Residents Making a Difference

During orientation, the residents are invited to volunteer at underserved clinics in the Pittsburgh area. This is an invaluable opportunity to not only “make a difference”, but to work on clinical and precepting skills.

At each clinic, pharmacists have the opportunity to work with physicians in evaluating patients and developing medication regimens. Their role also includes dispensing medications, administering flu and/or pneumococcal vaccines, performing glucose monitoring and pregnancy tests, and providing patient counseling. The medication supplies come from donations or are purchased through grants. Unfortunately, there is often a limited supply of both over-the-counter and prescription medications available. This makes the job of delivering the most appropriate patient care challenging.

Paul and Christina volunteered at two different medicine clinics during their residency year. Ditina, Kristin and Erika volunteered at the Women’s Center and Shelter of Pittsburgh. Paul feels strongly that “the underserved clinic has provided the opportunity to utilize school and residency experiences to care for patients that do not have the capability to afford proper health care.” In addition, he enjoyed the opportunity to serve as a preceptor for 2nd-year pharmacy students who attended clinic with him.

Ditina also feels the experience was rewarding both professionally and personally. She feels that “no other experience can compare to when one of these patients comes to tell you how much your care has meant to them.” The experience has been rewarding for Kristin as well. She intends to continue participating in caring for the underserved throughout her career in hopes to assist in preventing inadequate care for patients who may not have adequate healthcare coverage.

All of the residents who participated in the underserved program agree that their volunteer experiences have been invaluable and hope that future residents will continue to serve in this capacity.
Residents’ Roar

What’s Next for Our Current Residents

Cardiology
Erika Felix-Getzik  
Asst. Professor & Clinical Cardiology Specialist  
Mass. College of Pharmacy

Critical Care
Brian Watson  
ICU Clinical Pharmacist  
Allegheny General Hospital

Drug Information
Shelby Corman  
Pursuing a writing/research position

Family Medicine
Jonathan Ference  
Clinical Assistant Professor  
University of Oklahoma  
College of Pharmacy

Managed Care
Julie Kuhn  
Clinical Management Pharmacist  
Eckerd Health Service

Oncology
Beth Wise  
Oncology Clinical Pharmacist  
Wake Forest University  
Baptist Hospital
Stephanie Conley  
Pursuing a clinical oncology position

Pharmacy Practice (UPMC)
Paul Juang  
Critical Care Resident  
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
Ditina Raval  
Primary Care Resident  
National Institutes of Health
Kristin Zerumsky  
Cardiology Resident UPMC

Pharmacy Practice (VA)
Mike Koczynski  
Internal Medicine Pharmacist  
Allegheny General Hospital
Brianne Fairchild  
Pursuing a clinical position in North Carolina
Ashley Jenkins  
Clinical Management Pharmacist  
Eckerd Health Service

Primary Care
Christina Schober  
Clinical Pharmacist  
Harbor Hospital in Maryland

Faculty & Resident Alum Updates

Patricia Dowley Kroboth (Professor) was appointed Dean, University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, effective May 1, 2004.

Ted Rice (Associate Professor) has been recently recognized as a Fellow of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

Matthew Blommel (PP 01-02) was appointed Clinical Assistant Professor and Assistant Director of the West Virginia Center for Drug and Health Information in October 2003.

Emily (Wade) Castelli (PP 99-00; Crit Care 00-01) and her husband are moving to Bowling Green, KY in July. She will be working at “The Medical Center”, and part of her role will be to establish a pharmacy residency program.

Nicole Ansani (DI 98-99) is now working for Pfizer as a clinical education consultant.

Bethany Fedutes-Henderson (DI 02-03) was appointed Interim Director of the University of Pittsburgh DI Center in May 2004.

Emily (Wade) Castelli (PP 99-00; Crit Care 00-01), Kim Corpus (PP 01-02), and Justin (Schuller) Gortney (PP 99-00) passed the BCPS exam in 2003.

Damary Castanheira (Oncology 98-99) and Daisy Chung (PP 99-00) passed the BCOP exam in 2003.

Jennifer Stoffel (Crit Care 95) recently completed the BCPS recertification process.

Congratulations

Erika Felix-Getzik received an industry-sponsored research grant from Kos Pharmaceuticals for her residency research project.

Kristin Zerumsky was accepted to participate in the ACCP Heart Failure Traineeship Program at MUSC to be completed during her cardiology specialty residency.

Kristin Zerumsky, Ditina Raval and Paul Juang won third place at the PSHP Midyear Meeting Poster Session entitled “Pharmacy Practice Residency Programs: Fulfillment of the ASHP Practice Management Goals and Objectives”.

Julie Kuhn was married to Patrick Legal on May 8, 2004.

Mike Koczynski was married to Megan Farrell on August 16, 2003.

Ed Horn (Crit Care 00-01) was engaged to Paula Biscup (also a University of Pittsburgh graduate) in April. The two plan to wed in September 2005.

Laura Jung (Oncology 99-00) had a baby boy, Ethan Daehan Jung, in Dec. 2003. In June, Laura and her family will be moving to North Carolina.

Did you know that at least 5 Pitt resident alums are expecting newborns in the summer of 2004? Stay tuned for the full details regarding the future resident class of 2028-2029!
Silver Scripts
Jonathan Ference

Silver Scripts is a new program where P1 pharmacy students, paired with University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy faculty, travel to senior centers in the area to provide medication counseling on site. This is one of several ways that the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy reaches out and gives back to communities in Pittsburgh. Silver Scripts also offers a valuable teaching experience for the P1 students by providing an introduction to patient care and professionalism. During this inaugural year, two pharmacy residents, Christina Schober and Jonathan Ference, participated as mentors for the program.

Jonathan and one of his P1 student groups visited seniors at the Stephen Foster Senior Center in Lawrenceville. The center offers many programs for seniors, including tai chi, cardiac rehabilitation exercise sessions, and an onsite wood shop. It also has an adult day care program for seniors with Alzheimer’s Disease. During their first visit to the center, the group interviewed several seniors and advised them on issues ranging from timing of medication doses to prescription insurance issues. After the first session, one student said, “This experience truly made me feel as if I was on my way to becoming a pharmacist.”

At the second visit, a scheduling error with the “well seniors” resulted in an opportunity for the pharmacy resident and students to interact with the patients with Alzheimer’s Disease. The group learned that although they would not be providing pharmaceutical care in the traditional sense, they would experience patient interactions that were just as important and rewarding. The group spent the morning speaking with seniors and participating in their group exercise session. The highlight of the morning was a rousing game of ring toss: the seniors versus the “white coats.” The students lost by three points, but when it was time to say goodbye there was a smile on every face. Afterwards one student said, “I now have a greater appreciation for how difficult their lives are. We weren’t able to provide pharmaceutical care in the form of drug therapy identification to this particular community, but we hopefully touched their lives in a different way.”

Recent Publications


Peng CC (PP 00-01), Glassman PA, Marks IR (Managed Care 01-02), Fowler C, Castiglione B (Managed Care 97-98), Good CB. Retrospective drug utilization review: incidence of clinically relevant potential drug-drug interactions in a large ambulatory population. J Manag Care Pharm 2003;9:513-22.
A “GEM” of an Experience

Brianne Fairchild

One of the unique opportunities I have had as a pharmacy practice resident at the VA was being involved with the interdisciplinary outpatient Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) clinic every Tuesday and Thursday. While working in this clinic, I participated in the assessment and treatment of veterans 65 years or older with dementia, memory problems, depression, mobility issues, noncompliance and polypharmacy.

The pharmacist’s role at the GEM clinic is to screen patients for potential age-related changes that affect medication adherence, make drug therapy recommendations to avoid or minimize adverse outcomes, and provide patient and caregiver education on medications. The pharmacist actually helps improve medication adherence by reducing the number of medications, simplifying dosage schedules, clarifying written and verbal instructions, using non-safety caps on prescription bottles, and teaching patients how to use pill boxes.

There have been many memorable moments with individual patients at GEM clinic. Overall, it has been an honor to help care for our nation’s heroes and pursue excellence in “serving those who served”.

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