



# Washington Metropolitan Society of Health System Pharmacists Newsletter

October 2021  
Volume 7



**Dhakrit “Jesse”  
Rungkitwattanakul, PharmD  
is President- Elect of WMSHP  
and is the organizer of the  
upcoming seminar below**



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[www.wmshp.org](http://www.wmshp.org)

### Message from the WMSHP President

Dear members,  
All healthcare professionals are being challenged by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. I am confident that pharmacists can rise to the challenge and find new ways to adapt to new situations. We have seen many pharmacists organizing vaccine clinics and giving vaccinations. The storage and record keeping requirements and the important task of speaking with patients to address concerns about the effect of these products have put pharmacists on the front lines of a situation that they are well trained to handle. These times are challenging but I have never been prouder to be a pharmacist.

Our Society continues to move forward with our educational mission. On Saturday October 23<sup>rd</sup>, President- elect Dhakrit (“Jesse”) Rungkitwattanakul is coordinating a four-hour ACPE-approved virtual seminar series. On November 9<sup>th</sup> we will be holding a non-CE dinner seminar hosted by Sanofi and details will be announced by email soon.

See page 7

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, WMSHP will be hosting a Fall CE seminar which offers 4 hours of CE credits to the pharmacists. The CE day is comprised of updates on current evidence of COVID-19 vaccines and combating vaccine hesitancy and will be presented by a community pharmacist from CVS. The second and third presentations are focusing on drug dosing consideration in patients with renal impairment. Dr. Jesse Rung will discuss the dosing consideration in acute kidney injury patients undergoing continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT) and Dr. Harriet Kusi will be discussing in the aspect of peritoneal dialysis. Lastly, a clinical pharmacy specialist from Inova Fairfax Hospital will be discussing the management and dosing adjustments among patients living with rheumatoid arthritis. The event is free for WMSHP members and will only cost \$30 for non-members.

## Proposed Changes to WMSHP Governing Documents

Dominic A. Solimando, Jr., M.A., BCOP

Soon the WMSHP Board of Directors will release proposed changes to the Society's Constitution and Bylaws for comment by WMSHP members. WMSHP members will receive information from the Secretary on how to access the proposed changes, post comments, and vote on the changes.

Members are strongly encouraged to take this opportunity to review the proposals and submit comments to the Board. The website will include a feature to allow members to post comments online and see all comments posted by other members. When a final version is submitted for approval, all active members are urged to take a few minutes and vote on the proposals.

It is uncertain when the current Constitution and Bylaws were last revised. The existing electronic files are dated 2005; but this may be simply the date the current files were created, rather than an actual update of the documents. The proposed changes now under consideration may be the first update to our Constitution and By-Laws since the society changed from the District of Columbia Society of Hospital Pharmacists to the Washington Metropolitan Society of Health-System Pharmacists in 1989.

These documents define WMSHP as an organization and establish its goals and objectives; accordingly, changes should not be made casually. But, neither should they be impossible to change when a policy or procedure no longer serves its intended purpose. A good example is the current requirement that elections be conducted using paper ballots mailed to members and returned by mail. With the advent of the Internet, and widespread use of electronic communications, use of paper ballots no longer serves a purpose. Several years ago, WMSHP began using a system of online nominations and voting. The required change to the By-Laws to allow this was not made. That oversight is being corrected in this revision.

Updating the Constitution and Bylaws has not been an easy process. A special committee was appointed in 2015 to review the Constitution and Bylaws. The committee members were Mary Bingham, John Quinn, Dominic Solimando (Co-Chair), Vaiyapuri Subramaniam, and Leon Vandenburg (Co-Chair). The committee exchanged emails and met several times to discuss a number of amendments to both the Constitution and Bylaws. A final draft of the proposed changes was presented to, and approved by, the WMSHP Board of Directors in November 2015.

However, the revisions were not submitted to the society's membership for comment and voting in the manner prescribed by the existing Constitution and By-Laws. (*Disclosure – technically these procedures are not being followed now. The existing documents call for a physical meeting of the members to discuss proposed changes, followed by a mail ballot. Due to current concerns for large gatherings, and the ready availability of electronic communications, the Board has taken the liberty of substituting a virtual “meeting” and electronic voting. Adoption of this procedure for future amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws is one of the changes incorporated into this revision.*)

Since 2015, the Board of Directors has reviewed the proposed changes several times, but never took formal action. During these reviews, a number of changes were made to the draft approved by the Board in 2015. In 2019, WMSHP President Vaiyapuri Subramaniam, President-elect Ashok Ramalingam, and Board Member John Quinn led the Board of Directors in reviewing the various changes and preparing a new draft to present to the membership. Unforeseen circumstances delayed final action on these documents until now.

The document that will be posted for comment is intended to facilitate comparison of the existing Constitution and Bylaws with the proposed changes. This document will place the existing language next to the proposed change and, if appropriate, a comment concerning the rationale for the proposed change. The figure below provides an example of what members will see.

See page 3

New Version	Existing Version	Comment
What the proposed change will be.	What is in the current Constitution or Bylaws	Why the Board is proposing the change; and/or the potential impact of the change.
	What is in the current Constitution or Bylaws	When no new version is proposed, the section would be deleted.
What the proposed change will be.		When no existing version exists, this would be a new section added.

There are a number of changes being proposed to the existing Constitution and Bylaws, which can be divided into two broad categories - administrative and substantive. Administrative changes concern updating obsolete information. For example, revising the Bylaws required renumbering some Articles and Sections; approval of these changes are expected to be readily accepted. The administrative changes will be highlighted in yellow in the document posted online to assist members in identifying them.

Substantive changes are alterations of WMSHP policies and procedures that are expected to significantly alter how the society operates. For example, one proposal expands the WMSHP Board of Directors by adding the two delegates and the alternate delegate to the ASHP House of Delegates to the Board. There might be some discussion for and against such a change. The substantive changes will be highlighted in blue.

The proposed changes will be available for comment for at least 30 days. It is intended that the system allows members to post comments will be an interactive one. Members will be able to post new comments and respond to comments previously posted by other members. WMSHP members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to express their thoughts about the proposals, make suggestions for other changes, and discuss comments or suggestions from other members. A robust discussion by the membership will result in a Constitution and By-Laws that best meet the needs of the society.

As noted above, there are a large number of changes being proposed. Recognizing that all members may not be in favor of all the changes, there will *not* be a single motion to approve or reject the new documents. If there are no significant objections from the membership to the items identified as administrative changes, these will be subject to a single vote. If the discussion does reveal real concern about one, or more, of these proposals, those items will be subject to individual votes. The substantive changes will be subject to an individual vote on each proposal. This will enable members to support or oppose specific changes without requiring them to approve or reject changes they oppose.

# Supporter Spotlight



Dr. Ferdaus Hassan, (Right) and his regional Director, Dr. Lee T. Martin (Left)

Many of you remember Dr. Hassan for his 8/31/2021 WMSHP seminar “Influenza Vaccination and Amelioration of Disease”

## 1. How did your journey take you to your current position?

It’s been a long journey. When I look back at the past 20 years, most of my work was around vaccines, and when the time came, it was very natural to switch from an academic career to Sanofi Pasteur, one of the leading vaccine manufacturers in the world. My journey started in Bangladesh as a research officer in 1999 at ICDDR,B, a well-known international research organization. At that time, it mostly focused on enteric diseases and vaccine development. I saw the benefit of vaccines that prevented life-threatening diseases from affecting children. After completing my PhD program in Japan, I came to the NIH as a postdoctoral fellow and worked on the Otitis Media vaccine. In 2012, I joined a pediatric hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, as a research scientist in the microbiology department. At the same time, I also got involved with the New Vaccine Surveillance Network (NVSN). The NVSN is funded by the CDC and includes seven institutions across the U.S. The primary focus of this network is to find out the effectiveness of the influenza and rotavirus vaccines. During this time, I had the opportunity to closely learn, participate, and lead vaccine-related studies. In 2019, I joined Sanofi Pasteur Field Medical as a Medical Science Liaison (MSL), and I am currently working there.

## 1. Moving from research to a Medical Science Liaison is a change, what has surprised you most about this transition?

The first immediate change that I noticed was the presence of global voices. When I worked in research, I used to work in a silo or within a small group, occasionally collaborating with other research groups. This changed overnight. Sanofi has a presence in over 100 countries with more than 100,000 workers; I remember joining a global meeting where participants attended from all over the world. In my research position prior to Sanofi Pasteur, everyone had goals to meet such as get grants, work, and publish. In my current role, there are still goals, but no longer must I worry about the next cycle of funding or publishing. Nevertheless, the long-term goal of both sides is the same, which is improving patient’s health.

## 2. What are your goals in your role?

As a Medical Science Liaison (MSL), one must wear multiple hats. However, my primary goal is to proactively engage 1:1 with health care practitioners (HCPs) and policy makers and have scientific discussion on vaccines. Secondly, my goal is to understand unmet needs voiced by HCPs. Third, I provide unbranded scientific education to HCPs to increase disease state awareness. When requested, I also provide scientific data to HCPs in a fair and balanced way. What I cannot do is to directly engage into commercial or marketing activities.

**3. Do you have advice for young practitioners who wonder about a career as a Medical Science Liaison or a pharmaceutical sales representative?**

It's a competitive field to get into, but once you are in, you will see that it is quite rewarding. Understanding the requirements of the role is important. Because this role is field based, if you love traveling, enjoy talking about science with HCPs, and most importantly, impacting patients' lives, MSL role is something you can explore. Creative methods of establishing value to HCPs can be challenging, and persistence and self-confidence in your abilities is necessary. In addition to your scientific expertise, soft skills are also critical for success.

**4. What types of professional development and personality traits have you noticed among those who are high achievers in this area?**

Like any other job, as an MSL, you get better every day. One must have passion for things they do in their professional life to stay ahead. Once you blend your experience and passion together, you are a superstar. As a subject matter expert, you need to have an excellent understanding of your disease area and therapeutic/prophylactic agents as well as the health care systems in your geography. As MSLs, we never stop learning, and we stay up to date with all the latest scientific and medical information in specific disease areas.

**5. Companies all have different cultures and emphasize different goals; how do you find Sanofi Pasteur?**

I am very proud to be working at Sanofi. It's a great place to work. Among many recognitions, it has been recognized by Fortune magazine as one of the best big companies, by Forbes as one of America's best places to work, by Glassdoor as one of the top ten pharmaceutical companies to work for, and as one of the best companies for multicultural women. I also personally appreciate the focus on inclusion and diversity. It brings different talents, values, and voices together to solve healthcare problems. Because of my role in medical affairs, I am never asked to sell or promote any branded products. At Sanofi Pasteur, our motto is "empowering life," and we envision a world in which no one suffers or dies from a vaccine-preventable disease.

**6. Beside the COVID-19 vaccine what are the most significant scientific breakthroughs that we may see in the coming years in the realm of vaccines?**

New technologies such as mRNA-based vaccines will have a big impact on future vaccine development. Application of the mRNA vaccine technology platform has promise to address several infectious disease sectors that have evaded effective vaccines to date. Using this technology, we might see an effective vaccine against HIV or STD or significant improvement of current vaccines such as influenza.

When considering specific pathogens, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) has presented a perplexing challenge to public health. There is not presently a vaccine for RSV which infects every child at least once by the time they are two years of age. Contextually, the overall burden of RSV is significantly higher in children than influenza, and currently many companies are researching prophylactic strategies.

**7. Tell us something about yourself that your professional co-workers may not be aware of (Ex Hobbies, sports, achievements etc)**

My friends say that I am a reasonably good cook. I started spending more and more time in the kitchen soon after the pandemic started. I watch YouTube, and if it is visually attractive, I will try to cook it. Over the past one and a half years, I have tried, modified, and at least tried to improve many different recipes. Some went directly to the trash bin, some to tables. My daughter is my biggest fan of my cooking, and she loves anything I cook. In contrast, my son is my biggest critic

Don't forget about the upcoming ASHP Midyear!



Participate in the following [2021 Midyear meeting](#) highlights:

- 200+ hours of education featuring research-based insights and practical advice
  - Online home-study access until March 9, 2022
- The world's largest Residency Showcase
- Featured programming on innovation, COVID-19, and DEI
- Personnel Placement Service (PPS)
- Keynote speaker Simone Biles
- Board recertification opportunities
- Interactive networking events

And so much more!

## WMSHP Officer Elections

WMSHP will be electing a new slate of Officers in the new year. We will be holding open elections for President Elect, Secretary, Board Member, Delegate and Alternative Delegate. We will also be filling committee slots. If you would like more information on the duties involved and how to run for office please email us at [webwmsph@gmail.com](mailto:webwmsph@gmail.com). Many have found this to be a rewarding way to meet professional colleagues outside of their institution and sharpen their leadership skills.

The District of Columbia is now mandating 2 hours of ACPE-approved CE on COVID-19:  
<https://www.msdc.org/detail/news/2021/08/11/covid-cme-requirement-and-msdc-statement>

We have listed some ASHP and CDC resources



1.25 ACPE hours from ASHP

<https://elearning.ashp.org/products/9224>

CDC resources

CDC module 1.75 hours of ACPE

<https://www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/covid19>

CDC Vaccinating Adolescents: Injectable Vaccines 0.5 hours of ACPE

<https://www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/covid19/videos/adolescent/adolescent.asp>

### **Presidents message from page 1**

We are also providing readers with information on COVID-19 CE opportunities which will be of great interest for those who hold a D.C. license and have new requirements in this area.

Don't forget about the ASHP virtual Midyear Clinical Meeting on December 5-9, 2021. This offers many opportunities to gain ACPE-approved lectures and ways to virtually interact with professional colleagues from across the country.

The WMSHP Constitution and By-laws are being updated and you can read about this process in this newsletter edition that will describe how members are to vote soon on the proposed changes that will be announced by email and in the WMSHP website.

This year is flying by and this means new Officers and Committee Chairs will be sought for the coming year. If you are interested in working with the Society. I encourage you to contact me and we will find a position or opportunity that is right for you. This is an opportunity to give back to the profession and also to interact with fellow professionals that are outside your current working environment. (note: insert Ashok's name below)

Sincerely,

Ashok Ramalingam, RPh, MS, PhD, DPharm, CPPS  
President, Washington Metropolitan Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



Presents

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## **Advertising Opportunities**

The WMSHP newsletter will start accepting half page advertisements as part of the newsletter.

For small businesses and hospitals, the rate will be \$20 a month or \$100 a year. For drug companies and larger medical related businesses, the rate will be \$30 a month or \$200 a year

Advertisements must be emailed to [webwmshp@gmail.com](mailto:webwmshp@gmail.com) by the 15th of the month to be included in the next newsletter. Both print images are acceptable.