

My New Year's Resolution to You

A new year is a time for resolutions—whether it be to continue good practices, change an undesired behavior, accomplish a personal goal, or to improve your life in some way. The challenge with resolutions is the follow-through and maintenance. It is, simply, too easy to fall back on past behaviors or habits. And this is where I say that I have been most impressed with our Flip the Pharmacy participants as we not only begin third year with our new cohort, but we begin the year fighting the same pandemic that has changed our lives and practices dramatically. All of us have had to make multiple challenging changes in practices to meet the needs of our community including vaccinations, testing, treatments, remote care, and safety procedures. It has taxed our practices, distressed our employees, and impacted how we deliver care to our patients. And yet, even with the burn out being experienced by health care providers—including pharmacists—each one of us wake up each day, prepare ourselves for the chaos of the day, and trudge through the challenges that seem to be waiting for us as we care for our patients. The pandemic has forced us to embrace changes and transformation in ways we never experienced before in our careers.

It is this commitment for your patients and your communities to ensure that their medication needs are being met that I have most impressed with and my respect for all of you has deepened. Therefore, unlike past columns, I am making my own new year's resolution. My resolution to all of you is to make sure that I am doing all that I can at the national, state, and local levels to push for the recognition that all of you deserve. Frankly, I am quite unhappy and disappointed that we seem to be fighting the same battles that we had prior to the pandemic—PBM practices that negatively affect the financial viability of our practices, still not being recognized as providers by CMS, and the lack of fair payment for the care we provide to our patients that results in medication optimization. Perhaps it's because I turned 60 this past year and I know that the end of my career is looming or maybe I am just tired of the “can being kicked down the road” from our legislators and regulators. Regardless of the motivation, I promise you that I will work tirelessly and relentlessly to promote the “value of community pharmacists”!!

Your hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed. Keep the momentum going and I will step up my efforts to support all of you!! May your new year be happy and prosperous!