

NEWS

From the Desk of the ACCP President

March 27, 2020

Brian L. Erstad, Pharm.D., FCCP, BCPS**COVID-19, You, and ACCP**

"As a nation, we can't be doing the kinds of things we were doing a few months ago."

(Dr. Anthony Fauci, March 10, 2020)

These are indeed unprecedented times. I know that every clinical pharmacist is experiencing the unexpected and rapidly evolving consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of his or her professional setting. Those of us engaged in practice, research, education, administration, government service, and other professional activities have all been affected, as have our friends and families.

In just a couple of weeks, my interactions with students, postgraduate trainees, faculty, staff, and administrators at my university and health sciences center have changed dramatically. No business as usual. Telecommunication technologies are the medium for virtually all teaching and university-related activities as well as many patient care interactions. Despite the stress for all involved, there is a spirit of teamwork, dedication, and volunteerism. I suspect, or at least hope, that you have encountered a similarly positive aspect of your interactions in your work setting. We need to be resilient, stay the course, and try to remain upbeat as we go through these trying times together.

Clinical pharmacists have access to many sources of current/emerging data and information regarding COVID-19, including the CDC, the FDA, and the NIH, as well as online institutional and professional society/journal websites. However, there has been no compilation of "on-the-ground" clinical pharmacist activities/observations during this crisis. Therefore, we are interested in learning more about your own individual experiences as clinicians, researchers, educators, administrators, and students/trainees. Toward that end, ACCP will begin reaching out to members next week with a request to share some of these experiences – experiences that may be informational and inspirational for your colleagues and peers. I hope that you will be willing and able to participate. As members respond to this request, we will communicate many of these experiences through social media, the ACCP website, and other organizational communications. We believe this will be an excellent opportunity to share observations, feelings, fears, encouraging comments, and other thoughts with those of us in similar situations who are in need of information and inspiration.

Finally, like for ACCP members, life goes on for the ACCP staff from an organizational perspective. But, reflecting Dr. Fauci's quotation above, staff aren't performing their functions as they did previously. You are probably aware that, because of local shelter-in-place orders and other restrictions, both the Lenexa, Kansas, and the Washington, D.C., offices are closed. However, staff members are working remotely, carrying out their duties electronically and through tele- and videoconferences. Below are snippets of some of the current activities in which ACCP staff members are engaged.

Education and meetings staff are preparing ACCP's online board certification preparatory review and recertification courses, including those interrupted because of cancellation of the 2020 Spring Forum. In addition, preparations for the 2020 Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas, October 24–27, continue at full speed.

Publications and communications staff remain on schedule in the production and release of ACCP's specialty self-assessment programs, books, newsletters, and other communications.

Customer service staff are very busy responding to member inquiries and requests for assistance with ACCP programs and services as they're submitted to accp@accp.com.

Member services staff are working on the rollout later this year of a new monthly dues payment option. They are also processing new member applications/renewals and administering the third round of the Clinical Research Challenge (CRC), which involves the top 20 schools that will submit their research proposals on or before April 17. The CRC winners will be announced June 12.

Government and professional affairs staff are building on existing professional pharmacy partnerships and longstanding intra- and interprofessional collaborations that enable ACCP to continue to represent clinical pharmacy. These efforts are now increasingly focused on positioning the unique expertise of clinical pharmacists as essential team members in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic within a rapidly changing policy and legislative environment.

Research staff have reached out to ASHP to share with accredited residency programs the opportunity to present residency projects during the ACCP Virtual Poster Symposium, May 26 and 27. March 30 is the deadline for completed project abstract submissions; research-in-progress abstracts are due April 27. Abstracts of completed projects that are accepted and presented will be published in *JACCP*.

Operations and information technology staff are making sure ACCP's infrastructure remains secure and in place, maintaining our website and servers, processing mail, responding to tenant needs in our headquarters buildings, and paying our bills – all while maintaining the necessary social distance, of course.

The ACCP Foundation is accepting applications for the 2020 FIT and MeRIT investigator development programs and making final arrangements to open the next round of research grant funding on May 15.

One of ACCP's official journals, *Pharmacotherapy*, is preparing a set of editorials addressing issues related to COVID-19 for publication in its May issue. Meanwhile, *JACCP* just published in its March issue an ACCP white paper on CMM in telehealth, which is particularly relevant in today's environment.

Yes, these are uncertain times. We are all striving to carry out our daily duties while also caring for our patients, colleagues, students, trainees, families, and friends. We will get through this, of course, and likely learn a lot along the way – about the capabilities of our health care system, how to respond to pandemics, and how to manage our work in an uncertain world. In doing so, we will also learn a lot about ourselves. Stay safe.