A Community Pharmacy Elective Course Utilizing a Service Development Project to Foster Innovation and Creative Thinking

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BACKGROUND

In 2014, 44% of all practicing pharmacists worked in an independent, chain, mass merchandiser, or supermarket pharmacy.1

In 2018, 41% of graduating students reported employment in chain community pharmacy or independent community pharmacy.2

Critical thinking, innovation, and entrepreneurship are key elements in the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) 2016 standards.3

- Students are generally interested in and planning to offer clinical services in the community setting but indicate they may not feel ready to do so immediately upon graduation.4

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Innovations in Community Pharmacy Practice is a 2-credit hour course offered to pharmacy students in the spring of the third professional year.

Teaching methods
- Group discussions
- Case study activity
- Self-reflection
- Group project

The focus of this course is the evolving role of the community pharmacist in delivering direct patient care services. Students learn the basics of creating a business plan and utilize these principles to create their own business plan for a new or enhanced service that could be implemented at a community pharmacy site. This is a hands-on, project-based course, designed to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and critical-thinking in the context of community pharmacy practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Discuss examples of pharmacy innovation and evaluate the implementation and monitoring of such programs.

Describe how human, financial, technological, and physical resources affect the development of direct patient care services in the community setting.

Identify and analyze some of the current methods for receiving reimbursement for pharmacy services and monitoring quality metrics in the community setting.

Describe the various resources available to pharmacists in the creation of new services, including but not limited to, professional pharmacy organizations, non-pharmacy professional organizations, and foundations.

Identify barriers to service implementation and discuss strategies to overcome these barriers.

Utilize concepts of SWOT analysis and marketing/financial planning to identify and support the integration of new direct patient care services in the community setting.

Utilize appropriate verbal and written communication strategies to construct and present a business plan for a new or enhanced patient care service as a group.

COURSE OUTLINE

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Discuss examples of pharmacy innovation and evaluate the implementation and monitoring of such programs.
2. Describe how human, financial, technological, and physical resources affect the development of direct patient care services in the community setting.
3. Identify and analyze some of the current methods for receiving reimbursement for pharmacy services and monitoring quality metrics in the community setting.
4. Describe the various resources available to pharmacists in the creation of new services, including but not limited to, professional pharmacy organizations, non-pharmacy professional organizations, and foundations.
5. Identify barriers to service implementation and discuss strategies to overcome these barriers.
6. Utilize concepts of SWOT analysis and marketing/financial planning to identify and support the integration of new direct patient care services in the community setting.
7. Utilize appropriate verbal and written communication strategies to construct and present a business plan for a new or enhanced patient care service as a group.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course orientation/Syllabus scavenger hunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to service development/Introduction to SWOT analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Medication use systems and resource management/Cultivating creativity activity</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Practice innovation case studies</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Billing for pharmacist provided services/Exploration stations: billing, documentation, and quality metrics</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Individual SWOT analysis activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Group SWOT analysis and service proposal*</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>No class – Spring break</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Professional organizations/Establishing a Personal Learning Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Community pharmacy networks/Careers in community practice</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Group background research and references*</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Group service outline*</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Group marketing and financial plan*</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Practice innovation case studies/Final presentation preparation</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>New service development presentations</td>
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*In-class activity

**BUSINESS PLAN FOR A NEW OR ENHANCED SERVICE**

The primary course project was the development and presentation of a business plan for a new or enhanced pharmacy service. Students worked in small groups to complete:

- SWOT analysis
- Literature review
- Marketing & financial plan
- Service proposal
- Service outline
- Presentation to "key stakeholders"

**OTHER COURSE ACTIVITIES**

Individual SWOT analysis
- Students prepare an individual SWOT analysis and site description for a community site of their choosing
- Week 6 activity based off this assignment

Individual written reflection
- Students construct a reflection paper based on the class discussion about personal learning networks

**REFERENCES**