

The Many Faces of the PH Professional Network

Section Editor

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Section Editor's Note: Our authors for the following Pulmonary Hypertension Professional Network (PHPN) article are both leaders within our organization as well as veterans to the field of pulmonary hypertension. Traci Stewart is a nurse clinician specialist in pulmonary hypertension and cardiomyopathy. Traci is the Immediate Past Chair of the PHPN. Melisa Wilson is a nurse practitioner specializing in pulmonary hypertension and heart failure. Melisa is the current PHPN Chair. The design of this article gives Traci and Melisa a platform to speak about the history of the PHPN and the benefits of a PHPN membership. They will also touch on the importance of being involved and taking advantage of the opportunity to help shape our dynamic organization.

Ms Stewart: A lecture topic I recall from one of my last undergraduate nursing courses was to “join a nursing organization and be active in that organization.” Why do I remember that over so many other topics many years later? The thought of creating change at an organizational level was daunting. As a new pulmonary hypertension (PH) nurse coordinator in the mid-1990s, it was hard to find information about how to care for someone with PH. Building a PH clinic required implementation of many new processes and was fraught with challenges. Connecting with others in the PH medical community was difficult and occasionally awkward. No one wants to admit to being the new person on the block. My mission became: “If something scares you, become an expert and then help others with the same challenges.” The PH Professional Network (PHPN) offered an excellent opportunity to become involved in creating change.

Ms Wilson: Since the beginning of my journey as a nurse, I have been an active participant in nursing organizations. I sought roles that would offer professional growth potential while challenging me to learn new things. However, what was most important to me was to be part of something valuable and to actively help improve it. The PHPN is that *something*. I think all health care professionals have unique

skills. Some are more overt with these abilities, while others tend to keep them hidden like secret treasures waiting to be discovered. Our individual talents have the capacity to change the world around us. Whatever your skill is, PHPN has a place for you—a place to showcase your unique expertise to enhance the field of PH.

Ms Stewart and Ms Wilson: As chair and chair-elect of PHPN, one of our goals has been to advance a shift in the focus of the organization toward mentoring newer allied health PH providers. We are all responsible for nurturing the next generation of PH professionals to provide a seamless transition so patients remain in the hands of extremely capable providers. These providers must have knowledge of the background of PHPN and possess a desire to continue to improve outcomes. Joining PHPN provides networking opportunities to integrate providers with varying experience levels. PHPN offers many possibilities for networking, mentoring, and sharing and developing educational processes.

PHPN was established in 1999 to provide a network for allied health professionals caring for people with PH. Diversity within the PHPN membership is critical to success of the organization. The membership consists of nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, dietitians, and social workers. There are adult

Table 1. PH Professional Network Member Professions
Allied Health Members by Profession

Professional Role	
Medical Technician	1
Nurse	207
Nurse Practitioner	79
Pharmacist	19
Physician Assistant	3
Psychologist	1
Respiratory Therapist	17
Social Worker	3
Other	20
Not Shared	31

and pediatric professionals from large centers, small centers, and community clinics. These multidisciplinary team members are all focused on the complex needs of the PH community.

Joining PHPN offers members the opportunity to learn and to teach others. Time for networking is reserved at the PHPN Symposium and PHA International Conference, while the PHPN mentor program offers a more formal one-on-one experience. Members have the ability to ask questions and obtain feedback on day-to-day challenges via the PHPN listserv. Access to the membership roster enables individual contact. PHPN members are actively involved in Pulmonary Hypertension Association (PHA) initiatives to deliver insight from the allied health perspective. The creation of the PH Care Centers project

aligns with the goals of PHPN, and allows members to assure excellent care is provided to patients with PH.

Leadership in PHPN consists of executive and committee chairs working to facilitate necessary change. The PHPN committees include Education, Membership, Practice, Publication, and

Symposium. Committee chairs and committee members are engaged in identifying needs of the organization, mentoring, educating, and growing the membership. Tools and resources created in the committees benefit all members. The PHPN biannual symposium, *PH Pulse* newsletter, and webinars are

designed to disseminate strategies for managing and caring for PH patients.

We encourage you to become actively involved in PHPN, sharing your unique talents. There are many opportunities for professional growth, and an enormous amount that we can do collectively to create change in the PH community.

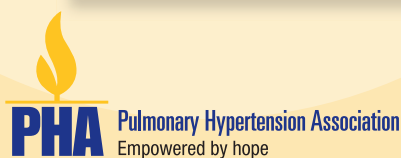
Building Medical Education in PH

A Partnership Initiative to Advance Medical Understanding of Pulmonary Hypertension

Building Medical Education in PH (BME) events are designed to foster partnerships between PHA, PH Centers and medical professionals. The program supports continuing education in the PH field through CEU/CME educational events. Participating in PHA's BME program can benefit your educational event by providing one-time use of PHA's medical professionals mailing list, advertising support, educational materials for distribution to attendees and more.

To partner with PHA in *Building Medical Education in PH* for your upcoming CME event, please contact 301-565-3004 x776 or BME@PHAssociation.org.

To learn more about this partnership, visit:
www.PHAssociation.org/BME



Upcoming BME events:

Pulmonary Hypertension Fellow Education Day and 10th Pulmonary Hypertension Symposium

Wednesday, November 5, 2014

InterContinental Hotel and Bank of America Conference Center
Cleveland, OH

6th Annual Research Triangle Pulmonary Hypertension Symposium

Friday, November 7, 2014

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
Durham, NC

5th Annual Pulmonary Hypertension Symposium : Sharing Knowledge Through Case Studies with PH

Wednesday, November 26, 2014

Advocate Christ Medical Center
Oak Lawn, IL

To view a full list of educational opportunities for medical professionals, visit: www.PHAOnlineUniv.org/Calendar