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Department of Health Policy Fellowship Programs: A Tradition of Excellence

Laura Pizzi, PharmD, MPH*

* Thomas Jefferson University

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Department of Health Policy Fellowship Programs: A Tradition of Excellence

Since 1994, the Department of Health Policy has offered post-doctoral fellowships in outcomes research and pharmacoeconomics. This past June, we proudly celebrated the graduation of our 23rd and 24th fellows, Christopher Salvador, PharmD and Vanja Sikirica, PharmD.

The skills that are required to measure the value of medical interventions and understand the development of healthcare policies are best acquired through a combination of experience and didactic training. The fellowship program provides these skills through a unique model, where the first year is spent working as a researcher in the Department, and the second year is spent working as a researcher at the sponsor's site.

Since the program's inception, the Department has worked with several fellowship sponsors, including major pharmaceutical manufacturers and a health insurer. Current sponsors include Ortho-McNeil Janssen Scientific Affairs LLC, GlaxoSmithKline, and Cephalon.

The objectives of the program are:

- To educate the fellow on health economic and epidemiological principles, and to demonstrate the application of these principles in evaluating the costs and outcomes of medication therapy and healthcare services
- To provide the fellow with practical experience and opportunities to apply research methodologies in the assessment of economic, clinical, and humanistic outcomes
- To expose the fellow to a variety of perspectives on the economics of drug development, including that of the pharmaceutical industry, health insurers, and providers
- To foster the leadership skills required for the fellow to effectively manage projects in a variety of healthcare settings.

Although many fellows have completed the program with the goal of obtaining a position in the pharmaceutical industry, several graduates are working for health insurers or outcomes research consulting firms. Through the years, many of our fellows have successfully climbed the career ladder, from entry-level to mid- or upper-management level positions. In many cases, sponsors have hired our fellowship graduates, with 10 graduates currently employed by a current or former sponsor or corporate subsidiary of the sponsor.

We are greatly appreciative to our sponsors for their continued support, and to you, our colleagues, for providing us with feedback about the program.

In addition to the pharmacy fellowship program, the Department of Health Policy also offers a Physician Fellowship program (see notice below). To inquire about

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sponsorship opportunities or apply for one of our fellowships, please contact Laura Pizzi, Fellowship Director, at (215) 955-1159 or e-mail laura.pizzi@jefferson.edu. Each position begins in June 2006.

About the Author

Laura Pizzi, PharmD, MPH, is Associate Director for Research in the Department of Health Policy, Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University.