



From the Executive Director

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of 2021. Where has the time gone? I am certain many of our readers are indicating it is about time. 2021 has been an extreme challenge as we continue to deal with a global pandemic. If you are missing a loved one or someone close to you due to COVID-19, please know that Oklahoma Pharmacists

Helping Pharmacists (OPHP) extends our heartfelt condolences. Our prayers are lifted up for a speedy recovery for those who are suffering from COVID-19. On behalf of myself and the OPHP Board of Directors, I would like to extend to everyone Happy Holidays and a safe prosperous New Year. Let's be sure to do our part; wearing our masks, washing our hands, and practicing social distancing in instances where we are not certain of the vaccination status of those around us, as we do our part to help mitigate unnecessary surges of COVID-19. As those of us in the medical profession are considered essential, and suit up and show up remaining on the front lines of this pandemic to take care of our patient's medical needs. I hope everyone is staying safe and doing everything possible to flatten the curve in hopes to get to the other side of the pandemic. As pharmacists, we continue to play a vital role in the battle against this global pandemic and I am very proud of my chosen profession and our contribution to this fight. We are all in this together.

In this issue, OPHP is featuring an article from Enterhealth, a treatment center based in Dallas, TX. This article "Holiday Season Information and Tips for Families from Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP)", is season appropriate for the holiday season upon us. Often the holidays are difficult times for those early in recovery or others that may be struggling. I hope this article is helpful to our readers in recovery from a substance use disorder and families who love and support those in recovery.



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From the Executive Director continued

The OPHP Board of Directors is pleased with the launch of the new free-standing OPHP website at www.ophp.us. I am excited to have this new resource available to help educate the public regarding the critical services OPHP provides the pharmacy profession and the advantage of self-reporting to OPHP issues of substance use disorder and other mental health issues. Please visit OPHP at www.ophp.us. OPHP recently mailed to all pharmacies in Oklahoma a magnet for a file cabinet or refrigerator that included the OPHP helpline number and new website address for quick reference if needed. If you didn't receive a magnet for your pharmacy or need extra contact OPHP via email at swarner.ophp.us and we will send it out right away.

Don't forget, take time for self-care, and if you are struggling with chemical dependency or other mental health issues, or you know another pharmacist or student pharmacist who you think may be suffering call the (OPHP) Help-Line immediately. Some struggle or have a hard time dealing with life on life's terms daily. Can I challenge everyone to recognize these struggles either in themselves or others and reach out for help or be willing to help if needed? If you find yourself struggling don't hesitate to reach out to (OPHP) for help that is readily available if needed. If you know someone struggling during this time, I hope you will be willing to be available for them if needed. If you are a pharmacist or student pharmacist and you are struggling personally with substance use disorder or other mental health issues, I would encourage you to call OPHP today and self-report your issues now. The advantages of self-reporting your issues with substance use disorder or mental health issues are that you can get well or get in recovery, and if there are no legal issues or complaints the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy does not get involved. This is a tremendous opportunity, so don't let it slip away and call OPHP before it is too late, resulting in disciplinary action on your intern/pharmacy license or other legal consequences.

I assure you it is the best thing you could do for a family member, friend, colleague, or yourself. If there is no legal action the pharmacist or student pharmacist can get the help and treatment they need for their disease and remain anonymous to the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy as long as they comply with the recovery recommendations of OPHP.



405-557-5773 locally—1-800-260-7574 statewide
There is a solution. All calls are confidential



If you haven't already contributed to OPHP this year, please consider making a tax-deductible contribution. These contributions help OPHP continue to assist and provide scholarships to pharmacists, pharmacy students and pharmacy technicians during the recovery process. Please [click here](#) to make a donation online. For those who have made a contribution this year, please accept our sincere thanks.

OPHP Helpline

*If anyone has questions or needs assistance
with a chemical dependency problem
either for a friend or themselves please call
Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP)
405-557-5773 locally—1-800-260-7574 statewide
There is a solution. All calls are confidential*

“There’s A Hole In My Sidewalk: Autobiography In Five Short Chapters” ~ Portia Nelson

A beautiful example of self-discovery

Chapter I

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in.
I am lost ... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter II

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter III

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in ... it's a habit ... but,
my eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter IV

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter V

I walk down another street.



Thank you Pharmacy Providers of Oklahoma (PPOK)

Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP) would like to extend a sincere thank you to the current and past leadership of PPOK and their support of OPHP's mission. The late Bryan Potter and Lonny Wilson and current CEO/Executive Director of PPOK, John Crumly, have all been extremely supportive of OPHP. This support is one of many examples of PPOK's support and advancement of the pharmacy profession in Oklahoma.

In the early 1990's PPOK donated money to OPHP to assist in the startup of this new peer assistance organization that over the years has assisted many hundreds of pharmacists, student pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, saving their lives and careers, and OPHP will continue to identify, and assist many others in the future.

PPOK purchased the Oklahoma Pharmacists Association building at 52nd & Oklahoma, in Oklahoma City, OK and then provided office space at no cost to OPHP and continue to do so at PPOK's new location, 3000 E. Memorial Rd., Edmond, OK 73013.

PPOK provides OPHP access to their conference room for our monthly OPHP Board of Director's meetings which is invaluable to OPHP. The continued success of OPHP can in part be attributed to the support of PPOK.



HOLIDAY SEASON INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR FAMILIES FROM OKLAHOMA PHARMACISTS HELPING PHARMACISTS (OPHP)

While the holidays are a time of celebration, it's a time when many people abuse alcohol or other drugs to cope with stress – stress which can become amplified by the pressures of the holiday season. This time of year can also be a very difficult time for people who are already in recovery for drug or alcohol addiction.

Spotting Signs of a Problem in a Loved One and How to be Sensitive to Family Members in Recovery

By Dr. Harold C. Urschel III, MD, MMA
Chief Medical Strategist, Enterhealth

With many families gathering together for celebrations, the holidays are a special time of year. At Enterhealth – a premier drug and alcohol addiction treatment company – we understand that this period can also be one of the most stressful times of the year. That holiday stress can drive people to self-medicate, whether it's with alcohol, marijuana, prescription pills or other substances.

The holidays are also a good time of year to really observe and evaluate family members, especially if you have concerns that someone may have a problem with substance abuse. Signs to look out for include: dents in a car, odd changes in behavior, particularly secretive behavior, changes in peer groups, and difficulty sleeping or staying awake. While none of these signs on their own are definite signals that someone may have a problem, it's when they start to stack up that you should be concerned.

If you have a loved one who you know is a recovering alcoholic or addict, your family needs to understand that no alcohol or drugs should be around them at any family gatherings or celebrations. We recommend that patients in recovery wait at least a year before being around alcohol or drug use. You want the family celebrations and bonding to be in substance-safe environments, and people in recovery already get enough temptation from things like commercials, social media, etc. If family members cannot abstain from a substance to support a loved one in recovery, then maybe that person should consider whether or not he or she has a problem themselves.

If you or a loved one is an alcoholic, here are five tips that can help during the holiday season:

Tip #1 – Spend Time with Sober People

Alcohol recovery can be tough, especially during the holidays. It's important to be around positive and sober people for support. Observing them will motivate you to emulate their behavior of not drinking.

Tip #2 – The “I’ll Take a Soda” Approach

You can have a drink this season – a nice cold soda or some other non-alcoholic beverage. While it's hard to avoid alcohol when you're at a holiday party, you can combat it by substituting another beverage in its place. However, do not use nonalcoholic beer or wine, as they contain traces of alcohol and can set off certain brain areas and reactivate intense brain cravings for alcohol.

Tip #3 – Manage Your Stress

Stress is one of various factors that can increase your need to reach out for a bottle of alcohol in order to cope. Remember, you can help manage your drinking problem by managing your stress. Find other ways to deal with stress, such as talking with a friend or family member, exercise, or have a set time in the day where all you do is relax.

Tip #4 – Indulge Yourself

It's hard for many to stop drinking, especially during the holiday season. You can benefit from not yielding to the temptation of drinking by rewarding yourself for every time that you don't drink. Reward yourself with a small gift, candy bar or anything else that brings you happiness.

Tip #5 – Have a “Plan B”

When battling an addiction, it's important to have a plan just in case you find yourself in an environment where there is alcohol present and you cannot handle the temptation. Having a plan and knowing how you're going to handle the situation will help you significantly. Tell a family member and/or close friend about your recovery process, and call them in case of an emergency to help you in those situations.

Sometimes, it takes more than helpful tips and family support to remain sober during the holidays. Enterhealth, a Dallas-based alcohol and drug addiction recovery center, offers a customized medically-based model of addiction treatment that reverses the effects of substance abuse on the brain.

To learn more about how Enterhealth Ranch and Enterhealth Outpatient Center of Excellence help with addiction, as well as more helpful tips for staying sober this holiday season, please call 855.393.8656 for more information, or visit our website at www.enterhealth.com.

I encourage any pharmacist, student pharmacist, or pharmacy technician that may be struggling with chemical dependency or any other mental health issue, or if you know a pharmacist or student pharmacist you think may be struggling, to call the OPHP Help Line now.



OPHP Helpline:

1-800-260-7574 x 5773 (statewide)

405-557-5773 (local)

All calls are confidential and OPHP is readily available for help.

Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP)

***405-557-5773 locally—1-800-260-7574 statewide
There is a solution.***

**WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT A COLLEAGUE
HAS A PROBLEM WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**

Trust your instincts!!

Call Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP) immediately
at the OPHP Help Line 1-800-260-7574 statewide or
405-557-5773 locally
Do not confront alone
Left alone the problem will not go away.

If you or a pharmacist you care about is suffering from substance use disorder
there is a solution
Oklahoma Pharmacists Helping Pharmacists (OPHP)
is readily available to help.

**Call the OPHP Help Line
1-800-260-7574 statewide
405-557-5773 locally.**

ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL



Identifying the Problem

Substance Use Disorder is a cunning, baffling, miserable disease. Denial is a major factor involved stopping those with this disease from seeking help for themselves. So often concerned family members, friends and colleagues, express knowledge that a problem exists, but are unable to identify it. The following *Impaired Pharmacist Symptom Inventory* may help to identify the problem, and get them the help that is so readily available before it is too late.

Impaired Pharmacist Symptom Inventory

- Overwork**
 - Disorganized schedule
 - Spasmodic work pace**
 - Unreasonable behavior
 - Inaccessible to patients and employer
 - Prescription errors**
 - Patient complaints
 - Frequent absences
 - Decreasing workload and tolerance
 - Frequent days off for vague reasons
 - Taking sexual advantage of coworkers or customers
 - Filling illegal prescriptions
 - Taking and/or using drugs from pharmacy without follow-up by physician**
 - Taking/selling drugs to others or giving them to family or friends
 - Often late, absent or ill
 - Decreasing work performance
 - “Pharmacy Gossip”
 - Incommunicative/unavailable
 - Alcohol on breath while in pharmacy
- **early signs

What do you do if you suspect a colleague has a problem with substance use disorder?

Trust your instincts!!

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