Fifth Anniversary: A Time of Reflection

It was cold outside, but the warmth inside the sanctuary was palpable as the pharmacy celebrated its fifth anniversary on February 25th.

"We're celebrating five years, but this really got started nine years ago," said Jeff Biehl, Executive Director of the Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus. "The vision was the result of public and private leaders coming together and trying to figure out how to address the problem," he continued. "This is not just about the uninsured. Affordability cuts across everyone. We're serving many people who find themselves at a vulnerable point in their lives, a place any of us could find ourselves."

Executive Director Allan Zaenger brought the event to a close with a story of the pharmacy's first patient. "It was the day before we planned to open our doors to the public, and Mariellyn Dunlap Grace and I were in the pharmacy getting ready. We had medicine on the shelves, we had our license in place. We had computers and we had a phone system. And then the phone rang."

"It was the wife of our first patient. I could tell when she started speaking that she was anxious, the type of anxiety that comes when you don't know what to do. Her husband had been released from prison, and she told me that he had been out of his heart medication for several days. I checked our shelves and we had the medicine, so ready or not, I told her to come in. As I hung up, she said thanks and I could hear the beginnings of relief in her voice. Twenty minutes later, she and her husband arrived at the pharmacy. Mariellyn and I were at
the door when they came in, and when I opened the door to welcome them I was barely able to say hello before she gave me a hug. And it wasn’t just any hug. It was a hug of joy. A hug that came from someone who felt that everything was going to be okay now."

"I wish that each of you could experience a hug like that," Zaenger told guests at the event. "It reinforced why we were going to do this. I want you to feel the gratitude that was in that hug. I want you to know that they are all of our patients -- the community’s patients.

CPCO Named a “Nonprofit to Watch”

The Charitable Pharmacy was honored to be named one of The Columbus Foundation’s 2015 “5 Nonprofits to Watch.” The program recognizes innovative nonprofits poised for an exceptional year of growth and progress in 2015. "Each of these organizations is doing exceptional work to strengthen our community," said Douglas F. Kridler, president and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. "Through inventive and thoughtful programs and services, they are positively impacting residents of all ages."

Pharmacist Published in National Journal

The results of a study conducted by CPCO Pharmacist Holly Fahey Babeaux and with help from pharmacy staff and interns were published in the national Journal of the American Pharmacists Association. The study of patient-reported outcomes demonstrated that CPCO is making a difference in the lives of our patients and likely reducing healthcare costs for the Columbus community. Specific findings showed that after using the pharmacy:

- Emergency room services or hospitalization needed by our patients decreased by 50%;
- The number of prescriptions filled more than doubled
- 71% of patients reported that they had increased access to health service providers including physicians, nurse practitioners and pharmacists; and
- 89% of patients reported that they had a better understanding of how their medicines help control their chronic conditions, believed their overall health was better, and felt that they had more control over their own health.