



Advancing Excellence in Pharmacy

KeePosted

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Council of Health-System Pharmacists

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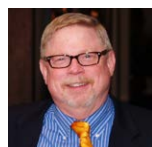
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## Directly Speaking What We Learned From You!

by Scott A. Meyers, Executive Vice President

Print This Article

In February, all ICHP members should have received a membership needs assessment via e-mail to determine your understanding of ICHP's advocacy efforts. Just over 11 percent of you responded. Not the best results for any survey but not pathetic either.

At the beginning of the survey, we provided Merriam-Webster's definition of advocacy: *"the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal; the act or process of advocating"*, in order to provide clarity on the purpose of the survey. Before we asked the questions, we went on to explain that ICHP's advocacy efforts included supporting pharmacy related issues in Springfield with the General Assembly and with the Board of Pharmacy and State agencies like the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Advocacy is a big part of what ICHP does but its value and importance seem to be poorly understood by our members.

Let me share some of the results of the survey here in the hope of convincing more of you to increase your personal advocacy efforts and perhaps increase your overall awareness of the advocacy efforts of ICHP. The entire anonymous results of the survey are available on the ICHP website at <https://bit.ly/2HK5eeE>.

In the survey's first question, we asked members to pick a statement that best aligns with their interest/perception of ICHP's advocacy. The results were mostly encouraging.

- 10% of respondents indicated they were very interested in advocacy and involved in ICHP's efforts.
- Nearly 25% were very interested and wanted to get more involved.
- Unfortunately, 48% were only somewhat interested and felt they had no time to get involved.
- Just over 7% were honest and felt they lacked an understanding of advocacy but were willing to learn more.
- Nearly 8% believed ICHP would advocate for them and there was no need to participate.
- And nearly 3% of respondents had no interest in advocacy.

To the 48%, 8% and 3% who either didn't have time, didn't feel the need or didn't care about advocacy, (and the numbers are probably higher among

## Directors

## ICHP Membership Application

### **Regularly Scheduled Network Meetings**

Chicago Area Pharmacy Directors Network Dinner  
3rd Thursday of Odd Months  
5:30pm

### **Regularly Scheduled Division and Committee Calls**

Executive Committee  
Second Tuesday of each month  
at 7:00 p.m.

Educational Affairs  
Third Tuesday of each month at  
11:00 a.m.

Government Affairs  
Third Monday of each month at  
5:00 p.m.

Marketing Affairs  
Third Tuesday of each month at  
8:00 a.m.

Organizational Affairs  
Fourth Thursday of each month  
at 12:00 p.m.

Professional Affairs  
Fourth Thursday of each month  
at 2:00 p.m.

New Practitioner Network  
Second Thursday of each month  
at 5:30 p.m.

Technology Committee  
Second Friday of each month at  
8:00 a.m.

Chicago Area Pharmacy Directors Network Dinner  
Bi-monthly in odd numbered months with dates to be determined. Invitation only.

[KeePosted Archives >>](#)

those who didn't complete the survey) I would like to urge you to take just a few hours a year to get more involved. Meeting with your legislators once a year is often all it takes to build a useful connection that can help you practice pharmacy better. Maybe not after the first or second meeting, but with no term limits in Illinois after a few years, the legislators will remember you and listen to you because they know you care. And reading the Government Affairs reports in the KeePosted won't take but a few minutes and Jim Owen and I always highlight the most important bills under consideration. Finally, with ICHP's Advocacy Center on our website, connecting with your legislator via e-mail has never been easier!

In another section of the survey, we asked members if they had attended a Legislative Day in the past or might in the future. The results were again somewhat surprising and disappointing:

- About 30% have attended a Legislative Day in the past and hope to attend again in the future. (This is encouraging!)
- 9% have attended in the past but will not attend again. (Not so encouraging, we make our impressions by repeated visits either in the Capitol or at home.)
- 32% have not yet participated but hope to in the future. (More encouraging signs from our members!)
- Nearly 30% have not and do not intend to attend a Legislative Day in Springfield! (This is the saddest result.)

When asked why those members indicated that they will not attend in the future, there were a few common reasons. Many were concerned with giving up a vacation day for this important effort, while a few others complained that the \$25-50 registration fee for pharmacists was too much money. While we didn't ask for endorsements of Legislative Day on this survey, past Legislative Day attendee evaluations have praised the experience as enlightening, a great opportunity to see our government in action, a day well-spent, and an opportunity to see that legislators are just like us and need our input to do their jobs. I would encourage the most ardent cynic to give a future Legislative Day a try and if they still believe that it is a waste of time, I will refund their registration fee. Before I came to work for ICHP, I spent countless vacation days and traded many shifts in order to participate in professional events including Legislative Day that I thought were important. I never regretted a single one!

Finally, in the survey, we described the ICHP Pharmacy Action Fund, ICHP's political action committee (PAC) and asked members if they contributed, planned to contribute, or why they didn't plan to contribute. Again, some of the answers were disappointing but not necessarily surprising:

- Nearly 11% said they contributed regularly. (Good but that really only amounted to 16 individuals).
- Almost 20% said they had contributed at least once and intended to contribute again in the future. (That's very encouraging.)
- 28% had not contributed but agree that it is important and will contribute in the future. (Also very encouraging.)
- Not quite 9% felt PACs are unethical and will not contribute. (A little

discouraging but political contributions are a way of life in Illinois and the U.S.)

- What is perhaps the saddest result is that 30% of respondents were unaware that ICHP has a PAC, but the good news is that they will consider contributing in the future.
- Separately, around 25% felt that ICHP should publish the names of the legislators who receive Pharmacy Action Fund moneys be published in the KeePosted. (A great suggestion which will probably be implemented.)
- 10% of the respondents felt the names of member contributors should be published in the KeePosted, and in fact, they are!

The ICHP Pharmacy Action Fund is a valuable advocacy tool and while we don't raise or contribute the large contributions of many PACs in Illinois, the contributions we make have made a difference and have demonstrated to the legislative leaders that we are serious in our efforts. These contributions open doors so our issues can be heard and once heard, many of those issues get traction and acceptance with General Assembly leaders. Just like life in general, without some skin in the game, your gains will be very, very limited.

I encourage each of you to take a few minutes and read the results of our advocacy survey and then spend a few more minutes considering what advocacy efforts you can personally undertake for your profession. I think if you seriously believe you belong to a worthwhile profession, you will find a few ways that you can up your advocacy game without spending a lot of time, money and effort. And you'll be surprised how easy it is!

## IPHP HELPLINE

There is hope! — Call Illinois Professionals Health Program (IPHP) Helpline to receive support from your peers 24/7.

*If you know someone who needs assistance, encourage them to call.*

**1-800-215-HELP (4357) [www.advocatehealth.com/IPHP](http://www.advocatehealth.com/IPHP)**

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