



**American Pharmacists Association
House of Delegates – March 15, 2021**

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Secretary of the House of Delegates

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NEW BUSINESS

(To be submitted and introduced by Delegates only)

Introduced by: Jimmi Hatton Kolpek, PharmD, FCCM, FCCP, FNAP
(Name)

02/09/2021
(Date)

American College of Clinical Pharmacy
(Organization)

Subject: Increasing Awareness and Accountability to End Harassment, Intimidation, Abuse of Power, Position or Authority in Pharmacy Practice

Motion:

- 1) APhA calls on all national and state pharmacy organizations, colleges/schools of pharmacy, and other stakeholders to support the development of a profession-wide effort to address harassment, intimidation, and abuse of power or position.
- 2) APhA supports the development of a profession-wide guideline on reporting harassment, intimidation, or abuse of power or position in their pharmacy education and training, professional practice, or volunteer service to pharmacy organizations.
- 3) APhA urges all pharmacy organizations to require individuals considered for any award, leadership position (including voluntary positions), fellowship recognition, or editorial board position, to formally confirm that they have never been involved in any instances of harassment, intimidation, or abuse of power or abuse of authority.
- 4) APhA recommends that any individual who has been engaged in, or who falsely attests that they have never been involved in, any instances of harassment, intimidation or abuse be excluded from consideration for

any award, leadership position (including voluntary positions), fellowship recognition, editorial board position, faculty/preceptor, or postgraduate training faculty/director position.

- 5) APhA recommends all pharmacy organizations incorporate harassment, intimidation, and abuse training in their member professional development and education activities.

Background:

The issue of harassment within the pharmacy profession has been brought to light through numerous public and private communications. A group of women pharmacists, motivated by the overwhelming response and outpouring of personal stories from individuals affected by harassment, intimidation, and abuse, conducted an anonymous survey to empower those impacted and provide them with an outlet to have their stories heard. A vast number of accounts perpetuated by numerous alleged harassers were shared. Through this effort, it became evident that many organizational harassment policies are outdated and without efficient reporting mechanisms. Most organizational policies rely on local or institutional responsibility for recognition and reporting of episodes of harassment or other unprofessional conduct. This has become problematic in the current, collaborative professional/interprofessional environment in which multi-institutional relationships are increasingly common. Further, as students, residents, and new practitioners pursue postgraduate training and other professional opportunities, they often interact with preceptors, faculty, and program directors from multiple institutions. Contemporary communication platforms and social media reveal that episodes of harassment, intimidation, and abuse during these interactions are far too common.

To highlight these concerns to national organizations, a petition, “End Gender Inequality in Clinical Pharmacy,” was posted to the website change.org:

Members of the Board and Organizational Leadership,

We, the undersigned, are writing to alert pharmacy organizations about the ongoing, troubling sexism in our profession. In recent months, it has become increasingly apparent that awards, presentations, and provisions of leadership have been used to intimidate women in our profession unbeknownst to many. At present, over 45 self-identified victims of this behavior have come forward. This behavior is persistent and has begun to have a significant impact on our trainees, creating a legacy of silent trepidation.

We wish to work within these organizations to develop systematic processes to monitor and/or gain a better understanding of the implications when these individuals are awarded recognition and elevated professional status by national organizations. There is a need to generate mechanisms to alert selection committees or other leadership bodies about individuals who use professional status to undermine, intimidate, and sexually harass our female students, trainees, and peers. We are further asking for supportive partnerships and actions that can become integrated into organizational processes in order to help those who have experienced bullying or harassment to feel supported by our organizations.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this delicate matter.

Several national organizations have released statements in support of the petition’s principles, which to date has logged more than 3,750 signatures.

The ACCP Board of Regents released the following statement on September 7, 2020:

ACCP Supports Authors of Gender Inequality Petition

After learning on September 3 of the petition titled, End Gender Inequality in Clinical Pharmacy, the ACCP Board of Regents held an urgent discussion session regarding the petition on the morning of September 4. The board reviewed the petition and considered the concerns that fostered its development. After in-depth discussion, the board reached consensus regarding its support of the petition and made the following observations:

- *Unfortunately, our profession, like society as a whole, is not immune to the impact of sexual harassment, bullying, and similar unacceptable behaviors.*

- *Like other pharmacy organizations, ACCP is seeking ways to provide support and guidance to members of the profession who encounter harassment, predatory conduct, gender bias, or other threatening or intimidating behaviors.*
- *It is difficult for any organization to assess allegations related to misconduct outside of its official bounds without verifiable documentation or firsthand knowledge of those allegations. However, ACCP is committed to addressing matters that are adversely affecting members of our profession. This applies not only to incidents of sexual harassment/intimidation, but the broader issues that surround inclusion, diversity, racial/gender bias, and equity.*
- *If one is confronted with a specific case of disturbing behavior that affects him/her individually (or that impacts a colleague, student, trainee, or mentee), the individual should immediately consult a human resources representative within her/his workplace.*

In reflecting on the board's discussion, ACCP President Brian Erstad commented, "ACCP encourages education of all stakeholders regarding the implications, detection, and management of sexual harassment, bullying, and similar unacceptable behaviors. Only through diligent efforts to report, follow-up, and investigate instances of unacceptable behaviors will our profession be able to meaningfully address this issue."

ASHP released the following statement on September 10, 2020:

ASHP Response to Petition to End Gender Inequality in Clinical Pharmacy

Recently, ASHP became aware of a petition to pharmacy organizations titled, End Gender Inequality in Clinical Pharmacy. In this petition it is stated that:

"In recent months, it has become increasingly apparent that awards, presentations, and provisions of leadership have been used to intimidate women in our profession unbeknownst to many. At present, over 45 self-identified victims of this behavior have come forward." It goes on to say that "there is a need to generate mechanisms to alert selection committees or other leadership bodies about individuals who use professional status to undermine, intimidate, and sexually harass our female students, trainees, and peers."

ASHP stands on values that include a culture that strongly supports equality, diversity, and inclusion. ASHP opposes and will not tolerate unprofessional behaviors that may undermine, intimidate, and harass others. Our values reside in helping and supporting all of our members and colleagues. This extends to support of gender equality, and ASHP is proud to be a longtime leader in national efforts to support women in pharmacy.

ASHP's Statement on Professionalism encourages pharmacy practitioners, administrators, faculty members, preceptors, residents, and students to advance patient care and strengthen the pharmacy profession by promoting professionalism in everyday practice. ASHP encourages pharmacists to serve as mentors to students, residents, and colleagues in a manner of high personal standards of personal integrity.

Further, our professional policy advocates that hospitals and health systems adopt zero-tolerance policies for intimidating or disruptive behaviors and encourages development and implementation of education and training programs to facilitate effective communication, set expectations for standards of conduct, and discourage intimidating or disruptive behaviors. ASHP encourages hospitals and health systems to implement processes for identification and reporting of intimidating or disruptive behaviors to evaluate and mitigate unacceptable behaviors in a timely and effective manner.

ASHP's policies and guiding principles are based on core tenets of professionalism, equality, diversity, and inclusion. It is with this same spirit that we, as a professional organization, actively support eliminating discrimination, exclusion, and injustices of all types directed at any individual or group of individuals.

The APhA Board of Trustees released the following statement on September 21, 2020:

Women in pharmacy face intolerable levels of harassment and intimidation

We want to make this clear right off the bat: APhA is steadfastly opposed to sexism, racism, discrimination, harassment, and intimidation – implicit or explicit – and we are committed to combatting behaviors that undermine any member of our profession.

A recent change.org petition called on national pharmacy organizations to address the ways women are silenced: Women risk leadership roles, awards, and opportunities to present their research if they speak out about sexism and sexual misconduct. The petition inspired a wave of women to share their own stories of abuse and harassment based on their gender. The petition also led to discussions about the unfairness of guilty parties receiving tenure-track promotions, positions of power, and professional awards and accolades with no consideration of their unprofessional and destructive treatment of their women peers.

This is a very real threat to pharmacy and the patients we serve. When women are sexually harassed, and when their achievements are subjugated and disregarded, we are deprived of valuable perspectives, ideas, and innovations that could propel us forward.

Every one of us, especially men, needs to take an honest inventory of how we think and act, and how we play a role in letting sexism endure. APhA members and staff must do so as well, not only as individuals but as an organization.

It's clear what we oppose, but what do we support? Well before the change.org petition resurfaced issues around gender discrimination and sexual harassment, the APhA Academy of Pharmaceutical Research and Science and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy convened a joint task force aimed at ensuring gender equity in careers in the sciences.

We are proud that three out of APhA's last five presidents are women, and that another woman will take the mantle in March. Our House of Delegates first took an unambiguous anti-sexist stance decades ago: In 1989, it adopted policy condemning gender discrimination and other bias-based discrimination. The policy was expanded in 2012 and 2017 to include gender identity and expression.

The change.org petition posted this month is upsetting to those who weren't clued into the problem already, but it's also a hopeful sign. It has motivated pharmacy groups, APhA and others, to reevaluate their actions to support women in the profession and recommit to living their principles, and it has amplified a conversation that must be ongoing.

We've got work to do. We call on all organizations and individuals to join us in fighting sexism, racism, discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. Let's get at it.

With the support of several national organizations, it is the hope of this group to create an efficient interorganizational stance against all levels of harassment within our profession with a focus on education and formal reporting mechanisms to attenuate the perpetuating environment of harassment within clinical pharmacy.

Current APhA Policy & Bylaws:

2004, 1994

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

1. APhA supports the principle that all work environments and educational settings be free of sexual harassment.
2. APhA recommends all pharmacy practice environments and educational settings have a written policy on sexual harassment prevention and grievance procedures.
3. APhA recommends that every owner/employer in facilities where pharmacists work institute a sexual harassment awareness education and training program for all employees.
4. APhA supports the wide distribution of the model guidelines on "Sexual Harassment Prevention and Grievance Procedures".

(AmPharm 34(6):55 June 1994)(Reviewed 2001)(JAPhA 44(5):551 September/October 2004)(Reviewed 2010)(Reviewed 2015)