Tennessee Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Delegate Primer

BACKGROUND

Welcome to your role as Delegate. As a representative of the Tennessee Society of Health-System Pharmacists (TSHP), an affiliate of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), it is vital that you are provided with a thorough understanding of processes, responsibilities, and importance of the policy development process and your part in the House of Delegates for ASHP. This document will serve as a guide for you through your upcoming experience. Additional resources at your disposal are the members of the TSHP Executive Committee, the Executive Director of the Tennessee Pharmacists Association (TPA), and all current and former Delegates.

You must understand that this position is extremely important and visible. You will be helping shape pharmacy policy at a national level, and it is incumbent upon you to research the policies and current issues as well as House procedures. You will serve as the face of health-system pharmacy in Tennessee, and you should prepare and act accordingly.

OVERVIEW

First, understand that your service as a Delegate for TN starts well before attending the ASHP Summer Meeting. The Summer Meeting is the culmination of the policy development process, and so it is important to become engaged in your new role as soon as possible. Fortunately, ASHP has a wealth of information available to help you become familiar with the policy development process, the structure and function of the House of Delegates, your responsibilities as Delegate, and a host of other useful information. This information can be found at the following link:

http://www.ashp.org/hod

Explore the different links and information found there. It is a good basis for your understanding and training. See below for a basic explanation of the House of Delegates and the policy development process.

1. What is the House of Delegates?
   From the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists website:
   “The House of Delegates is the ultimate authority over ASHP professional policies, which express the Society's stance on important issues related to health-system pharmacy practice and medication use in society. The House of Delegates meets annually at the ASHP Summer Meeting, where it reviews policy proposals that have been approved by the Board of Directors;
most professional policies are initially drafted by ASHP councils or the executive committees of sections and forums.”

2. How are policies and governing documents developed?

ASHP has five Councils that are appointed by the President-Elect each year. They are the Council on Public Policy, Council on Therapeutics, Council on Pharmacy Management, Council on Pharmacy Practice, and the Council on Education and Workforce Development. All Councils meet during Council Week in September of each year to draft new policies and review older policies for continuation, deletion, or modification within each council’s respective scope. The Councils will also review other documents put forth for consideration from various other entities within ASHP such as various sections, forums, and commissions. Council members will then address concerns brought forth by the Board or membership throughout the year until House sessions begin at ASHP Summer Meeting yearly in June. A helpful website to further explain these processes can be found at:

http://www.ashp.org/menu/PracticePolicy/HOD/ASHPPolicyProcess

RESPONSIBILITIES

Holding the position of Delegate for TSHP comes with a multitude of tasks to be completed and some significant travel. No member should entertain seeking this position without the willingness to commit to the activities listed below.

1. After selection as Delegate by TSHP membership in an annual election held each fall, your name will be submitted to ASHP as a Delegate for the next year’s House of Delegates session that will meet in the spring. At that time, you will begin to receive correspondence by email from the Chair of the House for ASHP. This correspondence will contain detailed directions on how to access current policy recommendations and all other things to be considered on the agenda for the next House. You will need to begin to examine the documents as quickly as possible. You are assessing content, background materials, and intent. You should also be thinking of necessity for amendment or readiness to advocate the document’s adoption as it stands.

2. ASHP has a website called Connect where discussion on the policies will take place until Regional Delegates Conferences and the meeting of the House at Summer Meeting. This website can be found at this address: http://connect.ashp.org. You should create a profile on Connect as quickly as possible (if you do not already possess one), and be sure you are a member of the House of Delegates Community. Once you are set up, begin to peruse comments of others and leave comments of your own if applicable. Sections and Forums will make formal requests for changes. The Board may offer up suggestions for changes as well. The Councils can also amend during this time. These changes will be found first on Connect. It is the Delegate’s responsibility
to maintain a significant presence on Connect and retain a current working knowledge of the policy recommendations as they evolve. You are serving as liaison to the entire membership of TSHP.

3. ASHP provides a Delegate Webinar that is helpful for new Delegates. It is usually scheduled for the middle of April.

4. The next step in the process of policy recommendation and revision is the Regional Delegates Conference (RDC). These conferences are spread out geographically over a couple of different time periods to ensure availability of Delegates to attend. They are typically held in four locations (Chicago, Atlanta, Baltimore, and Phoenix) over two separate two-day sessions (usually around the first weekend in May). It will be the responsibility of each Delegate to make plans for and attend a session of their choosing. All Delegates from Tennessee may attend the same RDC. However, the Delegates are strongly encouraged to attend separate sessions in order to gain multiple points of view. Also, maintain your presence in Connect throughout the meeting as there is typically robust discussion across the different RDC locations and sessions. It is important to see that real-time feedback. Registration for both the RDC and Summer Meeting should likely occur in February of each year. There is reimbursement available from TSHP and ASHP for this.

5. At this point, the Delegates should draft a Summary Report for the TSHP Executive Committee. This report should include the policy recommendations as they currently stand, proposed amendments from the various RDCs and Connect discussions, and the opinions and viewpoints of the Delegates on the policies and proposed amendments. The report should be submitted no later than May 15. The Executive Committee will then commission a survey of membership to determine majority stance on the policy recommendations and issues surrounding them. The Delegates will have the results of this report before attending House of Delegates.

6. Between RDC and Summer Meeting, you should closely review the ASHP Treasurer’s Report and the nominees for Chair of the House. During the House of Delegates, you will ratify the Treasurer’s Report and vote for the next Chair. All deliberation should be completed by time of attendance to Summer Meeting and, if any questions have arisen, the questions can be delivered during multiple opportunities at the Summer Meeting including Caucuses, Forums, and the House itself. This time is also when any new recommendations or new business items should be formulated and prepared for submission at the House.

7. Once you have arrived at the Summer Meeting, there are several meetings and functions that you must attend. Consult documentation provided for meeting attendees for date, time, and location of each event. A complete listing with some notes in parentheses is provided here:
• **Delegate Registration** (There is a separate and additional registration for Delegates)

• **Open Forum for Members** (This is when any member can discuss policies before the House, and it usually provides a “preview” of the issues that remain controversial)

• **Delegate Primer for House of Delegates Processes** (This is helpful to be sure you understand the rules of the House, so that you can become engaged)

• **Caucuses Facilitated by Chair of the House** (This is where you will get a sense of the controversial issues and potential amendments. A lot of work can be accomplished at these sessions. If there are concerns from Tennessee, this is the chance to see if others have similar concerns, and Delegates have the opportunity to collaborate to make changes.)

• **First and Second Meetings of the House of Delegates** (Be on time as there is a roll call! The first meeting is longer and is focused on the policies. The second meeting is focused on edits the Board may have made to policies, EVP report, Treasurer’s report, and election of Chair. The tradition among TN delegates has been to discuss the Chair election, but each delegate votes on their own ballot.)

• **Meet the Candidates** (Provides an opportunity to learn more about the candidates, including the candidates you will vote on.)

• **Delegate Reception** (This is a social event only for Delegates. Besides being a good opportunity to meet other delegates, important updates and new business are sometimes shared in this venue.)

There is reimbursement available from TSHP and ASHP for expenses incurred for the Summer Meeting as well. TPA staff and TSHP Executive Committee members are good resources for clarification and explanation each year as these policies can change.

8. Report final policy recommendations and significant happenings from House of Delegates to the TSHP Executive Committee. This report should be submitted by June 30 for inclusion in the business meeting held for TSHP membership at the TPA Annual Meeting each July. It is also helpful to provide a summary of key policies for TSHP publications.

**CONCLUSION**

Refer to this document as often as needed to familiarize yourself with the processes and responsibilities you are now answerable for accomplishing. There are numerous resources available to you from TSHP, ASHP, and former and current Delegates to assist you in fulfilling your obligations. Do not hesitate to utilize all at your disposal to make your contribution and experience the best it can be. A summative companion resource to this document available from ASHP regarding responsibilities and timelines can be found at this site: [http://www.ashp.org/DocLibrary/Policy/HOD/DelegateChecklist.aspx](http://www.ashp.org/DocLibrary/Policy/HOD/DelegateChecklist.aspx).