

What All Community Pharmacists Should Know about Veterinary Pharmacy and the Impact of an Educational Intervention

Megan Tenkhoff, BS, PharmD Candidate, Sidney Robertson, PharmD, DICVP, MBA

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Many providers, including veterinarians, can benefit from collaborating with a pharmacist as many medications are commonly used within various sectors of healthcare. While pharmacists are widely recognized as providing benefit to human patients, they are commonly overlooked within the animal realm. Unfortunately, most pharmacists are not educated on the benefits they can provide to veterinarians, their patients, and caregivers alike. Therefore, these individuals are unable to receive assistance from pharmacists and those pharmacists who are trained in veterinary medicine are harshly under-utilized. This problem can mostly be contributed to a general lack of veterinary pharmacy, compounding, and interprofessional education opportunities available for pharmacists.

Purpose: To provide a single educational intervention targeting community pharmacists focused on common veterinary pharmacy practices and a pharmacist's role in promoting beneficial interprofessional collaboration with veterinarians and assistance with prescribed medications.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted via a pre- and post-survey completed by participants prior to and following the conclusion of an educational session. A one-hour continuing education (CE) course on the role of a community pharmacist in veterinary medicine was taught to community and student pharmacists across the United States livestream via Zoom by a student pharmacist with a veterinary pharmacist's oversight. Participants completed a survey through Qualtrics addressing the following items: prior knowledge of veterinary pharmacy and dispensing, thoughts on interprofessional collaboration with veterinarians, and

comfortability with providing recommendations to animal patients and caregivers. Participants were asked to subjectively rate their confidence in these items before and after the continuing education presentation utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. The results of the survey remained anonymous and were used to assess the impact of the educational intervention.

Results: In total, 12 pharmacists and pharmacy students completed this study. One participant had no prior veterinary pharmacy knowledge, five had very little, four had an adequate amount, and two had a sufficient amount. Following the conclusion of the educational intervention, participants were asked to complete a series of questions ranking their comfortability, knowledge, resource and training awareness, and positive collaboration outcomes. There was a positive shift in the spectrum of those who initially strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were neutral to those who agreed and strongly agreed. Eighty-three percent of participants reported they wanted to learn more about veterinary pharmacy following the session.

Conclusions: The findings of this study suggest that an educational intervention increased knowledge and comfortability of community pharmacists and pharmacy students in their role in veterinary medicine. Participants wanted to learn more about veterinary medicine and more studies should be done to assess the benefits of veterinarian and pharmacist collaboration to support the need for veterinary medicine education within pharmacy programs.