



Stuart T. Haines

*Seek Support, Contribute to Your Team,
and Focus on the Patients' Needs*

Even though he is unlikely to admit it, Stuart is one of the clinical trailblazers in the profession. Working in the pharmacy department of a Veterans Administration hospital during college ignited his passion for progressive clinical practice and led him to the realization that his career path would not be a traditional one. His impressive career has involved innovative clinical practice in diabetes management and other specialty areas. As a board-certified pharmacotherapy and ambulatory care pharmacy specialist, Stuart feels that credentials are important to pharmacists because they provide a competitive edge and establish credibility with fellow members of the health care team. Stuart has achieved fellow status in the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (FCCP), American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (FASHP), and the American Pharmacists Association (FAPhA).

Stuart is Professor and Vice Chair for Clinical Services in the Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore, Maryland, and Clinical Pharmacy Specialist—Primary Care at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. He earned his bachelor of science degree in pharmacy from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences and his doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He completed a pharmacy practice residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and an ambulatory care residency at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. His letter advises that *to blaze your trail in clinical practice, focus on the patients' needs, seek support, and contribute to your team.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

It was great to meet you the other day at the conference. Your questions were very insightful and got me thinking! On the plane ride home I began to reflect on the trials and tribulations I faced in my own practice.

Starting a new clinical service is never easy, and it is not surprising to me that you have run into some roadblocks. While every institution and organization has its unique culture, the circumstances you described are not unusual. Human nature is surprisingly consistent! Most of us resist change. So hang in there. Be persistent. You are on the right track.

You asked about how I started the diabetes management service. To be honest, I cannot take credit for creating the service—it was a *team effort*. That is probably the most important piece of advice I can give you. Don't attempt to go it alone—indeed, you will be doomed if you try! I suppose in the “old” days it was possible to hang a sign up and create a service your own way—but health care delivery is a team sport now. Health care organizations are incredibly complex and, unfortunately, slow to change. Nonetheless, learning how to enlist the support of key people within your organization is critical. Navigating the organizational politics and figuring out who are the key players sometimes can be tricky. To be successful, you will need the support of people not only in your department but throughout the organization.

It sounds like your boss is really pushing you to get something started. Although the pressure to succeed can feel like an extra burden, the good news is that you have her support. Believe me, not everyone has that advantage. There are many people who have the backing of the physicians and nurses, but their direct pharmacy supervisor is skeptical or downright antagonistic. Be sure to use her knowledge of the organization and experience as a leader to help you! Seek her advice and, if you are not doing so already, meet with her regularly. She has a vested interest in your success, but she probably has a lot on her plate. Sometimes young practitioners can feel abandoned because they have all this pressure to get services started but do not get the direction