

Nightingale News

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October 16, 2024



Opening the Curtain: A Peek at Healthcare Behind the Scenes

*September was full of conferences, symposiums, and meeting wonderful people in the industry.
Here are some of my highlights from the month!*

ASOP: Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies

On September 25th and 26th, I had the privilege of being one of the select fellows invited to attend the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP) All Hands Annual Meeting, hosted by Faegre Drinker. This important gathering brought together thought leaders and experts from across the telehealth and digital prescribing ecosystem to address some of the most pressing issues facing the industry today.

It was an invaluable experience to engage in discussions alongside distinguished professionals from diverse sectors, including pharmaceuticals, supply chain, legal, and data analytics. Together, we explored several key trends shaping the future of online pharmaceutical safety. Notably, the conversation centered around consumer safety concerns related to the surge in compounded GLP-1s, the inadequacy of AI and algorithms in filtering out unauthorized or harmful medication sources, and the growing reliance on non-traditional websites and international vendors for medications when local pharmacies cannot fulfill patient needs. We also examined the motivations driving patients to seek medication from other countries, such as Canada.



Pictured:
Dr. Dhavalikar with
Dr. Ilisa Bernstein,
Dr. Brigid Groves, and
NSC's Executive
Director Dr. Donney
John at the reception
for ASOP All Hands
Annual Meeting.

One striking statistic shared during the meeting revealed that **66% of surveyed Americans would turn to the internet for medications they cannot obtain from their local pharmacy.** This highlighted the urgency of understanding consumer behavior as we work to develop strategies with ASOP to better safeguard patients online.



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Pictured: Pharmacy Fellows Dr. Neha Dhavalikar, Dr. Jermya Jackson, and Dr. Sarah Leonard at the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies All Hands Annual Meeting.

As a fellow, it was inspiring to collaborate with industry leaders who share a common goal: advocating for the safety of patients obtaining medication through online platforms. The rapidly evolving nature of the digital pharmaceutical marketplace makes it challenging to keep pace with emerging risks, but forums like the ASOP All Hands Annual Meeting are crucial for fostering collaboration. They offer a space for like-minded professionals to exchange insights, propose innovative solutions, and collectively strategize to enhance consumer safety in this dynamic landscape.

NAFC Symposium:

National Association of Free & Charitable Clinics

Straight after the ASOP All-Hands Annual Meeting, I caught a flight out of DCA and headed to Atlanta, Georgia to attend and present at the National Association of Free & Charitable Clinics (NAFC) Symposium. Joined by my colleagues, Dr. Shabnum Anwari and Dr. Se-A Han, we shared our work on NOVA ScriptsCentral's groundbreaking diabetes education program, DEEP: Driving Education to Empower People.

Our presentation highlighted the transformative power of culturally competent diabetes education on diverse communities across Northern Virginia. We emphasized the importance of tailoring diabetes education to individual needs, incorporating culturally relevant nutrition recommendations, personalized medication management, and creating diabetes tools in patients' native languages. By infusing diabetes education with a touch of cultural understanding, we emphasized the potential to significantly improve health literacy and outcomes.



Pictured (from left to right): Dr. Dhavalikar, Dr. Han, and Dr. Anwari at the NAFC symposium.



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I quickly realized that the symposium provided a unique platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing among healthcare professionals dedicated to serving underserved populations. We were heartened by the positive feedback and shared experiences from other free and charitable clinics and pharmacies. Many expressed their challenges in implementing effective diabetes education programs and found inspiration in our approach.



Pictured:
The Virginia
Association of
Free &
Charitable
Clinics at the
NAFC
Symposium.

Beyond the academic exchange, the symposium fostered a sense of community and mutual support. By sharing ideas, successes, and challenges, we strengthened our collective ability to serve patients and advocate for sustainable funding for care in the non-profit sector.



Pictured:
Dr. Dhavalikar,
Dr. John, Dr. Han,
and Dr. Anwari
posing next to the
National Association
of Free Clinics
podium after their
presentation on
NSC's Driving
Education to
Empower People
Program.

The symposium was a truly inspiring event that reaffirmed my belief in the power of compassionate healthcare and the positive impact it can have on underserved communities.



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Who am I?



Dr. Neha Dhavalikar, PharmD is a graduate of The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy where she earned her Doctorate in Pharmacy with an area of concentration in PharmacoAnalytics. She is currently completing a 1-year Safety-Net Health Equity fellowship with NOVA ScriptsCentral and the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). As part of the fellowship, she is working with communities in Northern Virginia and learning population health strategies to improve access and affordability for underserved patients.

THANK YOU FOR READING!



FUN FACT

Nova the Nightingale

is our mascot and a tribute to *Florence Nightingale*, a historical champion of public health!

Stay tuned for more Nightingale News as I continue my journey as a Safety-Net Health Equity Fellowship with NOVA ScriptsCentral and the American Pharmacists Association!

