



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

# Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/cptl](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/cptl)

## Research Note

# Do fourth year pharmacy students use Facebook to form workplace-based learning peer groups during rotations?

Jennifer Phillips<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jacob Gettig<sup>a</sup>, Kristen Goliak<sup>b</sup>, Sheila Allen<sup>b</sup>, Nancy Fjortoft<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy, 555 31st Street, Downers Grove, IL 60515, United States

<sup>b</sup> University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy, 833 S. Wood Street, Chicago, IL 60612, United States

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

APPE  
Experiences  
Students  
Facebook<sup>®</sup>  
Social media

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The objective of this study was to gain an understanding of whether pharmacy students are using Facebook<sup>®</sup> to create formal or informal workplace-based peer groups to learn from each other and share information while completing their advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs).

**Methods:** Fourth-year pharmacy students from two colleges of pharmacy in the same geographical area were recruited by email to participate. Inclusion criteria were: completion of two or more APPEs, current assignment to an APPE rotation in the local area, and a Facebook<sup>®</sup> profile. Two focus groups, of eight students each were conducted on each of the two colleges' campuses. An incentive to participate was provided. Thematic analysis was used to analyze responses.

**Results:** Students reported using Facebook<sup>®</sup> to learn about rotation expectations, roles/responsibilities, and preceptors. However, frequency and depth of interactions varied among the participants. Most participants noted that they prefer more private methods of communication to learn about APPE experiences. Students found Facebook<sup>®</sup> to be a good source of motivation and support during experiential learning.

**Discussion:** The use of social media sites like Facebook<sup>®</sup> may help students form "virtual" workplace-based peer groups during APPEs.

**Conclusion:** Pharmacy schools interested in providing support for formal workplace-based learning groups should consider using social media sites as one component of this program.

## Introduction

Workplace-based learning requires a completely different set of skills than didactic learning. Specifically, it involves the acquisition of knowledge or skills necessary to perform optimally in a workplace environment. In a pharmacy setting, this could include the acquisition of therapeutic knowledge, refinement of certain skills, or training on the policies, procedures, or logistics of an institution. It may take place through formal mechanisms, such as continuing education programs, lectures, or training programs or informal mechanisms, such as peer-to-peer coaching.

A smooth transition into the clinical setting is an important component to success for any healthcare student. Workplace-based learning may help facilitate this transition. The benefits of workplace-based learning have been explored with medical students transitioning from didactic to experiential learning environments. Studies have shown that medical students often struggle with adapting to the workplace-based environment.<sup>1,2</sup> Specifically, a focus group of medical students reported that many students struggle with understanding roles, responsibilities, and expectations; adjusting to the culture of the clinical environment; applying clinical

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [jphill@midwestern.edu](mailto:jphill@midwestern.edu) (J. Phillips).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2017.08.001>

skills; and learning the logistics of the experience.<sup>2</sup> Although there is little to no data identifying specific areas that pharmacy students struggle with when transitioning from classroom to experiential learning, it is reasonable to assume that they encounter many of the same stressors identified in studies of medical students.

Chou et al.<sup>3</sup> described a useful framework that categorizes workplace-based learning during medical clerkships into three domains – learning regarding relationships, practices, and tasks. Factors included in the relationship domain include the ability of the student to: manage different personalities, navigate a new workplace successfully, communicate effectively, and have a solid understanding of their role.<sup>3</sup> Factors included in the practice domain include: the amount of work and the pace at which the student is expected to perform; the types of activities completed by the student, available resources at the site, and the work schedule.<sup>3</sup> Factors included in the tasks domain include: knowledge, technical skill, sequencing, and acuity.<sup>3</sup>

One strategy that has been used to facilitate workplace learning for medical students involves the use of formal or informally created peer groups. In one recently published study, the use of peer groups helped facilitate workplace learning for medical clerkship students by providing useful information regarding clinical expectations during the rotation, best practice for interacting with patients or supervisors, advice on transitioning between experiences, and logistics of the experience.<sup>3</sup> Students in other healthcare disciplines, including pharmacy, may also benefit from the use of peer groups when transitioning to experiential learning. The question that remains unanswered is whether these workplace-based peer groups need to be “live” or if “virtual” peer groups formed through social media platforms can provide the same level of support to students. There is a lack of information to answer this question in the literature. However, there are numerous examples in the literature describing the successful use of social media to facilitate learning in the didactic setting.<sup>4-8</sup> Thus, we sought to investigate if students are independently forming “virtual” workplace-based learning groups using social media platforms and if so, if and how they are using these peer groups to facilitate workplace learning.

### Objective

The objective of this study was to gain an understanding of whether pharmacy students are using social media to create formal or informal workplace-based peer groups to learn from each other and share information while completing their advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs). In particular, this study attempted to gain an understanding of whether fourth-year pharmacy students currently use Facebook® to facilitate workplace-based during experiential learning.

### Methods

This study took place at two colleges of pharmacy in the Midwest. The investigators determined that qualitative methods were appropriate to address the research study objective to allow the investigators to ask probing questions about this unknown phenomenon. Investigators completed a two-day training course on focus group research methods and analysis and conducted this study per the standards outlined by Anderson.<sup>9</sup> Themes for the focus group questions were developed by using a modified framework of the workplace-based community,<sup>3</sup> with the exceptions that domain “relationships” was changed to “preceptors,” “practice” was changed to “environment,” and “tasks” was changed to “roles and responsibilities.”

Discussion questions were developed and piloted using four third-year pharmacy students and three pharmacy residents to check for issues with appropriateness of content/language, clarity and ambiguity. Members in the pilot group came from both institutions involved in this study. The final focus group interview protocol contained 14 questions (Table 1). Facebook® was specifically chosen as the focus of our inquiry because it is the most commonly used social media site.<sup>10</sup> Our pilot group confirmed that Facebook® is widely used on both campuses by students.

**Table 1**  
Focus group questions.

- 
1. Please confirm that you have an active Facebook® account.
  2. How often do you check your Facebook® account for updates?
  3. How often do you READ information about APPE rotations on Facebook®?
  4. What influences which posts you pay attention to?
  5. How often do you POST information or questions about APPE rotations on Facebook®?
  6. What kind of school Facebook® group pages do you belong to?
  7. During your 4th year, have you used Facebook® to learn about the environment of the rotation site, for example: aspects of the logistics of the rotation or the culture of the site?
  8. During your 4th year, have you used Facebook® to learn about your roles and responsibilities at a particular site, for example: workload, assignments, or schedule?
  9. During your 4th year, have you used Facebook® to learn about APPE preceptors, for example: what does the preceptor expect from me? What is the relationship between the preceptor and the students? What is the relationship like between the preceptor and the other health care providers?
  10. Are there any other APPE rotation-related topics we have not yet discussed that you use Facebook® to learn about?
  11. What types of rotation-related posts by other students generate the most “likes” or “comments”?
  12. In general, have you found social media applications like Facebook® to be a valuable information resource for learning how to navigate your APPE rotation?
  13. What other social media or resources do you use to help learn about your site/preceptor?
  14. If a faculty member OR a non-faculty clinical preceptor were a member of the pages you belong to, how would this change what you post? (Feel free to comment on both if your answer for both is different)
- 

APPE = Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6840180>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6840180>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)