with them the value of pharmacy. Debbie was also able to share with Andy and the HHSC staff TPA’s desire to always have open lines of communication regarding HHSC initiatives and efforts as well as pharmacy’s priorities and value in the healthcare arena.

Texas Pharmacy Association Hosted Meeting with Office of Inspector General
TPA’s Debbie Garza and Justin Hudman met with acting Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General Sylvia Hernandez Kaufman and top Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff. Discussions were around the desire of the OIG’s office to improve relationships with providers such as pharmacists, as well as areas they are focused on fraud, waste, and abuse in order to strengthen the Medicaid program in Texas. They offered their Chief Pharmacy Officer to share red flags and other findings from their audits and fraud protection operations as it relates to pharmacy. Going forward we hope to find ways to work with the OIG’s office to better inform and educate pharmacists regarding pharmacy issues that the OIG’s office identifies when they conduct oversight of state services through the Health and Human Service Commission.

HHSC Seeks to Allow Narrow Pharmacy Networks
In a meeting of some pharmacy stakeholders, HHSC shared their intention to allow MCOs to develop and implement narrow pharmacy networks within specialty pharmacy services as well as retail pharmacy services. TPA and others shared that narrow networks are not in the best interest of Medicaid beneficiaries, not necessary to achieve the desired value-based care, and within retail pharmacy services are a violation of the “any willing pharmacy” law. HHSC was of the opinion that they could allow the MCOs to create narrow networks of “preferred providers”, which by their design would seek to limit pharmacy providers participation in networks. More to come as this develops further.

Pharmacy Summit: Leaders Meet for Pharmacy Unity on Issues
The 2018-2019 Texas Pharmacy Summit held its first meeting on October 24 in Austin to begin preparation for pharmacy priorities for the 2019 Texas Legislative Session. The Texas Pharmacy Summit, established in 2014, is a coalition of the various state pharmacy organizations’ elected pharmacist leaders with the purpose to discuss legislative priorities and determine those issues where pharmacy can speak with one voice. Pharmacy unity has been and will continue to be important to the success of pharmacy’s public policy agenda in both the regulatory and legislative arena. This first meeting was more organizational in nature to discuss the purpose, structure and expectations of the attendees and outline the Summit process and issue development.

The Texas Pharmacy Summit meetings will continue in 2018. Gay Dodson has agreed to serve as moderator of the Texas Pharmacy Summit. TPA looks forward to the opportunity to have open and meaningful discussions with all of the organizations representing the interests of pharmacy in Texas.

VACCINATION INITIATIVE

TPA relaunched its vaccine newsletter Vaccine Insights to help pharmacists obtain the latest vaccine news and recommendations to provide better services to patients. Since TPA helped pass the landmark vaccination legislation in 1999, Texas pharmacists have been well positioned to help improve vaccination rates, especially in adults.

When patients and customers have a vaccine question, they should ask their pharmacist and to help pharmacists be in the know of the latest vaccine news and insights, pharmacists and students can sign-up for TPA’s Vaccine Insights newsletter.

You’ll find research-based news that is vetted for commercial bias, clinical relevance, and ‘main-street’ comprehension by the providers patients trust the most... doctors, nurses and pharmacists. Given today’s “fake vaccine news” debate, it is important for patients to rely upon their pharmacist as the trusted source for the latest vaccine news.

TPA LAUNCHES SPARx

We all know that advocacy is key to ensuring that the profession of pharmacy thrives. While visiting with state representatives is an important component of advocacy, advocacy goes far beyond legislative efforts. We need to teach pharmacy students how to advocate in all aspects of their profession and their lives. Because at the end of the day everything we do is about the relationships we build with others. Whether it be public relations, government relations, collaborating with other health care professionals or networking at a conference, these relationships directly impact our practice.

To help develop a student’s advocacy skills, TPA launched SPARx. SPARx is a four part program developed by TPA that is designed to educate and engage students in advocating and building positive relationships with their community, inter and intra-professional colleagues, legislators and their staff, and regulatory officials.
TPA GETS AROUND

TPA Attends Local Pharmacy Association Events
In an effort to get to know pharmacists and technicians across the state new CEO, Debbie Garza, has attended several local pharmacy association chapters, including the Capital Area Pharmacy Association (CAPA), Tarrant County Pharmacy Association (TCPA), Dallas Area Pharmacists Association (DAPA) and Greater East Texas Pharmacy Association (GETPA). Debbie has had the pleasure to meet local pharmacists, student pharmacists, and technicians at each meeting and introduce herself to the groups. She has provided an overview of her vision for pharmacy in Texas and as CEO of TPA, as well as induct new officers in some cases, share innovative practice initiatives TPA is involved for pharmacists payment for services, as well as new initiatives coming to TPA. Debbie welcomes the opportunity to visit other local associations across the state.

Other TPA Meeting Attendance
TPA attended this quarter the NACDS TSE meeting, NCPA Annual meeting, NASPA Summer and Fall meetings, TFDS Annual meeting, the University of Houston College of Pharmacy Annual Legislative Series, University of North Texas College of Pharmacy, and new student orientations at the University of Texas College of Pharmacy and University of Houston College of Pharmacy. Please contact TPA if interested in having a representative speak to your students or your organization.

Recognizing the best among us at the Bowl of Hygeia reception with our TPA members and national leaders of NCPA, APhA, and NASPA. L to R: Becky Sneed (NASPA CEO), Nathan Pope (2016 recipient), Amy Carson, Jeff Carson, Chris Alvarado (2017 recipient), Debbie Garza, Joe Harmison (2005 recipient), Matt Lester, Lynn Crismon, Doug Hoey (NCPA CEO), and Tom Menighan (APhA CEO).
PROFESSIONAL RECOVERY NETWORK

TPA’s Professional Recovery Network (PRN) held its fall education event on October 28 in Georgetown, TX. The daylong event was well attended with over 140 pharmacists, veterinarians, optometrists, dentists and guests. This event utilized a new peer-led format where participants shared their experience and successes in managing substance abuse and mental health issues in their daily lives. Departing from the past “clinical presentation” format, the “personal application” format provided attendees with multiple “what worked for me” pearls that they can immediately put into action.

The Professional Recovery Network will be hosting a fall wellness campaign focusing on tips to help you through the holiday season. This campaign will be featured on the TPA and PRN Facebook pages, in the weekly TPA newsletter, Texas Pharmacy Today, and on the TPA page, www.texaspharmacy.org.

UPCOMING DATES

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 13, 2017</td>
<td>Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery Certificate Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 14, 2017</td>
<td>TPA Board of Director Meeting</td>
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<td>March 6-7, 2018</td>
<td>TPA Board &amp; Committee Spring Leadership Retreat</td>
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<td>July 13-15, 2018</td>
<td>2018 TPA Conference &amp; Expo</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5-6, 2018</td>
<td>TPA Board &amp; Committee Fall Leadership Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 26, 2019</td>
<td>Pharmacy Day at the Capitol</td>
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For all upcoming events please view the online calendar at www.texaspharmacy.org.

2018 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

October signaled our launch of the 2018 Membership Recruitment and Renewal Campaign.

ADVANTAGES for YOU:
Equipping you for today’s rapidly evolving health care system with free and convenient CE and opportunities to connect with colleagues across the state.

ADVOCACY for Your PROFESSION:
Enabling you to confidently engage with your elected officials while representing your interest with the board of pharmacy, state agencies, health care organizations, and provider groups.

ADVANCEMENT for Your PRACTICE:
Creating opportunities for you and your colleagues to collaborate with health care teams and integrate pharmacy practice into emerging health care models.

Your VOICE is VITAL. Your PARTICIPATION is POWERFUL.

BECOME A TPA MEMBER TODAY!

www.texaspharmacy.org