

Catherine Gilmore and Libby Graef

Mentor: Jen Arnoldi, Kate Newman

Title: *Interprofessional Education Opportunities in the Community Pharmacy Setting Derived from Current Community Interprofessional Collaboration*

Abstract

Background

Interprofessional education (IPE) occurs when two or more students from different professions collaborate to learn about, learn from, and work with one another to facilitate collaboration and improve health outcomes.² Pharmacy schools may provide Accreditation Council of Pharmacy Education-mandatory interprofessional education through a variety of means to students, however, due to the availability of resources for pharmacy schools, such as affiliated hospitals and health systems, many IPE activities occur with collaboration with health-system based health professional students. The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand what interprofessional collaboration (IPC) opportunities exist in the community pharmacy setting to better determine prospective collaborative education opportunities for pharmacy and other health professional students.

Methods

This study was an analysis of community pharmacy stakeholders' opinions and experiences through structured interviews to obtain qualitative information from Illinois and Missouri community and ambulatory care pharmacists. Structured interviews were conducted with a predetermined set of questions. Interviews were stopped after saturation was met, and interviews were transcribed, where phrases were coded in the transcripts until themes with the coded words and phrases emerged.

Results

Structured interviews were conducted in July 2019 with 10 individuals interviewed separately with 1-2 interviewers asking questions. Responders stated that collaboration in the community pharmacy happened sometimes, but many barriers face pharmacists, such as personalities of various healthcare professionals (n=10) and perceptions of interprofessional collaboration varied. Benefits to IPC include improving outcomes (n=7), with barriers ranging from lack of in-person communication(n=7) to lack of reimbursement (n=2). Perceptions of pharmacists regarding interprofessional education for pharmacy students was thought to occur mostly on practice experiences (n=9), and some education provided in interprofessional classes through the pharmacy curriculum (n=5).

Conclusion

Interprofessional collaboration with community pharmacists at the center is an important way to progress the profession of pharmacy. Community pharmacists are at the frontline of providing healthcare to patients, and expanding the role and integrating pharmacist involvement in collaborative practice with healthcare professionals can improve outcomes for patients. "Flipping the pharmacy" and providing more direct patient care in community pharmacies needs ideal collaboration from a variety of healthcare professionals, and identifying innovative efforts in the region. Training current healthcare students with these practices is key to propelling this into the future.