



When DeAnn Mullins was 15, her 9-year-old brother was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. He could go blind, lose a limb, never have children, and not live past 30, Mullins and her father, a UPS driver in Panama City, Fla., were told.

"We spent years of fear, frustration, and guilt not knowing how to take care of that little guy," she recalls. Fortunately, the dire early predictions did not come to pass.

"The happy ending is that God turned that fear into my life's work. That work has been about helping others, and I have often said along the way...helping people should not be this hard."

To further her life's work, Mullins went to Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy. Graduating in 1993, she and her husband Ken took over his father's pharmacy in Lynn Haven five years later, not far from where she grew up on the Gulf Coast.

Remembering her brother's struggle with diabetes and her family's fear, frustration, and guilt, Mullins became a certified diabetes educator and now operates the WeCare Diabetes Education Program and WeCare Wellness as part of Mullins Pharmacy. Her pharmacy was the first provider of insulin pump training in Bay County

New Orleans

## Meet NCPA's New President

by Michael F. Conlan

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and the first pharmacy in Florida to be paid by Medicare for diabetes self-management training.

Her diabetes program includes the importance of a healthy lifestyle components, but goes beyond the usual eat less, lose weight, and take your medications mantra. Sometimes the lack of progress isn't the patient's fault, she notes. Subtherapeutic doses, inadequate oral therapy, and insulin regimens are more the norm than the exception. That's when medication management interventions are provided to improve medical, financial, and quality of life outcomes. Based on patient-supplied blood glucose data, the pharmacy can recommend medication adjustments to the primary care provider. This approach can improve patient outcomes and build trust and strong relationships with patients and providers.

Mullins is a former member of the Florida State Board of Pharmacy

and mother of two daughters, Gracie and Stevie-Marie, a Samford student who introduced her at the House of Delegates where she was installed as NCPA president.

"We need stronger aggregation within our pharmacy community, and we need to unite with other clinicians and like-minded health care providers, organizations, and patient groups," Mullins said in her acceptance speech. "Aggregation of independents and a larger aggregation with the entire health care community has been a board of directors' priority for several years.

"We must aggregate, not just to fight the PBM monsters, but to be an integral part of health care in the future. Aggregation means to unite people, and people unite when they share a belief. And a shared belief ...well, I think it can change the world." ■

**Michael F. Conlan is editor of America's Pharmacist.**