



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Bruce T. Roberts

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions questions that affect us all.

Bruce T. Roberts is the former CEO of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA). While at NCPA, Bruce co-founded SureScripts, Mirixa and Community Rx. Bruce recently joined BeneCard Prescription Benefit Facilitator (BPBF) as their President and CEO. Roberts is the founder of the Leesburg Pharmacy of Leesburg, Virginia, where he has lived with his family for more than thirty years.

Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A: Our focus at BeneCard is to reduce the cost of managing the prescription benefit as compared to our competition. Also there is a growing recognition of the cost to our healthcare system resulting from inappropriate use of medicines. With our business model being centered around both of these issues the current business environment has helped us gain traction in the marketplace.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A: On one hand the economy has been beneficial on the other like most businesses in America it has caused challenges. Specifically unemployment is a challenge in that if folks aren't employed they don't have benefits and we lose our customer.

Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?

A: The growing concern of inappropriate use of medicines is a global concern. As such how we address this issue not only in the United States but around the world has become a global debate. Specifically in the near term we are going to see a global collaboration to define what should the role of the pharmacist be in addressing this issue.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A: Change. The status quo isn't working when it comes to the prescription benefit. Defining new models, getting stakeholders to recognize the need for change, and then assuring the change occurs will be a challenge.

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A: The greatest challenge will be finding a job. With unemployment hovering at 10% job.....at least jobs they are trained to do and desire will likely be scarce. Also with rapid pace of change in American business they need to be adaptable to assure they ride the wave rather than get buried by it. And finally to avoid frustration of the entry level job young professionals need to keep their sights set on where they ultimately would like to be. They need to understand they will likely not get there overnight, and have a plan for where they ultimately see themselves.