



Compound interest

Photography: Jeff Covington

For Jim Hrncir, treating patients goes far beyond dispensing

By Chris Linville

Jim Hrncir, owner of Las Colinas Pharmacy, Compounding & Wellness in Irving, Texas, has received plenty of accolades during his nearly 40-year pharmacy career. But if you try giving him credit for his accomplishments, he cheerfully swats it away.

PCCA respectfully disagreed. The compounding organization recognized his pioneering career and overall excellence by naming him as the PCCA 2017 Dr. M. George Webber Compounding Pharmacist of the Year.

“Jim has the highest level of ethical standards both professionally and personally,” says PCCA CEO L. David Sparks. “Over the years, he has become the ‘go-to guru’ who teaches and gives advice to physicians for all compounded prescriptions and medical labs with shared patients, even on an international level.”



Photography: Jeff Covington

SHARING CREDIT

Still, Hrnrcir wants it known that any honors should be shared.

“If you hear me say ‘I,’ it really means ‘we,’” Hrnrcir says. “It’s a total team effort. There’s no way any of this gets done without our team. They are all superstars to me.”

Since Hrnrcir (pronounced ‘Hern-sir’) won’t do it, we’ll brag a little for him. He’s considered something of a trail-blazer in compounding pharmacy. In 1986 Hrnrcir created an estradiol

transdermal gel, considered one of the first of its kind in the United States. He helped launch a successful nutrition and supplements line, and, working with a team of integrative medicine specialists, spearheaded development of a software program used by integrative medicine providers and consulting pharmacists to better assess, manage, and treat female and male bio-identical hormone replacement therapy, thyroid, and functional medicine cases. The software also makes recommendations for supplements based on

support of medical conditions and drug-induced nutrient depletions.

Did we mention that Hrnrcir has made several appearances on the syndicated “Dr. Phil” television show as an expert in BHRT and pharmaceutical compounding? Host Phil McGraw’s wife, Robin McGraw, has promoted Hrnrcir’s anti-aging skin care product — a Vitamin C infusion cream — on other episodes.

Hrnrcir says he seeks to identify root causes of patient ailments, taking a



Hrcir and his wife Jan have owned Las Colinas Pharmacy, Compounding & Wellness since 1984.

deeper dive instead of automatically defaulting to a prescription medication. “I like integrative medicine simply because it combines the best of natural and traditional medicine into what’s best for the patient,” he says. “We want to find ways to help them get better as opposed to just controlling their condition.”

Hrcir is a strong advocate in a science- and evidence-based approach. Through the years he’s gathered information to bolster his belief that integrative-based medicines, and the

compounds used in them, result in positive outcomes. He’s had patients with diabetes who reversed their disease and patients with epilepsy who stopped having seizures, he says. “We were effectively treating fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue,” he says. “A lot of our doctor friends noticed and started sending patients to us. It’s really helped us. Our patient response has been wonderful.”

GETTING STARTED

Hrcir was born in Lockhart, Texas, and raised in Amarillo. Growing up,

he admired a couple of local pharmacists who owned their own stores. This influenced Hrcir to pursue pharmacy and own his own business.

After school Hrcir spent four years working in chain pharmacy before he realized it wasn’t for him. “I was always interested in consulting with patients,” he says. “But I recall being called down by my supervisor because I was spending time with patients. They wanted me to just sit behind the glass and fill prescriptions, and kind of be a robot. That just wasn’t me.”

In September 1984 Hrnrcir and wife Jan opened Las Colinas Pharmacy, Compounding & Wellness. Since then the pharmacy has moved twice, the last time in 2013 to its current 5,400 square-foot location. They have seven pharmacists, a nurse practitioner (also a pharmacist), and 30 total staff. Hrnrcir says plenty has changed in the last 34 years. Back then, PBMs were basically a non-factor. A lot of prescriptions were paid by cash. “If you were doing 100 prescriptions back then you were doing well, and if you did 150 you were doing great,” he says.

Hrnrcir says the compounding side sort of evolved. When the store first opened, it had practically no business, so the staff was happy to get any kind of prescription. He received a few prescriptions for compounds and thought, “Heck, I can do these. And I figured out how to do them. I was thinking, ‘Hey this is kind of cool.’ I found it rewarding.”

COMPOUNDING KICKS INTO GEAR

The compounding business kicked into a higher gear almost by accident, when Hrnrcir was trying to find a solution for a family member. The result was the estradiol transdermal gel, which is used to treat moderate to severe hot flashes and other symptoms of menopause or low amounts of estrogen.

“That spurred me to get better and better at this integrative medicine model,” he says. “I thought, it doesn’t hurt anything to have knowledge in both areas to try to do the best thing for your patients.”

When the pharmacy moved to its current location in 2013, he says he went all in to make his compounding lab as much ahead of its time as possible.

“We went well above any known regulations at the time. I asked

myself, ‘What can we do to outpace regulations?’” he says. Then with a laugh, he adds, “Of course they are continuing to write new regulations to outpace what we’ve built.”

SUPPLEMENTING HEALTH

Nutrition and supplements occupy an important place at Las Colinas Pharmacy. With that in mind Hrnrcir and a partner created a company called Optimum Therapeutic Solutions, featuring an exclusive line of nutritional supplements. The company is separate from the pharmacy, but the products are available in the store.

“I’m a big believer in the ethical use of supplements, but some are poor quality,” he says. “I want people to know that this is Jim’s line, and it’s the line that he promotes as his best foot forward.”

OTS uses algorithmic logic to make supplement recommendations based on support of medical conditions (ICD-10 codes) or drug-induced nutrient depletions. The line is available to pharmacists and medical providers, via wholesale or through revenue-sharing sales on the OTS e-store.

Supplements were almost a life saver for Las Colinas, Hrnrcir says. “Without them, I might not have kept the doors open. It grew from a very humble beginning of us just selling a very good calcium, to us selling a multitude of supplements for a multitude of supportive conditions and drug-induced nutrient depletions.”

PATIENT INTERACTION

Hrnrcir lectures nationwide on health care issues, including a 12-hour course called “Nuts and Bolts Training for Bio-Identical Hormones, Thyroid and Anti-Aging Medicine” that

Hrnrcir says his team deserves much of the credit for the pharmacy’s success.



LAS COLINAS PHARMACY

Compounding & Wellness

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A pharmacist creates customized medications in the pharmacy's state-of-the-art compounding lab.

Fast Facts: Las Colinas Pharmacy Compounding & Wellness, Irving, Texas

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| Established: | 1984 |
| Management: | Jim Hrncir, RPh, and wife Jan Hrncir, owners |
| Products & Services: | Retail prescriptions, non-sterile compounding, immunizations, supplements, medication synchronization, integrative medicine, lab testing, delivery services, patient seminars |
| NCPA member since: | 1993 |
| Professional: | Board member, International Academy of Compounding Pharmacists. Member, Professional Compounding Centers of America, American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, Texas Pharmaceutical Association, and the National Community Pharmacists Association. Named PCCA's 2017 Dr. M. George Webber Compounding Pharmacist of the Year. |
| Education: | Southwestern Oklahoma State School of Pharmacy, Weatherford, Okla., 1979 |

he teaches to physicians, mid-level practitioners, pharmacists, and nurses. He also conducts seminars at the pharmacy where he brings his professional road presentations to a patient level.

A typical seminar might have 40-70 patients, and Hrncir says it usually consists of a PowerPoint presentation where he discusses how integrative approaches can help with numerous health issues.

"The good thing about patient education is it's a way to build your business," he says. "Obviously with independent pharmacy we're always looking for ways to do that."

At seminars, Hrncir will ask participants if they are interested in a health assessment, and most say yes. So, with their permission, the

pharmacy will collect their emails, birthdates, and cell phone numbers and send them a link to a questionnaire in the pharmacy's patient management and assessment software.

"Once they have done that, I have their case right in front of me, all consolidated and ready to go," he says. "That allows me to individualize recommendations for treatments, for supplements, what doctors they might need to see, and for generally improving their health. I just want to help guide them toward a path, because most of them don't know where to start."

Hrncir and several other staff pharmacists offer personal consultations for a \$200 hourly fee. The consultation allows pharmacists to learn what therapies are appropriate for the patient, which pays off over time.

"We only do 'win-wins' here," he says. "It's a win for the patient because they get great clinical advice, as opposed to some article they read on the internet. We often send cases we've prepared to our doctor buddies, and they love it, and are thankful for doing prep work for them."

STAYING ENGAGED

Not surprisingly, Hrncir is heavily engaged in pharmacy issues at both the state and national level. He is on the compounding committee of the Alliance of Independent Pharmacists of Texas. A primary focus is the USP <800> rule that is scheduled to go into effect in December 2019 and could have a substantial impact on compounding pharmacies. Hrncir has also traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress to educate them on pharmacy issues.

"We as pharmacists need to stay involved, both from a political and regulatory standpoint," he says. "I think patient access is the No. 1 most important political and regulatory issue, because if patients don't have access, don't have choice of therapies, then we have limited their ability to improve their health."

Hrncir wants to continue improving his patients' health with innovative approaches, and spreading the word that pharmacists can use their skills to make comprehensive patient assessments through a science- and evidence-based integrative approach.

"I think pharmacists all over the country have a dream to be that, and there's no reason they can't be," he says. "With us, we love helping patients by looking at their cases and trying to figure out how to best help them." ■

Chris Linville is *America's Pharmacist* managing editor.