

**Comments from the Chair upon NCPIE's Receipt of the "Distinguished Service Award,"
AACP Annual Meeting, July 16, 2013, Chicago, IL**

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(excerpt of comments)

Thank you very much for honoring the National Council on Patient Information and Education with your Distinguished Service Award. I'd like to recognize NCPIE's Membership Director, Deborah Davidson, who's been in Chicago all week; and NCPIE's Executive Vice President, Ray Bullman, who was unable to attend. They are the real workhorses behind the Council's success, with whom I sincerely share this recognition.

This honor can best be summarized as *Back to the Future*. When that movie hit the screens in 1985, NCPIE was already in its third year of operation. In those days, "patient-centeredness" was not on many groups' radar; few policy-makers identified poor medication adherence as a common problem; and the role of clinician-patient communication in achieving optimal outcomes was often overlooked. However, at NCPIE – one of the country's original 'patient safety' coalitions – these very issues were the bulls-eye for its public and healthcare provider campaign targets.

And public they were! You're probably familiar with American Pharmacists' Month, held each October. NCPIE's been observing "Talk About Prescriptions" Month since October 1985. Guess who the early-adopters of our national observance were: schools of pharmacy. Yes, the ever-enthusiastic and eager communicators – tomorrow's pharmacists and their faculty advisors – have been great supporters of "T.A.P." Month from its earliest observance.

Today, we're pleased to count among our board members AACP's own Lynette Bradley-Baker. Lynette and Lucinda Maine [AACP CEO], thank you for your continuing support. Many AACP members first joined NCPIE courtesy of a grant from Glaxo that enabled pharmacy schools to participate in NCPIE's collaborative efforts, and to use NCPIE's resources to support the pharmacist as the medication expert. Although that grant ended long ago, we appreciate that many of those same schools continue to be involved directly today.

NCPIE was built around private stakeholders' opportunity to enhance the distribution and quality of written medication information. NCPIE quickly realized that from a patient and caregiver perspective, information dissemination had historically been a one-way street. Therefore, with its broad-based coalition of federal and private stakeholders (FDA, AHRQ,

AARP, National Consumers League, national pharmacy and pharmacist organizations, AMA, the pharmaceutical industry, U.S. Pharmacopeia, many others), NCPIE urged patients and their families to make it a two-way street. How? By asking questions of prescribers, pharmacists, and other clinicians. NCPIE armed them with questions to ask – in a handy wallet card, in brochures, in videos. These questions and similar products soon became foundational elements of many other organizations’ patient-directed campaigns.

In 2013, barely a week passes without a new report detailing opportunities to improve medication adherence. NCPIE issued its first such report in 1995. At that time, NCPIE urged: (1) patients to take the initiative by asking questions and sharing medicine-use information with all health care team members; and (2) pharmacists to counsel patients, and to provide useful written medicine information for reference at home. In 2007, NCPIE issued its second adherence report, “Enhancing Prescription Medication Adherence: A National Plan.” Among other ideas, this report called for a sustained national adherence campaign, in which today both AACP and pharmacy students participate – the *Script Your Future* campaign, led by the National Consumers League and many partners. This October, with support from AACP and other NCPIE board members, NCPIE will unveil its third Adherence Action Agenda. Back to the future, III!

Two articles in the *Journal of the AMA* (June 12, 2013) addressed, “Encouraging Patients to Ask Questions.”ⁱ You’re probably familiar with the term, “white-coat hypertension.” These authors referenced “white-coat silence” for patients who may, in the presence of health care practitioners, be afraid to speak up. For more than 30 years, the National Council on Patient Information and Education has been arming medicine users, and the practitioners and industries that support them, with ways to optimize medication use through enhanced communication. In our reforming health care system, as pharmacists’ information-mediator and medication-optimizer roles gain prominence over their traditional dispensing function, we can no longer afford risking any “white coat silence.” Today’s pharmacy students will be tomorrow’s front-line mediators and optimizers: NCPIE will continue to help lead the way in both, and we are most grateful for AACP’s recognition tonight of the Council’s historic role. ***Back to the future!***

ⁱ Judson TJ, Detsky AS, Press MJ, *Encouraging Patients to Ask Questions: How to Overcome “White-Coat Silence,”* JAMA, Vol. 309, No. 22, 2325-26; and Zuger A, *Talking to Patients in the 21st Century,* JAMA, Vol. 309, No. 22, 2384-85. <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/Issue.aspx?journalid=67&issueID=927088&direction=P>