



Opinion

The influence of teaching programs on residents' perceptions of comfort and confidence in teaching

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Abstract

Identified components of existing residency teaching programs are as follows: (1) structured seminars, (2) practical teaching experiences, (3) teaching portfolio development, and (4) teaching mentorship. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether these components contribute to the development of residents' self-perceived comfort and confidence in teaching. A survey was designed to determine the extent to which the four components are integrated into teaching programs and their relationship to a resident's self-perceived comfort and confidence in his or her teaching abilities. An electronic survey link was e-mailed to the directors of all American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)-accredited Pharmacy Practice residencies ($n = 546$) requesting the survey be forwarded to the 2009–2010 residents. The four components were assessed for the likelihood of an association with the residents' perception of their confidence for teaching skills using a univariate logistic regression analysis. Structured seminar participants reported comfort and confidence in developing objectives, assessing learning, managing classroom environs, and developing portfolios. Participants with practical teaching experiences reported confidence in presenting lectures. Those who precepted reported confidence in implementing active learning strategies, assessing learning, precepting APPE students, and providing feedback to students. Residents who maintained portfolios reported comfort and confidence in portfolio development and writing teaching philosophies. Mentored residents reported comfort and confidence in managing classroom environments. Structured seminars and practical experiences had the greatest influence on enhancing residents' comfort and confidence in teaching experiences. These components should be carefully considered as essentials when developing residency teaching programs.

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Introduction

An increasing number of pharmacy faculty nearing retirement age,¹ the increase in pharmacy school enrollment, and the opening of new schools of pharmacy are contributing to the need for new generations of teaching faculty in schools of pharmacy. The increased numbers of residency teaching certificate programs, and the inclusion of

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¹Ibrahim Sales was a Pharmacy Practice Resident at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center at the time this evaluation was conducted.

required teaching experiences in the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)-accredited residency program standards, addresses the necessity and importance of quality residency teaching experiences. Although ASHP accreditation standards have been established to ensure that residents receive comparable training across programs, there is no uniformity in the implementation of program components. The most apparent means of documenting teaching emphasis within a given residency is by the availability of a teaching certificate program; however, there has only recently been recommendations that provide guidance on how to structure new teaching programs.²

There are few publications that describe teaching and teaching certificates in residency programs. Stegall-Zanation et al.³ assessed the availability of teaching opportunities in residency teaching programs. They described teaching experiences that distinguish certificate programs from non-certificate programs but did not explore the value of these experiences in the residents' development. Program-specific reports from the University of Kentucky,^{4,5} University of Arizona,⁶ and the Indiana Pharmacy Teaching Certificate Program⁷ describe the implementation of residency teaching programs. They primarily focused on resident satisfaction and confidence levels related to their experiences; however, they did not explicitly evaluate the components of their programs.

Published descriptions of residency teaching certificate programs outline three core components: structured seminars on teaching, practical teaching experiences, and a teaching portfolio requirement.^{4–7} Our school of pharmacy offers the Mastery of Teaching Certificate Program that includes an additional component: a specific teaching mentor. We conducted an evaluation to determine whether these four components (structured seminars on teaching, practical teaching experiences, a teaching portfolio requirement, and a specific teaching mentor) contribute to the development of residents' comfort and confidence in teaching and, therefore, should be used as a basis for teaching programs.

Methods

A web-based survey was designed using Qualtrics™ to determine which, if any, of the four core components correlated to higher levels of residents' perceived comfort and confidence in their teaching skills and abilities. A list of all 546 accredited Pharmacy Practice Postgraduate Year-One (PGY1) residency programs was obtained from the ASHP residency listing. Pharmacy Practice PGY1 residents were selected exclusively due to the increased expectation that they would complete a teaching certificate program or have teaching requirements in their programs. In January 2011, an e-mail was sent to the directors of all ASHP-accredited Pharmacy Practice residencies requesting the link to the Qualtrics™ web-based survey to be forwarded to the 2009–2010 residents. Each director willing to participate was requested to reply to the initial e-mail and indicate how

many residents were provided the survey link. This aggregate number constituted the sample population size. A reminder e-mail was sent to all non-responding residency directors after the second week. The residents were requested to respond within two weeks of receiving the survey link. The survey was closed four weeks after the initial e-mail request.

The participants completed a web-based, adaptive survey that consisted of 53 questions. The first 32 questions were organized by the four core teaching components: structured seminars on teaching, practical teaching experiences, maintaining a teaching portfolio, and mentorship. The second section consisted of 13 questions assessing the residents' comfort and confidence in the teaching skills gained from their residency teaching programs. The interpretation of the terms comfort and confidence was reserved for the study participants. Definitions were not provided within the survey instrument. Participants were also requested to provide general information regarding their demographics, such as their current practice sites and teaching responsibilities.

The results were evaluated using SPSS 16.0 software (SPSS, Inc., Chicago, IL). Descriptive statistics were performed to describe the respondents' demographics and content of each teaching program represented. The questions related to comfort and confidence were presented on a 5-point Likert scale. For purposes of the analysis, the positive responses (strongly agree and agree) and the negative responses (strongly disagree and disagree) were consolidated, and the neutral responses were excluded. The odds of each teaching component contributing to the comfort and confidence of the teaching skills and abilities were determined using univariate logistic regression analysis. Statistical significance was set at $\alpha = 0.05$. This study was approved as an exempt research study.

Results

There were a total of 127 programs (23%) that responded to the e-mail requests. These programs were distributed throughout each region of the United States: Northeast (16%), Midwest (32%), South (32%), and West (20%). The survey was subsequently forwarded to 667 of the 1689 (39%) PGY1 Pharmacy Practice residents from the 2009 to 2010 class, and there were 276 (41%) completed surveys. This represented a 16% of the total ASHP-accredited resident class in the U.S. The univariate regression analysis for the teaching skills and abilities that contained significant results for one or more of the four components is provided in [Table 1](#).

Structured seminars on teaching

The majority of respondents (68%) reported that they participated in structured seminars on teaching during their residencies. Sixty-one percent of residents that responded indicated that these seminars were required, and 57% of residents that responded to this question attended 15 or more hours of instruction. Residents who had structured seminars on teaching were significantly more likely to

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