

# An Evolving Pharmacist: *Continuing Education, Widening Skills*

By Bobbie Barbrey, RPh, CCN

**H**ow many pharmacists had the opportunity to ride on a truck delivering prescriptions to customers when they're six years old? *I am that pharmacist!*

My uncle, Pete Barbrey, was an amazing person and pharmacist. As a young man, I spent many summers with him and his family in Goldsboro and Raleigh where he managed a Kerr Drugs pharmacy. This was where I first experienced what a pharmacist does. When I got to high school, I already knew from my delivery truck days that I wanted to be a pharmacist. No doubts whatsoever. I was fortunate to be accepted into pharmacy school at the University of Michigan where I received my pharmacy degree.

As I look back, I can see that even then my other passion was budding as my college electives were mostly in health, wellness, and nutrition—not pharmacy electives. My pharmacy classmates always accused me of taking these electives because they were offered in the nursing school with all the female nursing students. That may have been a bonus, but it was the nutrition education I was after. Little did I know that the path to my health and wellness career was just beginning.

## FIRST STEPS: PHARMACIST, MANAGER, OWNER

After graduation I was blessed to be employed by the same company that my uncle worked for—the original Kerr Drugs in Raleigh. Banks Kerr founded the company, and the most important lesson that I learned there has stayed with me: take care of the customer first, no matter what it takes.

Working with Kerr Drugs, my career spanned from being a pharmacist, a store manager, and a district manager. As I climbed the corporate ladder, I missed the hands-on-pharmacy, a desire that my uncle instilled in me. I remember watching him interact with his patients and in the process, changing their lives just from their conversations. I really wanted those kinds of relationships.

The chain drugstore didn't foster that same kind of one-on-one interaction. In addition, I didn't agree with some of the policies that were implemented. Or was it just that I wanted to do more? With my background and experience in business management and pharmacy, I thought, "Why not open my own pharmacy?" Honestly, I wish I had done it when I was 29 years old, but finally, at 49, I took that big, bold step.



Bobbie Barbrey updating his staff, Danielle Tedder, left, and Kaylan Barbrey, on new findings on fish oil

## NEXT STEPS: ADDING NEW SKILLS, CONTINUING EDUCATION

As I was getting ready to open Medicap Pharmacy in 2001, I became a **Board Certified Clinical Nutritionist (CCN)**, so that I could be more effective in helping patients be well and stay healthy for their entire lives. I always dreamed of having a wellness practice as the foundation for my pharmacy and this training gave me the tools for success. This program also hammered home simple truths: we are what we eat! And, more than that, we are what we absorb.

I realized that I needed to continue to improve my skill set in order to help my patients and for me to become an even better pharmacist. Even as I continued to go to seminars and take classes, I saw that we needed strong credentials in all parts of the store. I am proud to say that Medicap became the first and only PCAB (pharmacy compounding accreditation board) **accredited compounding pharmacy** in Raleigh, and the seventh to get accredited in the state of North Carolina. I am passionate about having high standards in our pharmacy and you can trust that we have achieved these in our lab.

As the business grew and improved, I realized that there was still a missing piece. I wanted to be a consultative-oriented pharmacist or functional pharmacist—that is a pharmacist who looks for the root cause of poor health, and helps patients develop a plan to improve their health. I started exploring **energetic medicine**, specifically BioMeridian Stress Assessment Scanning. I attended an intensive training class through the Energetix College of Bioenergetic Medicine in Atlanta Georgia and learned the basics of energetic medicine. I was hooked! Health revolves around increasing energy throughout the body.

Subsequently, I attended a four-session, year-long program in London, Ontario, Canada, where I achieved another level of certification working with Doctor Robert Cass, in the field of bioenergetic medicine.

Energetic testing taught me to look at the body objectively, identifying locations of inflammation, and then targeting those areas for support. This type of testing gives the patient a greater opportunity to activate their own innate healing response and achieve balance between systems in the body.

I became more interested in anti-aging medicine as more of my patients were asking how to age gracefully. What did I do? You guessed it! I received my diplomate certification from the **American Academy of Anti-Aging (A4M)** in 2017. A4M has an extensive educational program, both on-line and in the classroom and does a great job of educating practitioners on a functional approach to helping people solve their health-related issues. The program includes all aspects of health—hormones, GI, nervous system, cardiovascular, weight, nutrition, cancer, autoimmune, neurology, and more.

My wife and I attend two annual A4M conferences to help keep us up to date with new findings in health issues. I learned early on that you can't blindly adopt one mindset to help your patients heal: what you do today may be different than what you will be doing a week, a month, or a year from now. You have to be flexible and stay on top of what's going on scientifically: learn what the studies are revealing and what's working for patients and practitioners. A great example of this is a proper diet, and in particular a ketogenic diet. Stop by and let's talk about this if you are interested. It is changing so much about how we should be eating.

Along the way I've also been studying **genetics**, working with MethylGenetic Nutrition. We can now use genetic profile

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analysis to assess health issues. I can analyze your 23andMe results or the results from a new genetic test that we are

now able to offer. I use a sophisticated software program that takes the genetic information provided by the test and turns it into usable information to help identify areas in the body that need additional support.

My professional education is a constant, ongoing part of what I do every day. As patients come in for consultations with a variety of problems, I'm motivated to take more classes so that I can help them solve their health issues. I need to stay one step ahead of them! The educational journey will never end for me.

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF GOOD HEALTH

Many people are looking for the one pill, the one supplement, the one thing that's going to change their health. It doesn't work that way. Robust health is built on a solid foundation; this cannot be done with one pill. It often needs a multi-faceted, targeted plan. I'd love for you to come and talk to me about creating one with you. I can help guide you on a path to preserving, improving, or restoring your health. **h&h**

*Bobbie Barbrey is the owner of Medicap Pharmacy in North Raleigh, a full-service retail pharmacy, which also offers compounding and nutritional counseling. To better serve his clients, Mr. Barbrey completed the program offered by the International and American Association of Clinical Nutritionists and became a Board-Certified Clinical Nutritionist (CCN).*

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