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Research

Pharmacy resident publication success: Factors of success based on abstracts from a regional meeting[☆]

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Abstract

Objective: To determine the publication rate among pharmacy resident research projects in a region of the United States and to compare characteristics of published and unpublished projects.

Methods: Research project abstracts from the Great Lakes Pharmacy Residency Conference in 2003, 2005, and 2007 were reviewed. Two independent investigators collected all study data. Data on residency year, state, institution, study design, and whether results were reported were extracted from available abstracts. Publication rate was determined systematically using a search algorithm within the following databases: Scopus, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts (IPA), and MEDLINE (PubMed). Kappa-statistic was used to determine inter-rater variability. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze nominal and continuous data. Univariate and multivariate regression analyses were used to determine characteristics of publication success. Sensitivity analysis was performed on projects that were successfully published.

Results: Information was extracted from 655 abstracts in which 76 abstracts were published (11.4%). Publication rate trended down over the three years analyzed (2003 = 12.9%, 2005 = 12.2%, 2007 = 9.9%; $p = 0.57$). Study design (interventional, observational, cross-sectional, or service development, $p = 0.115$), direction of inquiry (prospective or retrospective; $p = 0.146$), intervention of interest (drug, human, or other; $p = 0.096$), results in abstract ($p = 0.096$), and institution type (university-affiliated, veterans affairs, community-hospital, or retail; $p = 0.001$) were entered into the multivariate model. Cross-sectional design [odds ratio (OR) = 3.6], human (OR = 1.9) and other (OR = 2.1) interventions, as well as university-affiliated residency (OR = 2.6) remained significant for publication success. The mean time to publication from abstract to presentation was 24.5 months, and 83% of projects were published within pharmacy journals.

Conclusion: Publication rate of pharmacy resident research projects presented at the Great Lakes Pharmacy Residency Conference is low, but it is consistent with other regions of the United States. Study design and study outcomes may influence chance of project publication as well as institution-type, which may have unique research resources, training, and mentorship.

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Introduction

A component of clinical pharmacy is the generation of new knowledge.¹ Consistent means of training pharmacists with the research and practice skills required to advance knowledge through translational research have been identified as a need.^{2,3} There are multiple opportunities to prepare pharmacists to conduct research. These include Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree programs, biomedical research degree programs, mentored training experiences offered by national pharmacy organizations, and postgraduate residency or fellowship training. However, experiences focused on intensive research training are insufficient to meet this demand.³

Postgraduate residency training programs offer pharmacists additional opportunities to develop research skills while advancing clinically. Residency is the final training experience many pharmacists have prior to a clinical pharmacist position. Completion of a quality improvement or research project and presentation of a final project report in a manuscript style suitable for publication is required of *American Society of Health-System Pharmacists* (ASHP) accredited post graduate year 1 (PGY1) programs and post graduate year 2 (PGY2) programs.^{4,5} Interest and availability of PGY1 and PGY2 residency positions are continuing to grow⁶ due to increased expectations of residency training for all pharmacists participating in direct patient-care.^{7–9} The number of pharmacists serving as primary authors of biomedical research is increasing along with the volume of pharmacists completing residency training¹⁰; however, it cannot be assumed that the observed increase in pharmacist publications along with residency training is correlated, as a small subset of academic pharmacists may be responsible for the majority of these publications.¹¹ Furthermore, the publication rates of pharmacy resident research projects after presentation at regional or national conferences are <15%, with some studies suggesting a decrease in the publication rate.^{12–18}

Completion of resident research is considered highly challenging but beneficial, to the resident, program, and institution.^{19,20} Bookstaver et al.²¹ found scholarly activity related to resident research is important to residents but barriers exist to publication of their research. Inadequate time is commonly cited while lack of mentorship, low research quality, inability to complete the project or final manuscript, and lack of knowledge or difficulty working through the publication process have all been identified as barriers to publishing resident research.^{13,21–23} Residency program directors, preceptors, and pharmacy residents would benefit from identifying the characteristics of a

residency research project that make it more likely to be published. The objective of this study is to evaluate the characteristics of published pharmacy practice residency projects presented at the Great Lakes Pharmacy Residency Conference from 2003 to 2007.

Methods

This is a cross-sectional analysis of pharmacy resident abstracts presented at the Great Lakes Pharmacy Resident Conference (GLPRC). This study was deemed exempt by the St. Louis College of Pharmacy Institutional Review Board, as all data were accessed on the conference website (<http://www.glprc.com/>).

We aimed to assess the publication rate of pharmacy resident research projects based on abstracts presented in 2003, 2005, and 2007. These years were chosen as 2003 was the earliest conference in which abstracts were available online. We selected 2007 as our end date in order to evaluate publications for up to five years post-presentation and to assess publication success.¹² We selected only 2003, 2005, and 2007 to avoid residents being counted twice (if participating in two years of residency training).

Primary outcome

Our primary outcome was the publication rate of the pharmacy resident research abstracts. Publication success was used as a measurable outcome to assess research training and experience achieved during residency. A pre-defined systematic search strategy was used to determine publication success. The search strategy included the search engines in the following order: (1) Scopus[®], (2) International Pharmacists Abstracts, and (3) MEDLINE (PubMed) using the resources available through the St. Louis College of Pharmacy Library. The search strategy within the search engine continued until the search terms returned <25 results which were then manually reviewed. Each search within the individual search engines included, in sequential steps: (1) author's last name, (2) author's last name and first initial, (3) author's last name, first initial, and three to five key words from the project's title.¹⁵ If there were no hits on the first author, the same strategy was performed for each available author (to account for a change in last name). When the list of authors was exhausted, the search strategy was repeated in the subsequent search engines. During any point of the search strategy in which a publication was found, it was considered publication positive and the search was completed. If no publication was found by the end of the search strategy using all three search engines, the resident research was considered publication negative.

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