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Research

Student preferences regarding didactic content and practical experiences of influenza vaccination clinic business operations in a pharmacy business and entrepreneurship elective

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Abstract

Objective: Elicit student preferences for didactic content and practical experiences of vaccination clinic business operations. **Design:** Pharmacy students who worked at least one shift in a campus-wide vaccination clinic managed by the College of Pharmacy during the fall 2012 and fall 2013 semesters were invited to participate in an online survey. Students were sent a link to the survey immediately after working in the vaccination clinic and were given two weeks to electronically complete the survey.

Assessment: In all, 83 out of 110 students (75.5%) responded to the online survey. A majority of students indicated that didactic content and practical experiences of business operations related to vaccination clinics were needed. The two business operations for which the largest proportions of students agreed they would like to have included were didactic content of billing information (62.5%), and practical experience of managing clinic staff (78.5%).

Conclusion: Students indicated preference for both didactic content and practical experiences related to vaccination clinic business operations. Didactic content about operations will be implemented in an entrepreneurship elective in the College of Pharmacy, and related practical experiences will be made available to students who work in the vaccine clinic. Course coordinators will assess student learning following implementation of the integrated didactic and experiential instructional model.

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Keywords: Instructional design; Didactic content; Practical experience; Integrated learning; Immunization

Introduction

One of the objectives of the U.S. healthy people 2020 initiative is to increase rates for influenza immunization coverage among adults 65 years or older and those who are

high-risk adults.¹ Pharmacists in all 50 states are authorized to immunize. Pharmacists have the opportunity to increase immunization rates by virtue of being one of the most readily accessible health care providers in the community.^{2–6} The literature informs the advancement of pharmacy education to prepare students to provide immunization services and education for patients. This advancement includes student performance in immunization certification programs, incorporation of immunization pharmacy practice experiences, and evaluation of immunization certification programs.^{7–9} The literature also addresses the planning and implementation of student-led immunization clinics.^{10,11}

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However, the pharmacy education literature is sparse regarding instructional content and practical experiences of business and service operations specific to vaccination clinics, as well as material that may be offered in pharmacy courses. Additionally, the Accreditation Council on Pharmacy Education competencies encourages the development of active learning strategies in curricula.¹² In fact, the Center for Advancement of Pharmacy Education guides educational outcomes to include innovation and entrepreneurship for personal and professional development.¹³

In 2011–2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that supermarket or drug store pharmacies were the second most common place for receipt of the influenza vaccination among adults.¹⁴ Therefore, students, in their careers as pharmacists, will most likely be responsible for not only providing vaccinations but also managing business operations associated with vaccination clinics. The instructional design of courses concerning business management, implementation, and operations of clinical services is mentioned in the pharmacy literature.^{15,16} Assessing student preferences for integrating content and experiences of business operations specific to a vaccination clinic is lacking. This is vital as pharmacy students need to be educated and provided with practical experiences regarding business operations in order to maintain compliance with the appropriate state medical and pharmacy boards, ensure appropriate collection of reimbursement, and manage staff and clinic workflow. As the profession advances to expand the role of pharmacists' performance of clinical services and primary care delivery, curriculum will need to be modified to best meet the educational needs of students.

Since 2011, the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy (OU COP) has managed influenza vaccine clinics for employees and covered dependents (which included some as young as two for the FluMist vaccine) of the Health Sciences Center campuses of both Oklahoma City and Tulsa annually during the month of October. The vaccine clinics varied in size and location and also served as Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) and Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPE) for students in the OU COP. Students in all years were involved with the flu clinics in the fall 2012 and 2013. Students who did not have a vaccination certificate, offered in the spring term of their second year, did not perform duties associated with counseling or administering the influenza vaccine. Students who were certified to administer vaccinations had the opportunity to provide both intramuscular injections and nasal influenza. On average, each student would vaccinate approximately 40 individuals per clinic. A sub-set of these students was enrolled in a semester-long, three credit hour Pharmacy Business and Entrepreneurship elective. The elective course provides students opportunities to learn about pharmacy management through development of a pharmacy business plan. Broader content on value-added services such as medication therapy management, health

screenings, and vaccinations is also covered. Beginning in fall 2012, all students enrolled in the elective course were required to spend one three-hour class period in active service learning in the college-managed influenza vaccine clinic performing clinical immunization duties.

Over time, coordinators of the elective course realized the potential to make available business operations experiences within the vaccine clinics that would complement the didactic learning. The coordinators sought to elicit preferences for didactic and experiential learning of vaccine clinic business operations from pharmacy students who worked in the clinics, and compare level of preference between students enrolled versus not enrolled in the elective course. This article contributes to the literature by reporting student preferences for course content of business operations related to a vaccination clinic, and identifies future curricular modifications to integrate didactic with experiential learning. The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Institutional Review Board approved this study.

Design

Study sample

Pharmacy students who volunteered to work in the college-managed influenza vaccine clinic in fall 2012 and 2013 were the sample for this study. Students performed two main duties in the flu vaccine clinics: (1) obtain patient consent for immunization and (2) administer influenza vaccinations under pharmacist supervision.

The pharmacy students were stratified by enrollment status in the elective course to compare differences in curricular preferences between the two groups. This was done to reduce potential bias from students who self-selected into a course due to their interest in business and management. By including preferences of all students who participated in the college-managed vaccine clinics, we captured a broader perspective from the student body.

Student survey development

Recognizing an opportunity to expand didactic content to cover business operations of a pharmacy-led immunization clinic, the Pharmacy Business and Entrepreneurship elective course coordinators developed a survey to inquire about students' perceived need and preferences for course content and practical experiences relating to eight operations that focus on clinic-specific business tasks. A similar method of gathering student input has been done in an Undergraduate Pharmacy Management Course in which student feedback was obtained for course content modifications. Findings showed, although the redesigned course placed additional demands on instructors' time, students acknowledged the subject to be more relevant and interactive.¹⁷

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