

Understanding and Addressing Gaps in Preparedness for Pharmacy Student' Transition to Practice

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Background

- Transitioning from student to pharmacist is known to be stressful and difficult.
- This transition can be known as being practice-ready or students transition to practice.
- Practice-ready encompasses students' knowledge and skills as a pharmacist, while the transition to practice involves most other areas.
- Common challenges: role confusion, overwhelming workloads, anxiety, fear, unintentionally harming patients and failing to meet expectation at work.¹
- A barrier is lack of professional identity formation, which demonstrates role confusion.¹
- The goal is to better understand where students stand on important topics, to aid in the development of training and educational sessions to help students have a smoother transition into their professional practice.

Methods

- Anonymous 37-itemed survey was administered to fourth year SIUE pharmacy students.
- Four main sections: Applying for the job, Accepting the Job, Working the Job, and Other.
- Additional space was provided for students to put other topics they don't feel prepared for and if they would like to receive additional information on subject matter.

Results

- Demographics:** 32 females, 10 males
 - 19 to start residency/fellowship, 2 considering a job, 1 applying for jobs, 15 have plans to work, but have not begun job applications, and 5 students are unsure
- Areas students feel the most prepared for transitioning to practice:**

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Mean
I understand my role in the Pharmacy.	28	12	0	0	1.30
I can empathize with all my patients.	31	9	0	0	1.23
I am prepared to delegate tasks among other employees.	26	14	0	0	1.35
I am confident in my ability to locate information or answers on questions patient may have.	26	13	1	0	1.38
I feel confident asking others for help.	27	11	1	1	1.40

- Areas students feel the least prepared for transitioning to practice:**

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Mean
I am prepared to discuss and evaluate benefit packages (insurance, retirement, leaves, vacation time, overtime, etc..) with potential employers.	7	11	13	9	2.60
I am prepared to negotiate pay.	8	9	11	12	2.67
I understand sign-on bonuses and the different ways they are distributed.	6	15	10	9	2.55
I understand student loan repayment options.	11	12	9	8	2.35
I understand professional liability including where to obtain coverage.	10	10	10	10	2.50

Conclusion

- Students are academically prepared to become a pharmacist, but unaware of many career challenges.
- Students are less prepared in areas concerning pay, insurance, benefits, and loans.
- This information helps faculty, preceptors, professors, and students better themselves and patient care by building confidence, readiness, and targeting weaker transitional areas.

References

- Mourh, J., & Newby, B. (2018, June 30). *Barriers and strategies for transition from student to successful hospital pharmacist*. The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy. Retrieved September 14, 2022, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6592656>.