

# Long Term Care Section Holds Leadership Retreat

Examines future of long term care practice and role of section

by Bradley Schermetzler

**O**n Jan. 17, 2008, the PSW Long Term Care (LTC) Section Board of Directors, along with key LTC Section leadership, convened an LTC Section Leadership Retreat in Madison. The ever-changing marketplace for long term care facilities has seen a dramatic shift in recent years. Consolidation of services has resulted in large corporations providing pharmaceutical services for many facilities and fewer individual pharmacies providing these services. As the marketplace has evolved, so has the makeup of the LTC Section. Recognizing the shifting marketplace, the LTC Board of Directors called upon the leaders of the Section to attend this retreat for an introspective look at the past, present, and future of long term care pharmacists.

## HISTORY

The LTC Section was formed in early 1976 as a division of the Wisconsin Pharmaceutical Association (WPhA). The WPhA Board of Directors approved the formation of an LTC Section at the 1975 WPhA Convention. An informal meeting of pharmacists who served long term care patients took place in late 1975. *The Wisconsin Pharmacist*, the monthly journal for WPhA, chronicled the beginnings of the Section. On Jan. 13, 1976, the WPhA Section on Long Term Care met for the first time in Madison.<sup>1</sup> The Section created four goals to help guide the newly formed organization. They established four goals:<sup>1</sup>

1. Provide the mechanism for the formal exchange of ideas and disseminating information to members to keep all concerned aware of new regulations regarding long term care.
2. Establish a liaison with both Federal



PSW Executive Vice President and CEO Chris Decker kicked off the retreat with a presentation on the LTC Section's history and status.

and State governmental agencies and form an organization to approach DHSS on the various fee concepts for adequate reimbursements for pharmaceutical services.

3. Act as an educational mechanism to aid pharmacists interested in LTC facilities.
4. Coordinate activities with the Pharmacy Peer Review Organization.

The original dues set by the LTC Section Board of Directors were \$10 per year. Continuing education requirements were also included in the bylaws. Members were required to record eight hours of continuing education credits in one year to maintain their membership in the Section. The first educational seminar sponsored by the LTC Section in May 1976 included a presentation on "physician-pharmacist intra-professional relationships in nursing homes."<sup>2</sup> With over 75% of the Section attending the Spring conference, the leadership decided to hold a second conference later that year.

The journal began publishing articles written by members of the LTC Section

in July 1976. The articles focused on issues relevant to pharmacy services in the nursing home setting. Topics ranged from unassigned medications in the LTC facility and the role of the geriatric nurse practitioner to the use of bananas to avoid hypokalemia in a nursing home patient. While not appearing in every issue, more often than not an article with a long term care focus was published.

After only eight months of existence, the Section had 106 member pharmacists who were providing pharmacy services for nearly 50% of the state's 52,000 patients in long term care facilities.<sup>3</sup> The Section continued to grow and established a core group of pharmacists who formed the backbone of the Section. A newsletter containing information specific to long term care pharmacy services was created and continues to this day. In 1991 the Section was formally established with an operational agreement with WPhA. Regular conferences and board meetings took place twice a year as membership grew steadily for the LTC Section.

When WPhA and the Wisconsin Society of Health-System Pharmacists (WSHP) combined to form PSW in 1998, the LTC Section was incorporated into PSW.

### LTC LEADERSHIP RETREAT

The LTC Board and invited guests began the LTC Leadership Retreat in January with a presentation on the Section's history and status by PSW Executive Vice

the number of opportunities its members have to utilize medication therapy management services when caring for patients.

### CONCLUSION


The retreat concluded with a discussion on the role of long term care pharmacists in today's health care system. The group recognized that there is still a need to provide educational, professional, and legislative



The assembled LTC leadership recognized the need to broaden the services that the Section provides to its members considering current marketplace trends.

President and CEO Christopher Decker. In addition, the Section leadership had the pleasure of hosting a visit from special guest, John Feather, PhD, executive director and CEO of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP). Feather's presentation at the retreat focused on challenges that consultant pharmacists face in today's marketplace. The makeup of ASCP's membership has changed dramatically in the past few years. He reported that up to 80% of the current membership does not provide pharmacy services in a nursing facility. This is a significant change when compared to the makeup of ASCP in years past. ASCP has had to adjust its focus and its resources in response to a changing membership. ASCP is partnering with associations and corporations normally associated with community-based pharmacy practice in order to broaden its reach. These partnerships allow ASCP to provide specialized educational opportunities to pharmacists who care for elderly patients in the community. ASCP is also looking to increase

support for those pharmacists who provide medications and services to patients living in long term care settings. They also recognized the need to broaden the services that the Section provides to its members considering current marketplace trends. The LTC Section Board will continue to work to improve the services that the Section provides. The group is looking forward to the Spring Senior Care Conference scheduled for April 1-2 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha and the incorporation of the "Senior Care Track" into the 2008 PSW Annual Meeting. ●

 FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PSW'S LONG TERM CARE SECTION  
[WWW.PSWI.ORG/LTC/](http://WWW.PSWI.ORG/LTC/)

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### REFERENCES

1. The President says. *Wisconsin Pharmacist* 1976;3:65.
2. WPhA Section on Long Term Care. *Wisconsin Pharmacist* 1976; 5:148.
3. WPhA Section on Long Term Care. *Wisconsin Pharmacist* 1976; 11:367.