

The Independent News

An official publication of GPhA's Academy of Independent Pharmacy

The mission of AIP is to ensure the economic viability and security of independent pharmacy, and to advance the concept of pharmacy care designed to enhance patient quality of life and positive outcomes.



2020-2021

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CONVENTION 2020



Chairman's Message

I'm back!!

I'm happy to resume the responsibilities as chairman of AIP. These past several months have been a very trying time for all of us. As I write this article, many new cases of Covid-19 are coming up positive as well as increases in hospital admissions. My fear was after Memorial Day, and people out on vacation, there was going to be a spike in the number of folks testing positive. This time it's mainly those under 39 years of age, who, may not be symptomatic, but yet can spread the virus to those most vulnerable.

We must continue to be vigilant and do our best to remind ALL those in our communities to wear masks and keep their social distance. This virus is not going away any time soon, so please make sure you have plenty of PPE supplies. Masks (N-95, KN-95 & surgical), hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol, antibacterial wipes, non-contact & digital thermometers, pulse oximeters and of course plenty of toilet tissue.

While there has been shortages in the market place these last few months, many of our wholesalers and distributors are starting to acquire many PPE products.

We recently partnered with Priority Protective Services to provide masks at incredible prices. (Call-404-304-3322).

On the political front, I want to give a big shout out to our government affairs team as HB 946 & SB313 passed overwhelmingly and awaits the Governor's signature. I believe that Georgia now has the strongest anti-PBM legislation in the country. For months I kept hearing commercials on the radio how PBM's are saving patients thousands of dollars on their prescriptions. What a crock of ----.

They put a lot of effort and of course tons of money to fight these 2 bills, but, because of YOU, and all the emails and phone calls to your legislators, we won the battle.

Thank you Greg, Cindy and the rest of your team for an outstanding job under very difficult circumstances.

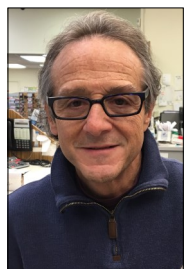
While our country goes through a difficult, but probably a political metamorphosis, we continue to remain an important and vital entity in each of our communities. The protests along with the viruses will be around for a while.

On a personal note, I had the misfortune of my store being broken into after the riots and looting taken place after the George Floyd death. No drugs taken, just an incredible mess I had to clean up at 2:30AM. Please be careful and now might be a good time to review all your security measures.

I hope all of you applied and received your SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan as well as the PPP loan. This certainly was a welcomed financial addition.

As of today, I continue to allow only 1 patient to enter the pharmacy. I'm sure many of you are taking the same precautionary measures to keep your staff and patients safe.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to again serve as chairman of the best state independent pharmacy organization led by our great staff, Jeff, V, and our MSR's.



Ira



Save The Date:

- ◆ **GPhA Convention Postponed**
Tentative Date:
Thursday August 13
-Sunday August 16,
2020 Omni Amelia
Island, FL
- ◆ **AIP Fall Meeting**
Sunday,
October 25, 2020
Middle Georgia
State University -
Robert F. Hatcher,
Sr Conference
Center, Macon, GA

Members Please Be Aware

When emailing AIP regarding pharmacy issues please include your name, pharmacy name, address, phone number and NPI#.



Amanda Gaddy, R.Ph.,
AIP Director of Clinical
Services

Pandemics Do Not Stop Audits

It looks like PBM Audits are making a come back. Even a pandemic can't stop them for long.

Whether you need support in preparing for an audit or assistance with an appeal, AIP is here to help! **In the last four years, we have helped reverse over \$1 million in audit findings for our members.**

A few tips from recent audits:

- 1) Prescriptions with an electronic signature from the provider must be received as an e-prescription. There are times when e-prescriptions default to fax. When this happens, please call and document the prescriber, who verified the prescription, the date and time. Include the DEA number if the prescription is for a controlled substance. Electronic signatures are not valid for faxed prescriptions.
- 2) Multiple CII prescriptions written on the same day must include when the practitioner intends for the patient to receive the medication.

For example, if there are three prescriptions written and signed on the same date, the first prescription does not need clarification on when it may be filled if it can be filled immediately. The remaining two prescriptions must include the earliest date each may be filled.

Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1306

“The individual practitioner must provide written instructions on each prescription (other than the first prescription, if the prescribing practitioner intends for that prescription to be filled immediately) indicating the earliest date on which a pharmacy may fill each prescription.”

- 3) If the prescription is written, e-prescribed, faxed or phoned in by a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant, please ensure the Supervising Physician is noted on the hard copy prescription.

For more detailed information on specific audit tips and red flags, consult the PBM Provider Manual. The previous tips are just a few examples of common discrepancies.

If you need assistance preparing for or responding to a desk or onsite audit, please contact Amanda Gaddy: agaddy@gpha.org (p) 404-313-5500. Please copy Jeff Lurey on all requests: jlurey@gpha.org.

Member in the News

Pharmacy steering detrimental to patient care

Printed in The Newnan Times-Herald - Jun. 08, 2020

I purchased Lee King Pharmacy because I wanted to provide world-class care for people in my community with a personal touch.

Since purchasing the pharmacy in January of this year, I have had the privilege of providing care under the most trying health care crisis this country has seen in our lifetime.

In doing so, I have seen the best this country has to offer from physicians, nurses, pharmacists and pharmacy techs. I have also seen it from our patients and their relatives and loved ones, who are willing to go the extra mile to stay healthy and safe.

But I have also seen a darker side to America's health care system—PATIENT STEERING. During this COVID-19 pandemic, I've had more than 15 patients who were steered from my pharmacy to pharmacies owned or affiliated with the patient's insurance company or their pharmacy benefits manager.

To be clear, these are patients, who are often very sick with chronic diseases including cancer, who chose my pharmacy, who traveled to my pharmacy, who needed drugs, and who were told, at the height of the pandemic, that they had to receive their drugs from a mail order pharmacy (delaying treatment up to three weeks) or retail chain pharmacy affiliated with the insurer or PBM.

Continued on Page 3

AIP Election Results

Ballots were mailed out to all AIP members in May. Seventy-three ballots were returned. Kevin Florence will be the AIP Board Chairman Elect and Drew Miller will be the AIP Board Secretary. Meet the candidates below:

KEVIN FLORENCE, Pharm.D. CHAIRMAN ELECT



Kevin Florence graduated with a Doctorate of Pharmacy from the University of Georgia in 2009 and owns ADD Drug and ADD's Personal Care LTC pharmacy in Athens, GA. He has served on the GPhA Legislative Committee, Region 10 president, completed Leadership GPhA and received the 2013 Distinguished Young Pharmacists Award. He

currently sits on both the GPhA and AIP Board of Directors. His wife, Rachel, graduated from UGA and taught elementary school for 7 years before leaving to help with the pharmacy. They have a son, Luke, daughter, Kate and yellow lab named Emma.

DREW MILLER, R.Ph., CDM SECRETARY



Drew Miller is owner of Wynn's Pharmacy located in Griffin, Georgia. He graduated with a BS in Pharmacy from Mercer Southern School of Pharmacy in 1980. He currently serves on the AIP Board of Directors. Past Chairman of AIP from 2012-2016, currently serving his 4th term on the Georgia Medicaid DUR Board, Past Chairman

Georgia DUR Board, currently serves on Spalding County Board of Health, currently serves on GPhA Governmental Affairs. He is a member of NCPA, AIP and GPhA. He was the 2008 AIP Pharmacist of the Year. Drew and his wife Susan, have two children, Stuart and Claire.

Congratulations to both Kevin & Drew.



DRUG CHANNELS

Expert Insights on Pharmaceutical Economics
and the Drug Distribution System

Pharmacist Job Market in 2019: Salaries Grew, Retail-to-Hospital Employment Shift Accelerated

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently released its employment data for 2019. That means it's time to update our annual *Drug Channels* analysis of pharmacist salaries and employment.

Average base salaries were about \$125,000, though there was substantial variation across practice settings.

Total pharmacist employment grew in 2019. Consistent with our previous analyses, the share of pharmacists who work at hospitals reached a new high.

However, the number of pharmacists working in retail settings decreased. The challenges facing the retail pharmacy industry are now showing up in the employment data. It's more bad news for the pharmacists who are working for the weakened.

The entire story can be found at: <https://www.drugchannels.net/2020/06/pharmacist-job-market-in-2019-salaries.html#more>

Continued from Page 2 - Pharmacy steering detrimental to patient care

As a health care provider, there is nothing more devastating than seeing a patient who chooses to receive care from you to be forced to go elsewhere.

The good news is that the Georgia General Assembly is hard at work on these issues, with a package of pharmacy patient protection bills that look to stop patient steering and other harmful patient practices, including in Georgia's Medicaid managed care program, where some of the managed care companies have overcharged the state to the tune of \$90 million dollars more than pharmacies were reimbursed for drugs in the last two years alone, while also steering some of Georgia's sickest patients to affiliated pharmacies.

In fighting this legislation, representatives for the insurance companies and PBMs argue that they are not the ones who steer patients, that it is their clients that want to use their pharmacies exclusively for certain drugs.

Allow me to dispel that myth. I am not only a pharmacist; I am also a small business owner, employing 10 people, and something I am very proud to do is assist with health insurance for my employees as well as myself and my family.

What has shocked me to the core is that my pharmacy's insurer, Aetna, who is owned by CVS, is requiring that my employees get certain prescriptions from CVS mail order or retail pharmacies. Let me be clear, I did not ask Aetna for a plan requiring me and my employees and their families to use CVS pharmacies, nor was I informed this would be a required part of the plan.

That I can't care for my own patients, neighbors and friends saddens me. That I can't fill prescriptions for my own employees for insurance offered through my business just plain makes me mad. That insurers and PBMs engage in this practice at the height of a pandemic scares me.

The time to act to stop this practice and other harmful and wasteful practices is now. Please join me in thanking the Georgia General Assembly for taking on unscrupulous and dangerous practices by large insurers, PBMs, and Medicaid managed care companies and reach out to your state Representative and state Senator and ask for their support of Georgia House Bills 918, 946, 947, and 991, as well as Georgia Senate Bill 313.

Mindy Leech
Newnan

<https://times-herald.com/news/2020/06/pharmacy-steering-detrimental-to-patient-care>



In this ongoing health crisis, independent pharmacies have used their skills and wisdom well to provide much-needed services to the communities they serve. And it's only natural that officials would turn to independents now. We've been preparing for years for a moment like this one. From the moment the COVID-19 crisis hit our communities, members of the National Community Pharmacists Association have continued caring for patients as essential workers, and they've also stepped up with creative, innovative ideas to continue that service. That their patients are being well taken care of is reward enough, but independents are getting attention all over the country.

It is gratifying to see Leslie's Pharmacy owner Warren Holmberg called an "everyday hero" in an article in his local paper, the *MV (Martha's Vineyard) Times*. In North Carolina, a TV station asked viewers to nominate heroes they have encountered during the pandemic. Robert and Pamela Guy of Guy's Family Pharmacy in Thomasville, N.C., were heroes of the day in April. The *Bronx Times* featured Mount Carmel Pharmacy owner Roger Paganelli in a story about people who are working around the clock to keep others safe.

Owners Brent and Laura Smith were named Coronavirus Heroes of the Week by their local newspaper in Oxford, Miss. Ohio pharmacist Aimee O'Reilly was one of the "Working Heroes" recognized and interviewed by Kelly Ripa and Ryan Seacrest on "Live with Kelly and Ryan." Many editorials have praised the work of pharmacists as well.

It's just about recognition for a job well done. The media is also turning to community pharmacists for their expertise. In a story in the *Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman Review*, multi-store owner Erik Nelson said, "Building a relationship with a pharmacist can make all the difference in a time like this." He added, "We're the most accessible doctorate degree in the health care field. Create a relationship with your pharmacist, and they'll tell you if it's something serious that needs to be addressed by a doctor." On *WALB-TV* in Albany, Ga., NCPA Board of Directors chair and pharmacy owner Hugh Chancy did an interview about his pharmacy being selected as a site for self-administered COVID testing and explained how the testing works. An Atlanta TV station featured a heartwarming story about Lily's Pharmacy owner Jennifer Shannon. She started stapling a cheery card to prescriptions, handmade by her four children, and the effort was so popular that she enlisted community members to make cards as well.

Added to all this is our ongoing branding initiative to help highlight the value of independent pharmacy and give it a well-deserved spotlight. The ads present community pharmacists as trusted medication experts and neighbors.

Highlighted above are just a few of the media shout-outs to community pharmacists we've seen. We've tried to mention as many as we can in our various communication tools. If you have one you want to share with us, please let us know.

Recently, Grubb's Pharmacy in Washington got a mention on the Twitter feed of Adm. Brett Giroir, the assistant secretary for health at HHS. (Grubb's owner Michael Kim is NCPA second vice president.) More than 38,000 followers turn to Giroir's page for his regular COVID-19 updates, and we were proud to see independents singled out as he plugged testing and the Opening Up America Again plan.

Independent pharmacies like Grubb's are family-owned businesses that have been serving people in their communities for years, and sometimes generations, and have been on front lines of health care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of those communities are underserved, where the local pharmacy is the only accessible health care provider.

Pharmacy has shined brightly during the COVID-19 pandemic as essential front line health care providers. NCPA's "Your Neighbor" campaign is also helping to keep pharmacy's profile high. This is the first national community pharmacy branding campaign to highlight the work our members and their teams have devoted to their communities during this national emergency. Neighbors helping neighbors. In its first full month, the campaign made almost 11 million impressions and consumer store traffic increased by over 20 percent. Learn more at www.ncpa.org/your-neighbor. Be sure to include these ad promos on your social media pages to keep your pharmacy's name in the news.

Best,

Douglas Hoey, Pharmacist, MBA
NCPA CEO

If you change wholesaler, please be sure to let us know. Please contact Veroushka Betancourt-Whigham "V" at vbwhigham@gpha.org or 404-419-8102. Thank You

GPhA Convention

August 13-16, 2020
Omni Amelia Island, FL

AIP Wholesaler Appreciation Luncheon & Business Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 15, 2020

Time: 12:30 - 1:45 pm

The hotel requires we provide them with numbers in advance, so please complete the information below and FAX to (404) 237-8435

As Soon As Possible

- I Will Attend the Luncheon **AND** Business Meeting.
- Staff/Guest Will Attend the Luncheon with Me.

(PLEASE PRINT)

Member's Name: _____

Pharmacy Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: (____) _____ FAX Number: (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Staff/Guest name: _____

Any questions, please contact "V" Verouschka Betancourt-Whigham at vbwhigham@gpha.org



Progress Update

By Laird Miller, Executive Director (laird255@gmail.com)

It's a great time to join!

A lot has been going on with CPESN/Georgia. As most of you know by now, we are officially incorporated as the Georgia affiliate of CPESN USA. Over the last five months we have hired a director, seated a board of directors, and started operations as a state organization. As with just about everything else, the Covid Pandemic has slowed our operations in some areas, but in others we have been moving forward, preparing for the summer season, and the proliferation of CPESN activity in our state.

One of our key items was the formation of our CIN, or Clinically Integrated Network of Pharmacies. We have done that, and Charlie Barnes and I have completed the first Engagement Learning Series which prepares us to go out and present our network to potential payors. Over time, we hope to have more people across the state complete this 30 hour plus classroom series, so we have well-equipped leaders to work with insurance companies, health systems and private purchasers of our services to enhance patient health through pharmacy involvement. We are in the process now of bringing online the new documents and contracting packages needed to complete the process.

Network Adequacy is our next area of attention. We all probably know that Georgia is physically the largest state east of the Mississippi River. This presents some unique challenges in providing state-wide services. CPESN has determined that marketing ourselves as "providing state-wide coverage" means we need about 175 locations. Right now we are just over one hundred, but we are actively working to fill in the stars on our location map. Existing CPESN stores need to go to our collaboration page and be sure to affiliate with Georgia to light up your location. RIGHT NOW, you can sign on as a new member and get free membership through the end of August. This allows you to get up and running with no membership fees. PLEASE take advantage of this great deal. Go to CPESN.COM and click on "For Pharmacies" to begin the process. Also, Flip The Pharmacy coaching is available to early responders, but slots are limited, so move quickly. We are making our Flip the Pharmacy "lite" program available at no charge as it develops.

We are still looking for regional luminaries who will take on the job of being a liaison between area stores and our organization. We need assistance from stores to help us with local business opportunities. When you use your contacts to promote what pharmacy and CPESN can do, it becomes much easier to bring a deal to fruition. You don't have to carry the weight of the process, you just have to help us get in the door. Your reputation is our most valuable asset.

So, as they taught us in PELS training, before you go, discuss "next steps" in the process. If you are a current member, bring yourself up to date on the CPESN collaboration page. If you are not a current member, I hope many of your next steps will be to sign up with CPESN, or at least to contact Charlie Barnes, myself, or any of our board members listed below for more information. We look forward to our August convention to talk to you, but you don't have to wait till then. You can reach me at 770-596-1354. As we begin to move out from our seclusion, I look forward to meeting with small groups of you in your towns, to discuss your future as a CPESN member, and the opportunities we can offer.

Board Members

Charlie Barnes (charlie@barneshc.com), Erin Dalton (erindalton120812@gmail.com) Amanda Gaddy (agaddy@gpha.org), Thomas Sherrer (tjsherrer@gmail.com), Patrick Chancy (patrickchancy@chancydrugs.com)

A Sporting Clays event benefiting the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation

Friday, September 25, 2020 ▪ 1:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.



Have fun together outside with some friendly competition at the first sporting clays fundraiser hosted by the Georgia Pharmacy Foundation (GPhF) at Big Red Oak Plantation Shooting Preserve in Gay, GA.

What is sporting clays? Some have called it

"redneck golf" or "golf with a shotgun."

Event proceeds will fund GPhF initiatives. We fund student pharmacist scholarships, offer free CE and resources to stay mentally well, and give pharmacists a path to become a Champion for Opioid Safety.

Visit gpha.org/ready-aim-phire now to register, sponsor, or get more information.

Send your techs to



A one-day CE and social program by GPhA pharmacy techs for GPhA pharmacy techs.

Saturday, May 2

Just \$30 for GPhA members
\$50 for non-members*

including lunch and an afternoon at Topgolf!

Visit GPhA.org/techu for info and to sign up!

* includes a GPhA membership!



AIP/MEDELLA SPRINGS PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

AIP is excited to announce that we have formed a strategic partnership with Medella Springs Healthcare to leverage the front-end as a revenue generating department that will increase store traffic and enhance profitability, while simultaneously delivering greater patient outcomes. Through a clinically proven portfolio of products, a unique training process and an easy to implement marketing model, AIP Member stores will be able to deliver enhanced patient care, while driving incremental sales through a sophisticated and proven front-end strategy. This partnership allows AIP to capitalize on the buying power of our 425+ member pharmacies to negotiate attractive margins for a series of exclusive products which justify the investment of our time and resources to develop this business.

Here are just some of the benefits of this partnership:

1. Negotiated discounts for AIP members which create healthy margins for clinically validated products that you can promote with confidence.
2. Favorable and exclusive payment terms.
3. Free product credit with every reorder.
4. Significant financial and educational contributions to the AIP Spring and Fall meetings.
5. Annual AIP profit sharing program that enables AIP to keep our fees low and services high, while freeing up critical capital to lobby on your behalf in Washington and at the state and local levels across Georgia.
6. Easy to implement, yet sophisticated marketing programs that really work:
 - Training and resource library developed in cooperation with AIP
 - Dedicated Medella Springs Service Representative committed to the successful implementation and long-term success of the program
7. New and exciting product development and clinical trial opportunities for AIP members.
 - Pre-trial subject recruitment
 - Post-trial customer conversion to increase traffic and bring new customers into our stores

One of AIP's objectives has always been to proactively address the unique business and professional issues facing independent pharmacies. We are committed to ensuring economic viability and security for our members. The partnership with Medella Springs Healthcare enables us to create differentiation over chain stores and increase our front-end profitability, while remaining dedicated to providing the highest level of patient care.

This program will be launched in early July. More information will follow regarding implementation of this exciting opportunity.

When the markets turn as volatile and confusing as they have over the past month, even the most patient investors may come to question the wisdom of the investment plan that they've been following.

As a financial planner with over 25 years' experience, I've seen a lot of difficult markets come and go. And I can certainly empathize with people who find the current environment troublesome and disturbing. I'd like to help if I can, and to that end, here's what I offer:

A cup of coffee and a second opinion.

By virtual appointment, you're welcome to talk with me and receive a complimentary, no-obligation second opinion. I'll ask you to outline your financial goals - what your investment portfolio is intended to do for you. Then I'll review the portfolio for and with you.

If I think your investments continue to be well-suited to your long-term goals - despite the current market turmoil - I'll gladly tell you so and send you on your way. If, on the other hand, I think some of your investments no longer fit with your goals, I'll explain why, in plain English. And, if you like, I'll recommend some alternatives.

Planning for your future doesn't have to be complicated, and I'm here to help.

Onward,

MIKE TARRANT, CFP®

Financial Planner for Pharmacists, Business Owners & Families

www.miketarrantplanning.com

Securities offered through LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory Services offered through IFG Advisory, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisor. Integrated Financial Group and IFG Advisory, LLC, are separate entities from LPL Financial. #1-975875

KEEP INDEPENDENTS INDEPENDENT

Please don't forget, if you have a desire to sell your pharmacy or if you have an interest in buying a pharmacy, please contact Jeff Lurey at 404-419-8103. We have been quite successful during the past several years at keeping independents independent. We maintain a list of pharmacists who want to buy additional pharmacies and we also keep a list of young pharmacists who want to own a pharmacy. All information is kept strictly confidential.

AIP MISSION STATEMENT

To advance the concept of pharmacy care. To ensure the economic viability and security of Independent Pharmacy; To provide a forum for Independent Pharmacy to exchange information and develop strategies, goals and objectives; To address the unique business and professional issues of independent pharmacies; To develop and implement marketing opportunities for members of the Academy with emphasis on the third party prescription drug program/benefit market; To provide educational programs designed to enhance the managerial skills of Independent Pharmacy Owners and Managers; and, To establish and implement programs and services designed to assist Independent Pharmacy Owners and Managers.



PRIORITY
PROTECTIVE SERVICES
YOUR MASK AND PPE SOURCE

(404) 304-3322. PPRmasks@gmail.com

CE Certified/U.S. Lab Tested Face Masks

Pay by CC, Venmo, or C.O.D.

Free Same-Day Delivery Atlanta Area

PGT Brand KN95: \$1.45/Mask
Minimum Order of 100 Masks.
5 Masks/Package



Manufacturer's Website:
<http://en.pgtcare.com>

Certifications & Testing: Copy of all Certifications are on Manufacturer's Website.

- KN95 (GB2626-2006)
- CE 2163 & Dekra (German Certification Agency)
- Independent U.S. lab test conducted by our Company: Passed @ 95% particulate filtration efficiency; inhalation/exhalation and valve leak.

Hiya Brand 3-Ply: \$.30/Mask
Minimum Order of 200 Masks.
50 Masks/Carton



Manufacturer's Website: <http://fjxingyuan.com>

Certifications & Testing: Copy of all Certifications are on Manufacturer's website.

- EU: FFP2 & CE
- Dekra (German Certification Agency)
- Independent U.S. lab test conducted by our company: Passed FFP2 standard.



6065 Barfield Road, Suite 100
Sandy Spring, GA 30328