



## A New Alliance: Message From the PTS President

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The Pharmacy & Therapeutics Society (PTS) is pleased to announce that we have selected *The American Journal of Pharmacy Benefits* to serve as our official journal. We believe that the *Journal* will quickly become a leader in the dissemination of information on the impact of formulary management strategies on utilization, cost, and quality of pharmacy services. Its mission is fully consistent with that of the PTS: “to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and information exchange and the P&T process; to support evidence-based formulary development and implementation across all practice settings as key elements in value-based benefit design; to evaluate best practices in P&T organization, process, and outcomes; and to share what we learn with all interested parties.”

The PTS leadership has been working to build an alliance of pharmacy and therapeutics (P&T) experts, corporate and healthcare organization medical directors, employers, and others to represent the official “voice” of the P&T community. We want to develop new educational opportunities and policies that reflect industry best practices and believe that the *Journal* is the best possible partner to help us achieve this goal.

The US healthcare system is confronting major change. Healthcare institutions, organizations, and managers of pharmacy benefits must integrate new approaches to evidence with efforts to maintain high-quality services and manage cost effectively. Healthcare providers and patients have an array of choices with respect to coverage and cost. It is important to ensure that patients and their families make the best possible decisions.

Generic products can be expected to change the formulary landscape in some major drug categories because some familiar branded products will soon be losing patent protection. New approaches to pharmaceutical care, biologics and “biosimilars,” vaccines, healthcare technology, specialty pharmacy, and healthcare procedures are on the doorstep. Comparative effectiveness research

and the impact of biomarkers on the personalization of healthcare also are ahead. With all these changes come increasing demands from employers and government for evidence of quality healthcare and improved health outcomes commensurate with continued growth in healthcare spending.

The PTS will play a major role in this challenging environment. We will aid in the improvement of evidence-based benefit design, drug formulary development, and implementation across all healthcare practice settings. The *Journal* will be our full partner in these efforts.

In addition to our work with the *Journal*, I would like to inform you of 2 other PTS developments. The first relates to a new feature of the PTS Web site. The second relates to an extremely important conference taking place in May 2009.

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The PTS Web site ([www.pandsociety.org](http://www.pandsociety.org)) now offers free webinars of selected sessions from our 2008 Annual Conference. You'll be able to listen to the opening general session, “Clinical Value and Comparative Effectiveness: Generating Evidence,” with faculty Sean R. Tunis, MD, MSc, founder and director of the Center for Medical

Technology Policy, and Steven D. Pearson, MD, MSc, FRCP, president of the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review, Harvard Medical School. You then will be able to hear an interactive panel discussion, "Healthcare Delivery Systems: Applying Evidence in Clinical Practice," moderated by and featuring board of trustees members from 5 different healthcare practice settings. Finally, we will be presenting a workshop on "New Challenges in Vaccine Therapy Management."

This is the first time we have used webinars to disseminate information from our annual conference. We hope that they help you in your own policy development activities and encourage you to attend our annual conference in Washington, DC, November 5-6, 2009, at the Gaylord National Hotel. We are developing the annual conference program now and welcome suggestions for topics to be covered, speakers to be invited, and potential corporate and organizational sponsors. Please feel free to contact our executive director, Joe Eichenholz, at [jeichenholz@pandsociety.org](mailto:jeichenholz@pandsociety.org) for more information.

The conference that will take place on May 18-19, 2009, at the Embassy Suites Airport Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the first annual forum of P&T committees conducted by the Center for Business Intelligence in association

with the PTS. This conference will help you understand the latest market dynamics impacting formulary development, management, evaluation, and the P&T process. The drug pipeline spotlight will review some of the most promising and challenging treatments for formulary consideration in the pharma and biotech areas. You will hear the latest P&T strategies from leading healthcare organizations and institutions. I am pleased to be chairing this conference on behalf of the PTS and know that you'll find it a unique experience. Information on the conference is available on our Web site ([www.pandsociety.org](http://www.pandsociety.org)) or at [www.cbnet.com](http://www.cbnet.com).

The year 2009 is one of unprecedented challenge to all Americans. The healthcare system must adapt to change and accommodate the needs of millions of Americans suffering from economic hardship. But we also have a tremendous opportunity to share knowledge, insights, and best practices to achieve the maximum value from our nation's investment in healthcare services and products. *The American Journal of Pharmacy Benefits* and the Pharmacy & Therapeutics Society can responsibly address the healthcare needs of our country today and in the future. We welcome the *Journal* as our partner and as a positive force in the dissemination of new ideas in the healthcare arena. 