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Experiences in Teaching and Learning

Incorporating the American Pharmacists Association's Delivering Medication Therapy Management services certificate program into an accelerated pharmacy curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Background and purpose: To describe the incorporation of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Delivering Medication Therapy Management (MTM) Services program into a PharmD curriculum and to describe student perceptions of the program.

Educational activity and setting: The program was delivered over 12 months to students on two campuses via two didactic courses in the second professional year and during the first two advanced pharmacy practice experiences in the third professional year of an accelerated school of pharmacy program.

Findings: Student perceptions were assessed by review of responses to the APhA MTM program evaluation survey.

Discussion and summary: Incorporation of the APhA MTM program into an accelerated PharmD program required careful planning and coordination amongst faculty and course coordinators. Students perceived that the program was valuable, met their educational needs, and incorporated effective learning experiences and cases. These perceptions were reinforced by the high percentage of students who completed the program.

Background and purpose

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Accreditation Standards for doctor of pharmacy (PharmD) programs have long recognized the importance of preparing students to participate in patient-centered care and medication therapy management (MTM) services.¹ More recently, the 2016 ACPE accreditation standards furthered the importance of MTM education and training by incorporating a philosophy meant to ensure that programs graduate practice-ready and team-ready students.² This approach includes preparing students to collaboratively contribute to patient care via the pharmacists' patient-care process, the backbone of which is MTM services.³ To prepare students for participation in the patient-care process, colleges and schools of

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pharmacy must ensure that students acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes to deliver MTM services.

The importance of pharmacist involvement in patient-care is recognized by the healthcare industry.³ Pharmacists contribute to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services quality measures, which include a focus on improving adherence to medications, and ensuring patients with chronic disease conditions receive recommended therapy and patients older than 65 years are appropriately prescribed high risk medications. These measures, which are also important aspects of MTM initiatives, are utilized to establish Medicare Star Ratings. These ratings, in turn, are used as an indicator of the quality for Medicare Part D and other health insurance plans.⁴ Pharmacists can positively impact Star Ratings of health plans and become part of a preferred pharmacy network by contributing to medication use improvements which impact these important quality measures.

Pharmacist employers desire that pharmacy school graduates have education and training which allows them to participate in patient care and MTM services.⁵ To understand pharmacist employer expectations of pharmacy graduates, ACPE sought feedback from the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, National Community Pharmacy Association, National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation, and Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy.⁵ These organizations recommended additions to the educational outcomes that impact MTM training and education.⁵ They desire that graduates be able to collaboratively participate in the patient-care process, conduct a comprehensive medication review, advocate on behalf of patient needs, and document MTM services.

Students at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) University, School of Pharmacy-Worcester/Manchester (SOP-W/M) are exposed to course content that addresses knowledge required to perform the MTM components described in the pharmacists' patient-care process.³ However, the escalation of influences (2016 ACPE Standards, Center for the Advancement of Pharmacy Education (CAPE) Educational 2013 Outcomes, employer expectations) motivated the SOP-W/M to consider ways to further supplement the education and training that is already part of our curriculum.^{2,3,5,7} It was decided that the nationally-recognized American Pharmacists Association Delivering Medication Therapy Management Services (APhA MTM) program would serve the purpose of providing students with additional practice opportunities and further highlight the applicability of MTM services to their future practice.⁶

This report is novel in that it is the first to provide a complete description of the integration, implementation, and assessment of the APhA MTM program into a PharmD curriculum. The lack of literature describing the incorporation of this program into pharmacy curricula could be an indication that schools have struggled to develop a means of effectively delivering this program. Such struggles might be expected given that this program has several components, making incorporation into a curriculum challenging. Hence, this report may help other schools or colleges seeking to incorporate the APhA MTM program in their curricula. Since the integration was new to our curriculum, we sought to capture students' perceptions of the APhA MTM program to determine if they found it a valuable and practice-relevant learning experience. Use of the data included in this report was approved by our Institutional Review Board.

Educational activity and setting

The SOP-W/M program is a year-round, 34-month, accelerated program. There is a main campus (Worcester, MA), which enrolls approximately 250 students each year and a satellite campus (Manchester, NH), which enrolls approximately 55 students each year. Distance education technology allows for the synchronous delivery of classes to each campus.

In the second professional year, there is a required, two-course series entitled Introduction to Advanced Pharmacy Practice (IAPP). These courses are offered concurrently with pharmacotherapeutics and pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, and toxicology

Table 1
Introduction to Advanced Pharmacy Practice-1 course outline.

^a Date	Topic
Week 1	Orientation/Drug consult writing/Plagiarism
Week 2	Navigating through the medical record
Week 3	Statistics
Week 4	Evidence based medicine
Week 5	Journal club workshop
Week 6 and 7	No class; complete APhA MTM pre-live seminar requirements: self-study materials, pre-seminar case, self-study exam
Week 8	APhA MTM session 1 lecture
Week 9	Spring break
Week 10	APhA MTM session 2; breakout rooms Patient "Toni" case discussion
Week 11	Medication safety/Interprofessional education project discussion
Week 12	APhA MTM session 3; breakout rooms Patient "Carl" case discussion
Week 13	APhA MTM session 4 lecture
Week 14	APhA MTM session 5; breakout rooms Patient "Donna" case discussion
Week 15	APhA MTM session 6; breakout rooms Patient "James" case discussion
Finals week	Cumulative exam

APhA = American Pharmacists Association; MTM = Medication therapy management

^a Introduction to Advanced Pharmacy Practice –1 (IAPP-1_a) is a 2-credit course. Each topic was scheduled once per week for 1 h and 50 min.

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