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Background

- There is limited information in the literature about the rate of industry-based pharmacists remaining active in clinical practice. It has been documented, however, that pharmacists as a whole take on second jobs separate from their main source of income (moonlighting) at a greater rate than the average workforce (13% versus 5%).¹ Reasons for this include financial and expanding professional skillsets.^{2,3}
- A career in pharmacy offers flexibility for licensed pharmacists to hold positions in multiple healthcare settings. It is unknown how many pharmacists working in the pharmaceutical industry have an active license or stay in clinical practice by moonlighting.

Objectives

- To collect licensure data of industry-based pharmacists.
- To identify the rate and extent of industry-based pharmacists working in an alternative practice setting.
- To determine the most common pharmacy practice setting and reasons why industry-based pharmacists moonlight in addition to their industry position.

Methods

- In late February 2016 a voluntary web-based anonymous survey created through Qualtrics was distributed via email to pharmacists at pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, which was the only inclusion criteria. Individuals were referred from the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program (~800 alumni) or via networking avenues.
- This adaptive survey had a maximum of 20 questions. Question types were multiple choice, fill in the blank, and Likert scale. Participants were allowed to submit a blank survey or skip any questions that they did not wish to answer.
- Participants had two weeks to complete the survey. The survey closed in March 2016 with data analyzed shortly thereafter.
- This study was approved by Rutgers Institutional Review Board.

Results

- 108 pharmacists started the survey and 101 (93.5%) completed it.
- Of the 101 respondents who completed the survey, 96% (n=97) currently work in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries with the remaining 4% (n=4) having worked in industry previously.
- Survey respondents represented a variety of pharmaceutical industry departments. The departments most represented of those currently working in industry are shown in **Figure 1**. The group "Other" was also highly ranked (n=15, 16%), with the following responses provided: Advocacy, Business Development, Clinical Market Research, FDA, Market Research, Medical Affairs, Medical Affairs Strategy, Medical Education, Medical Information/Independent Medical Education/Risk Management, Medical Research and Strategy, and Technical Operations.

Results (continued)

Figure 1. Departments of current industry-based pharmacists.

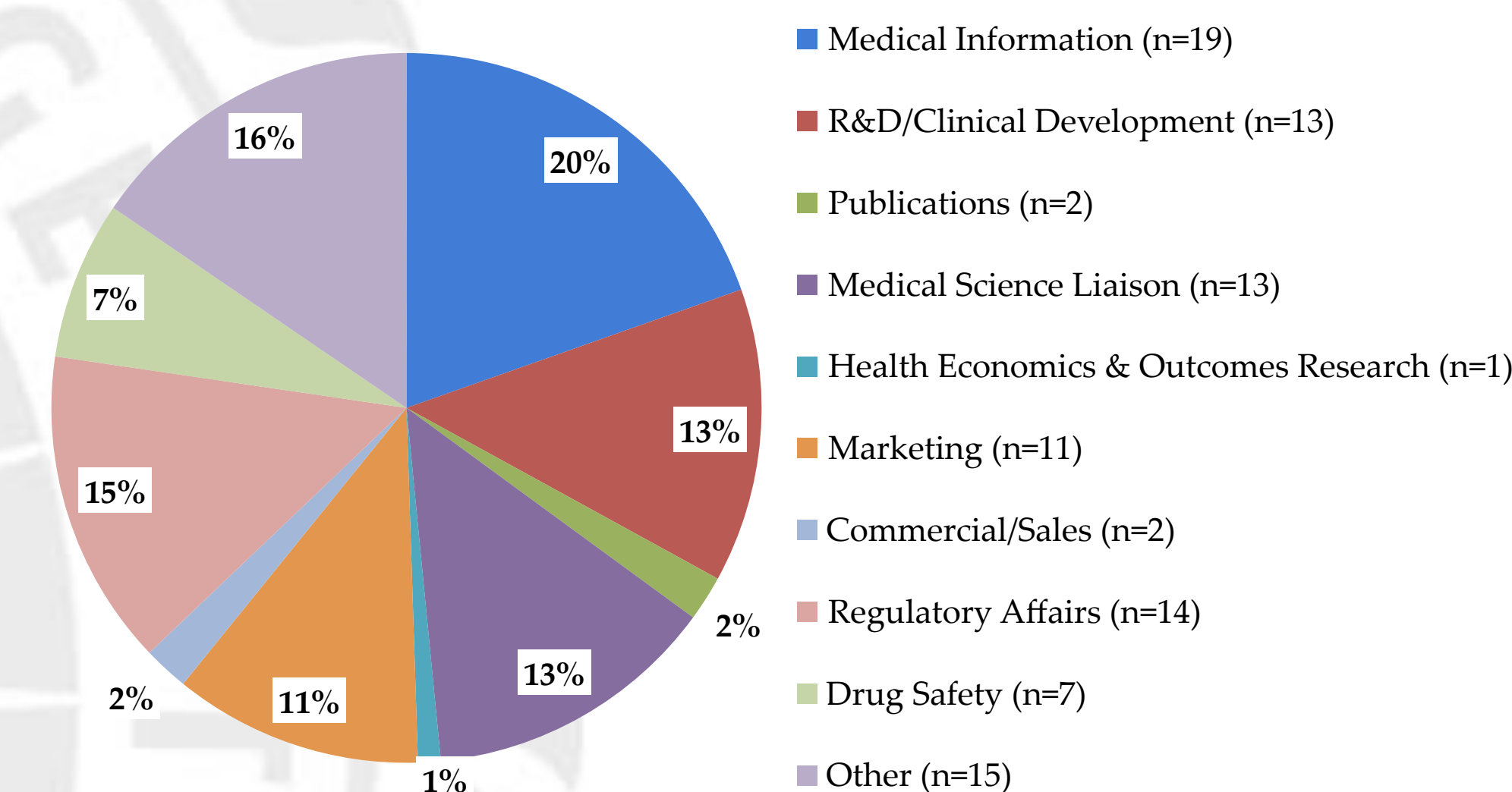
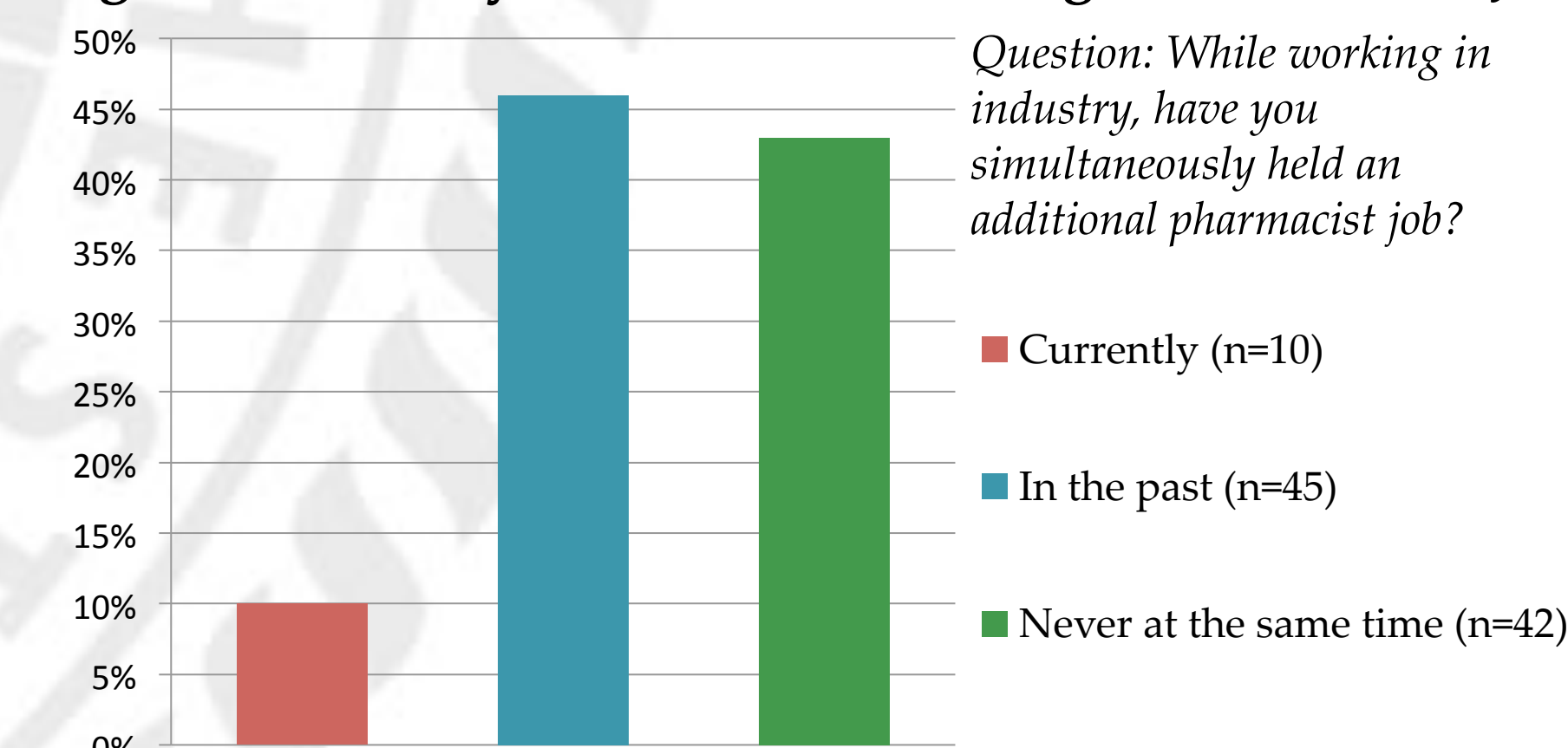


Figure 2. Industry Pharmacists Working an Additional Job



- Pharmacists were asked if they felt working in their alternative pharmacy practice setting made them a better industry pharmacist, and vice versa. In both instances, a majority of pharmacists saw a benefit to working in industry and their selected practice at the same time (**Figures 3 and 4**). Positive open-ended feedback related to the questions shown in **Figures 3 and 4** included: higher appreciation for the job, incorporating a variety of different skills between roles, a better understanding of clinical data, ability to listen to patient concerns, gaining of competitive intelligence, and a broadening of perspective. However, other respondents listed the following unfavorable reasons: potential bias, very different environments, and no direct relation between them.

Table 1. Analysis of Alternative Pharmacy Practice Settings and Reasons for Working

Reasons for Working in the Selected Practice Setting	Pharmacy Practice Settings Worked While Maintaining an Industry Position							
	Hospital (staff) 12 [†]	Hospital (clinical) 2 [†]	Community (chain) 27 [†]	Community (independent) 17 [†]	Managed Care 1 [†]	Long-Term Care 1 [†]	Consulting 1 [†]	
Financial	8	2	24	10	1	1	1	
Utilizing license	5	1	14	7	1	0	0	
Keeping current	10	1	15	12	1	0	0	
Enjoyment	2	1	2	5	0	0	1	
Job security	4	0	2	3	0	1	0	
Patient interaction	2	0	11	7	0	1	0	
Other	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	

[†]Values represent all areas selected by the 55 respondents

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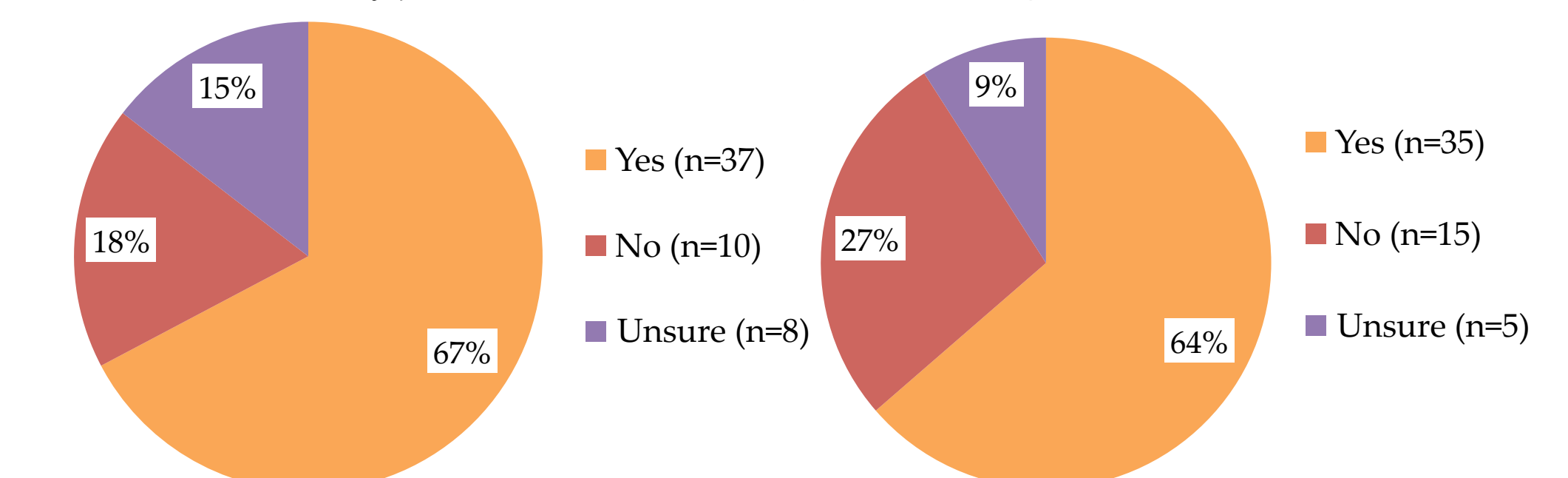
Results (continued)

- Of the 101 individuals who completed this survey, 89% (n=90) stated they currently hold an active pharmacist license.
- Of those currently working in industry (n=97), 89% (n=86) have active licensure. Only 3% (n=3) stated their industry employer requires to be licensed whereas the majority (n=83, 97%) stated they are not required.
- Average length of licensure for all of those holding an active license (n=90) was reported as 9.59 years (range: 0.00 to 30.00).
- An impressive 19% of respondents (n=17) hold licensure in two states but most respondents (n=69, 77%) are active in only one state. Two individuals reported holding licensure in 3 states and another 2 noted being active in 4 or more.
- A majority of pharmacists (57%) held an additional pharmacy role while simultaneously working in the pharmaceutical industry at some point in their career (**Figure 2**).

Figures 3 and 4. Feedback on Moonlighting While in Industry

Question: Do you think working in your selected practice setting(s) helps/helped you to be a better industry pharmacist?

Question: Do you think being an industry pharmacist helps/helped you in your selected practice setting(s)?



Results (continued)

- The top reasons that industry pharmacists worked an additional pharmacy practice job were "financial" (n=42, 76%), "keeping current" (n=34, 62%), "utilizing license" (n=26, 47%), and "patient interaction" (n=18, 33%).
- The most common alternative practice setting was community (chain), followed by community (independent), and hospital (staff). Reasons for working an additional job varied by the respective practice setting. The top reason for working community (chain) was "financial", whereas community (independent) and hospital (staff) was "keeping current" (**Table 1**).
- Industry pharmacists who rated "patient interaction" as a reason for moonlighting was 41.1%, 40.7%, and 16.7% for community (independent), community (chain), and hospital (staff) pharmacists, respectively (**Table 1**).

Discussion

- Of the 55 respondents that reported moonlighting, there were 5 that held pharmacist jobs in multiple settings at some point during their industry career. For example, one pharmacist indicated working in both Hospital (staff) and Community (chain) settings.
- Although industry pharmacists moonlight mainly for financial reasons, a large percentage noted other reasons which varied by practice setting.
- Practicing industry-based pharmacists reported working on average per month 3.53 days and 22.33 hours. The time worked by these individuals is not insignificant given that they also work full-time.
- A majority of these respondents are former post-doctoral pharmacy fellows and may not be representative of the typical pharmacists employed in industry.

Conclusions

- Industry pharmacists maintain active pharmacy licensure at a high rate and some even have pharmacy licenses across multiple states.
- Working in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry does not limit pharmacists from using their license and practicing in patient care.
- Industry-based pharmacists most often moonlight in community (chain) pharmacy and for financial reasons.
- Additional research should be conducted to further evaluate pharmacists' moonlighting roles and those of other professions (physicians, nurses, etc.) who work in the industry.

References

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