

What's Around the Corner?

January is a good time to really look ahead, and not just make the usual, soon-broken resolutions. NCPA's vision of the future sees patients being connected with their local community pharmacy, their physician, and the health system.

Those patients will go seamlessly from one provider to another—not like the disjointed system we have today. Pharmacists will use their unique medication expertise to make sure patients are receiving the most effective medication at the best value to the health system. Market pressures will continue to try to commoditize the product.

NCPA will continue to fight for fair payments for the invaluable service of dispensing medications—a primary tool of our profession.

Revenue streams will come from a number of sources. Opportunities for pharmacists will be prevalent in our changing health care system for those willing to help shape the system.

Independent community pharmacies offer what payers need. We can have the most impact with the sickest and most costly patients. We are missing one key ingredient right now. Independents must aggregate in a way different than today. They must be able to contract with a payer or a hospital system as a group to provide products and services. They especially must be able to do this in geographic regions

where that hospital or health plan has a lot of patients. In this model, payers can skip the middleman.

Who needs them in the middle adding costs anyway?

Of course, the future is largely reliant on the successes in the present—the here and now. I've said it before and I'll say it again: NCPA's strength is in its membership—the men and women touching patients' lives every day. Working in your community. Giving back to your community.

We recently measured that community contribution.

It's probably not surprising to know that 63 percent of community pharmacies support five or more community-based organizations. That's data from the *2015 NCPA Digest*, sponsored by Cardinal Health.

We dug even deeper to find out that the typical financial contribution independent pharmacies make to their communities is \$3,000 per pharmacy!

That amounts to more than \$65 million, or 2.6 percent of your pre-tax profit. As a point of reference, Walmart gives over \$300 million back to charities, but that represents 1.3 percent of its pre-tax profit.

If independents were a corporation, not only would it be in the Fortune



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50 ahead of household names like Disney, Google, and McDonalds, it would be one of the most generous charitable givers in all of corporate America!

Of course, your connection to the community goes deeper than financial contributions. Many times, not only are independent pharmacies the sponsor, but the owners and their staff are often the coach, the mayor, the chairman, the president, or are behind the scenes making sure the fields get mowed, the vans get driven, or the food gets served.

NCPA exists because of you, and it is our priority to protect you so that you can continue to take care of your patients and your communities. ■

Best,

B. Douglas Hoey, Pharmacist, MBA
NCPA Chief Executive Officer