

Background

The Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program prepares PharmD graduates to pursue careers in the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industries. This specialized training program enables fellows to enhance their professional growth and acquire specific skill sets through hands-on experience. Participants focus on a specific area of interest, which may include clinical research, marketing, medical information, regulatory affairs, or various other areas. Upon successful completion of the RPIF Program, alumni secure positions in many different specialty areas within industry. Over the history of the program, neither the core department in which RPIF Program alumni secure their first full time position nor the extent to which their first position is with their host company has been fully documented.

Previous research comparing host company hiring rates of RPIF Program alumni between various disciplines produced an understanding of the hiring trends of post-doctoral fellows into full-time functional roles.¹ The current research aims to attain a deeper understanding of the longitudinal migration of pharmacists throughout the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industries following completion of the RPIF program.

Objective

The objective of this study is to evaluate the core department in which RPIF Program alumni secure their first full time position and the frequency with which their first position has with their host company.

Methodology

The RPIF utilizes software to maintain an alumni database containing information such as i) fellowship company and core department (focus area of fellowship), ii) first position attained after RPIF Program completion, and iii) current employer and title. This data was analyzed to determine the percent age of RPIF Program alumni who are currently working within the pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical industry and the percentage of RPIF Program alumni who acquired their first position upon program completion within the pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical industry. The data was also used to determine whether RPIF Program alumni acquired their first position upon program completion and/or current position in the same core department in which they completed their fellowship or initial position. Missing alumni data was collected through an evaluation of online profiles in the LinkedIn professional networking site.

The alumni database contained nearly complete information about RPIF Program alumni who completed the program during 2003-2009 (n=327). However, in order to capture data from 187 RPIF Program alumni who completed the program between 1987-2002, a questionnaire was developed and distributed using the Zoomerang™ Survey tool. The survey included questions about partner company affiliation, core department, first position attained upon program completion and current position.

Results

Figure 1: 1987-2009 Alumni Fellowship Core Department Distribution (n=424)

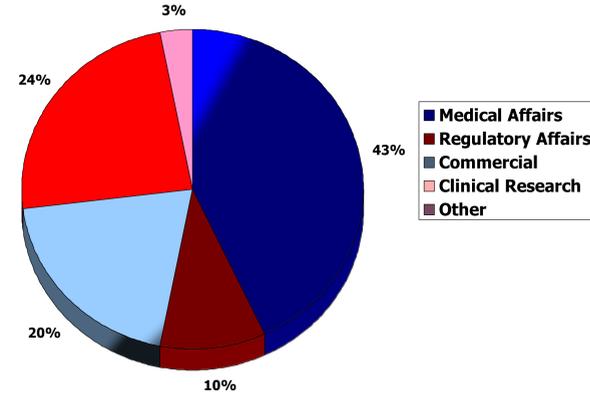


Figure 2: 1987-2009 Alumni Initial Position Post Fellowship Completion (n=424)

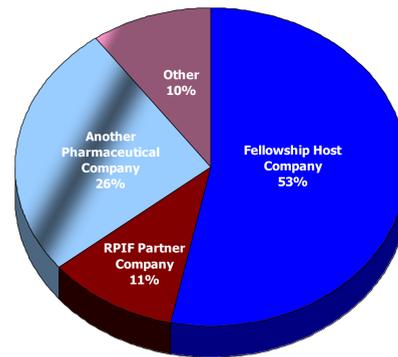
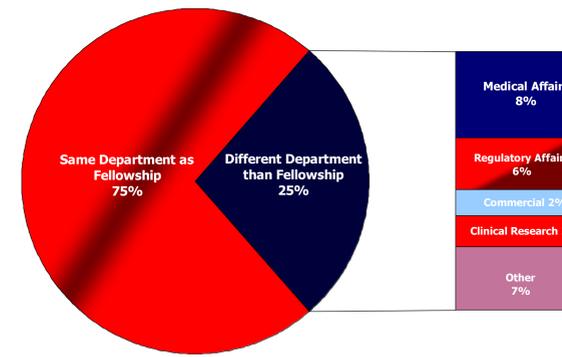


Figure 3: 1987-2009 Alumni Initial Department Post Fellowship Completion (n=424)



Medical Affairs: Publications, Medical Education, Medical Information, Medical Communications, Medical Strategy, Scientific Affairs, Medical Science Liaison
Commercial: Marketing, Managed Markets, Market Research, Business/Competitive Intelligence, Sales
Clinical Research: Clinical Investigations, Clinical Operations, Clinical Pharmacology, Clinical Development, Translational Medicine

Figure 4: Percent of 2003-2009 Alumni Remaining in the Same Core Department (n=327)

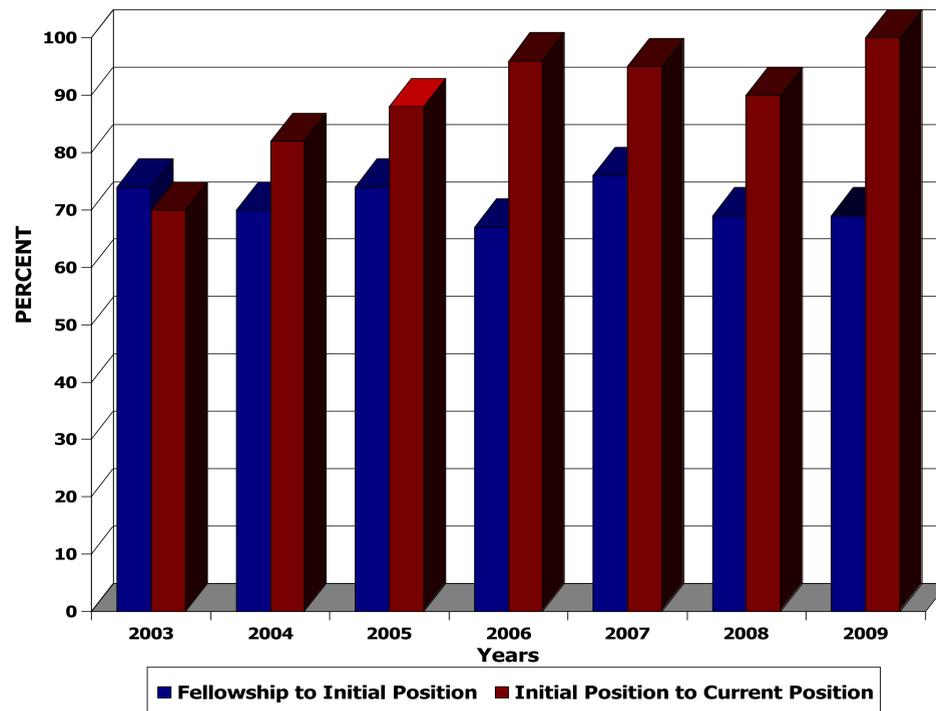
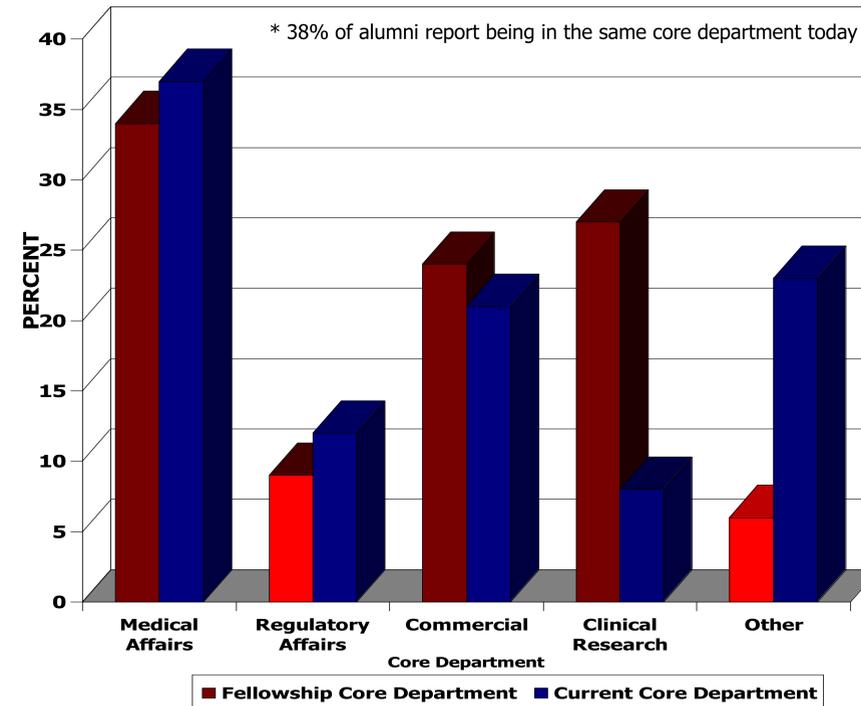


Figure 5: 1987-2002 Alumni Core Department Comparison (n=97)



Discussion

- Of 187 RPIF Program alumni who completed the program between 1987-2002, 97 completed the survey
- The majority (90%) of RPIF Program alumni were initially employed within the pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical industry
- The majority (75%) of RPIF Program alumni were initially employed in the same core department in which they completed their fellowship program
- Most RPIF Program alumni have pursued a career within medical affairs, which is consistent with the core capabilities of a pharmacist
- Of RPIF Program alumni completing the program from 1987-2002, only 38% report being in the same core department today. Over time, many alumni have transitioned into different departments outside of their fellowship core department (Fig. 5)
- Responses indicated a higher rate of 1987-2002 alumni leaving clinical research roles and an increase in alumni transitioning into medical affairs, regulatory affairs, and other roles (Fig. 5)

Limitations:

- Information in LinkedIn is not updated on a consistent basis
- Position titles may vary significantly between companies
- Interpretation of position titles and corresponding core department was dependent on investigator judgment.
- Data from about 100% of 2003-2009 program alumni was combined with data from about 50% of 1987-2002 alumni to get a representation of "total" program alumni

Conclusions

Most RPIF Program alumni initially stay in the core department they were trained during their fellowship. However, as they progress in their careers they are more likely to change to a different department. The transition of RPIF Program alumni into various departments and roles outside of their core fellowship department, demonstrates the RPIF Program's ability to prepare fellows for multiple roles and responsibilities in the pharmaceutical industry.

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1. Savidge RD. et al, Comparison of hiring rates at host companies for medical information post-doctoral fellows versus other disciplines and potential influencing factors, 2008, 19th Annual Medical Communications Workshop. Poster