

## Reflections on Ten Years of Progress



*Life is not just the passing of time. Life is the collection of experiences and their intensity.*

– Jim Rohn

It is difficult for me to comprehend the fact that this will be my last editorial for the *Journal of Contemporary Pharmacy Practice* (JCPHP). As many of you may know, I accepted a new position as the Chief Executive Officer for the Dallas County Medical Society and am departing California Pharmacists Association (CPhA) after ten years of service to pursue that new adventure as of January 2020.

As I think about the many opportunities and challenges that have come to the practice of pharmacy over the past ten years, I am struck by the awesome commitment made by the many dedicated professionals I have had the privilege to work alongside as we advocated and advanced the pharmacy profession in California. In retrospect, when I first arrived at CPhA in 2010, the profession was predominately still a product-based model where pharmacists served their patients by safely dispensing medicine and were compensated based on a small margin and modest dispensing fee.

I distinctly recall conversations with leaders in the profession about a brewing storm on the horizon that would lead to dark days for pharmacies as margins and dispensing fees continued to be winnowed away by health plans and pharmacy benefit managers.

That looming crisis provided a critical platform for a call to action, where a reinvigorated association led by outstanding volunteers and a new professional staff would take up the mantle of a bold and audacious plan to open new opportunities for pharmacists to operate at the top of their license.

Coupled with this shift in the business of pharmacy, one of the opportunities I perceived when evaluating the CPhA position was the increased role that pharmacists would play in the health care delivery system. At the time, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was being hotly debated and moving through Congress with vigor. It became clear, as the ACA was enacted into law and millions of additional people received insurance, that there were insufficient health care providers to care for the population. We simply could not graduate physicians or open clinics quickly enough to take care of the newly insured. Enter pharmacists.

With these political and economic backdrops unfolding, in 2012, CPhA took its most aggressive and progressive steps at expanding the role and economic future of the pharmacists with a statewide legislative measure affectionately called Senate Bill 493, authored by Senator Hernandez. This legislation would go on to become a national model, replicated in various ways among nearly every state and even federally. It was the honor of my life to have received recognition from the U.S. Surgeon General himself for efforts at innovating health care and increasing access to quality care. This legislation paved the way for pharmacists to provide patient care services beyond dispensing medicine, and equally as important, provided a method of payment for those services through the Medicaid program and in direct contracting with health plans and self-insured employers.

Since that time, CPhA has continued to evolve the practice of pharmacy with additional legislative measures that have opened additional scope of practice and business models for innovative pharmacies to pursue. Those that have done so have averted the storm of no margins and de minimis dispensing fees. Those pioneering pharmacists have reinvented themselves and their practices are thriving by serving their communities with important and impactful patient care services. I encourage all pharmacists to continue pushing the boundaries for how you can care for your patients in innovative and creative ways.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the members, our many stakeholders, and academic partners, for your support over the past ten years. It has truly been a joy to serve as your CEO. I hope that my service to the organization has helped in some small way to move the needle in promoting the health of the public through pharmacist care.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JR Roth', written in a cursive style.

Jon R. Roth, MS, CAE  
Executive Editor