

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT...



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Steve Shalansky CSHP Foundation Research Grant Recipient

CSHP Foundation research grant recipients are changing the face of clinical practice. Read on to understand some of the exceptional work by our members. Inspired or curious? Apply for a CSHP Foundation grant at www.cshpfoundation.ca.

Dr. Steve Shalansky, with colleagues Linda Jang, Dr. Andrew Ignaszewski, Catherine Clark, Leon Jung, and Dr. Carlo Marra, embarked on a research study in 2003 using funds awarded by the CSHP Research and Education Foundation (CSHP Foundation). Steve's project was entitled "Interpreting British Columbia's Prescription Database for Clinical and Research Applications: Agreement Between PharmaNet And Best Assessment Methods." His team received \$10,000 to conduct research that evaluated differences in medication histories using the British Columbia PharmaNet community prescription profile compared to a patient interview, and differences in medication adherence comparing PharmaNet information and an electronic vial monitoring system. Dr. Shalansky's findings were published in the *Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* in 2007 and the *Annals of Pharmacotherapy* in 2008.

Q: What impact did the research have in your hospital?

A: The research was used numerous times in the development of our hospital's medication reconciliation program. Our data helped justify the need for in-person best possible medication histories, versus relying exclusively on the PharmaNet profile.

Q: How would you estimate your research impacted patient care?

A: This project impacted patient care by demonstrating to our pharmacists and other healthcare workers that the PharmaNet profile cannot be relied upon exclusively for an accurate medication or adherence history. This study received considerable attention in the Vancouver media, so it highlighted the need for more accurate medication history information to many people in the Greater Vancouver area.

Q: What role did the research grant play in your research career?

A: This research gave me insight into pharmacy administration issues such as medication reconciliation, using administrative databases, networking with other professionals, and presenting in front of hospital administration. The success of this project also encouraged me to stay involved in research while maintaining an administrative position.

Q: Why should healthcare professionals, key decision makers and the general public pay attention to the research done by pharmacists?

A: Our research often provides objective evidence of the impact pharmacists have on patient care. This may help administrators justify new or expanded pharmacy services. Not many professions are able to provide this type of evidence. Research done by pharmacists can provide cost-effectiveness data for pharmacy services, new drugs, etc. Pharmacists also have more direct contact with patients than some other professions, so their research can be a good conduit to the public's impressions of the health care system.

Q: Why is an organization like the CSHP Foundation important to hospital pharmacists?

A: Most pharmacists are trained primarily as clinicians, thus may have difficulty qualifying for national peer-reviewed research grant competitions. The CSHP Foundation provides a mechanism for new pharmacist researchers to obtain research funds crucial to launching an early research career. If the project is part of your routine clinical practice, you may not require a large grant. This can lead to bigger projects and participation in more experienced research teams. Since the competition is specifically geared towards hospital pharmacists, the chance of success is relatively high.

I think the CSHP Foundation grants can be key to launching a research career.