

Are There Benefits of Completing a Pharmacy Residency Prior to a Career in PHARMA? A Survey of Opinions From the Industry

Hiren Kachhia¹, PharmD; Monica Arora¹, PharmD; Theia Monera¹, PharmD, MS; Lesley Fierro², PharmD, MS; Michael Toscani¹, PharmD; Joseph Barone¹, PharmD, FCCP
1 – Rutgers University, 2 – Sanofi, Medical Information

Introduction

- According to the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP), "By 2020, residency training should become a prerequisite for entry into pharmacy practice"¹
- Clinical residency is widely accepted as training that ultimately improves direct patient care
- Skills attained during clinical residency can prepare a pharmacist for successful careers such as those in the pharmaceutical industry (PHARMA)
- In this study we assessed the utility of a clinical residency by industry professionals for a successful career in PHARMA, an area of increasing interest

Methods

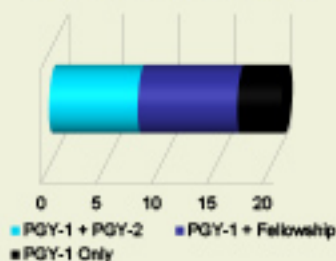
- An online survey was disseminated to individuals who meet the following criteria: 1) Graduated with a degree in pharmacy (BS or PharmD) and 2) Completed an elective PGY-1 residency
- Eligible individuals were identified by current Fellows of the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program
- The survey assessed the opinions of the respondents on the value and the impact of clinical residency on their careers in PHARMA
- The survey included rating scales and multiple choice questions, and was open for two weeks
- The survey was approved in accordance with Rutgers IRB policies and procedures

Results

Figure 1: Type of PGY-1 Residency Completed



Figure 2: Pharmacists Completing Either PGY-2 Residency or Fellowship in Addition to PGY-1 Residency



Results

Figure 3: Years of Clinical Practice Prior to Career in PHARMA (n=27)

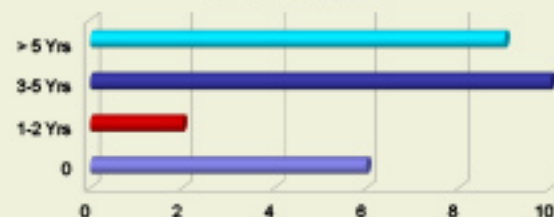


Figure 5: View on Whether Acquired Skills Facilitated Transition to PHARMA and Whether Skills Are Still Utilized (n = 28)

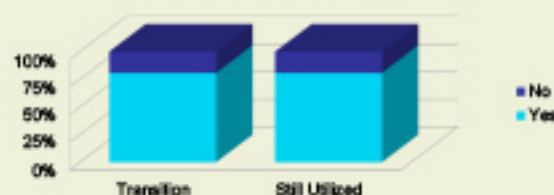


Figure 7: Relevance of Skills Acquired to Practice in PHARMA (Rated 1-5 (5 Most Relevant))



Figure 9: Perception of Advantage Conferred Over Others Without Equivalent Experience (n = 26)



Figure 4: Field of PHARMA Employed (n = 27)

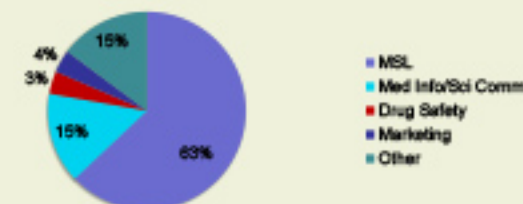


Figure 8: Assessment of Most Relevant Clinical Skill to Practice in PHARMA (n = 24)

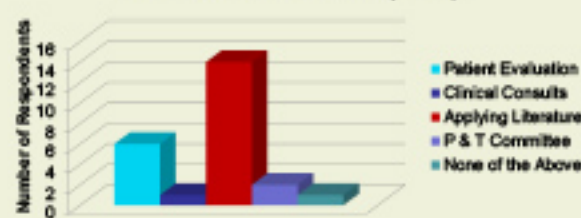


Figure 8: Value of Residency to Career in PHARMA (Rated 1-5 (5 Most Valuable))

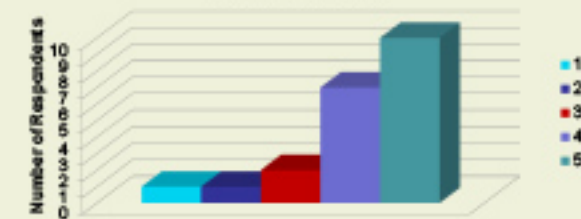
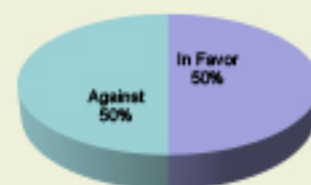


Figure 10: Perception of Proposal to Make Residencies Mandatory (n = 28)



Discussion

- Most survey respondents completed a general residency (78%) with the remainder of the respondents selecting "other", potentially meaning they proceeded directly to a specialty residency or the residency was prior to "PGY1/PGY2" designation (See Fig 1)
- In addition to a PGY-1, there was a fairly even split between those who have completed a PGY-2 or Fellowship (See Fig 2)
- The majority of respondents worked in clinical practice for 3-5 years (37%) (See Fig 3) prior to starting in the industry and have been employed in PHARMA for 10-15 years (44%)
- The highest rated skills on a scale of 1-5 (5 = highest) obtained during clinical residency training include: Interaction with healthcare professionals (4.61), participation in clinical research projects (4.32), and project management skills (4.26) (See Fig 7)
- The lowest rated skill obtained during clinical residency training was budgeting (2.59)
- Most pharmacists stated their residency positively contributed to their careers in PHARMA. The average rating was 4.28 in response to the question "how valuable do you consider your residency to your career in PHARMA?" (See Fig 8)
- In response to the question "if you have completed a clinical residency and fellowship, which has been more vital to your career in PHARMA" the following results were seen: Residency, 3; Fellowship, 5; Equally vital, 4; Neither, 1
- 88% of surveyors believed their residency resulted in a competitive advantage (See Fig 9)

Limitations

- The sample size of the study was limited to 27 pharmacists
- The majority of the respondents (19) are employed as a Medical Science Liaison, with the next highest category being Medical Information/Scientific Communications (4) (See Fig 4)
- An inconsistency was observed among two questions, in the first of which 9 pharmacists claimed that they completed both a residency and fellowship. However in a follow-up question 13 pharmacists responded to a question comparing residency and fellowship experiences

Conclusion

- Pharmacists responding to the survey found clinical residency training to positively contribute to their careers in PHARMA
- Half of the pharmacists surveyed agree with ACCP in making residencies a mandatory pharmacist licensing requirement relating to a career in PHARMA
- Given the high responses from MSLs, the authors believe that in the future, studies can be designed to address whether residencies are beneficial in other cross-functional areas
- In the future, it may be interesting to compare opinions between pharmacists who have completed a residency to those without equivalent clinical experience

References

1. Knapp KK, Shah BM, Hyun-Kim HB, et al. Visions for Required Postgraduate Year 1 Residency Training by 2020: A Comparison of Actual versus Projected Expansion. *Pharmacotherapy* 2009; 29: 1030-1038