

# EXPLORING THE DIVERSITY AVAILABLE IN POST-DOCTORAL PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY DRUG INFORMATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of a drug information specialist utilizes strong clinical, communication and leadership skills that are not often adequately refined upon completion of a didactic program. In addition to fulfilling essential drug information responsibilities, many specialists support sales, marketing, regulatory, safety, legal and company wide initiatives. These skills would be hard to achieve just upon initiation of a new position, but can be attained through programs such as post-doctoral drug information fellowships and residencies. With the emerging fellowships and residencies, it is critical that the program develops the professional expertise of an individual and also meets the needs of its organization. While many fundamentals of industry-based drug information programs are similar, the scope of responsibilities and opportunities in each program provide a broad range of unique learning opportunities.

## OBJECTIVES

- Determine the core set of responsibilities of industry-based drug information post-doctoral fellow and resident programs
- Identify methods to improve current drug information post-doctoral fellowship programs
- Measure fellow and resident post-doctoral drug information satisfaction
- Determine the ideal industry-based drug information fellowship program based on fellow and resident opinion and feedback

## METHODS

### Design

A 25-question survey was created and completed by current post-doctoral pharmaceutical industry drug information fellows and residents.

### Data Collection

A questionnaire was developed to identify fellows and residents exposure to the following:

- after-hour emergency call coverage
- attendance at regional or national professional meetings
- attending brand team meetings
- community service activity participation
- company executive management interactions
- creating AMCP Dossiers and formulary kits
- developing database letters
- formal presentations
- interaction with other departments: pharmacovigilance, sales, marketing, regulatory, and legal
- leading fellow/resident initiatives
- mentorship program
- networking opportunities
- product launch participation
- reviewing promotional materials
- sales force support
- sales or medical liaison training
- teaching and/or precepting PharmD students
- telephone inquiry coverage
- updating website

### Additional Aspects Measured:

- core responsibilities defined to be >50% of actual
- fellow satisfaction and improvements
- ideal responsibilities

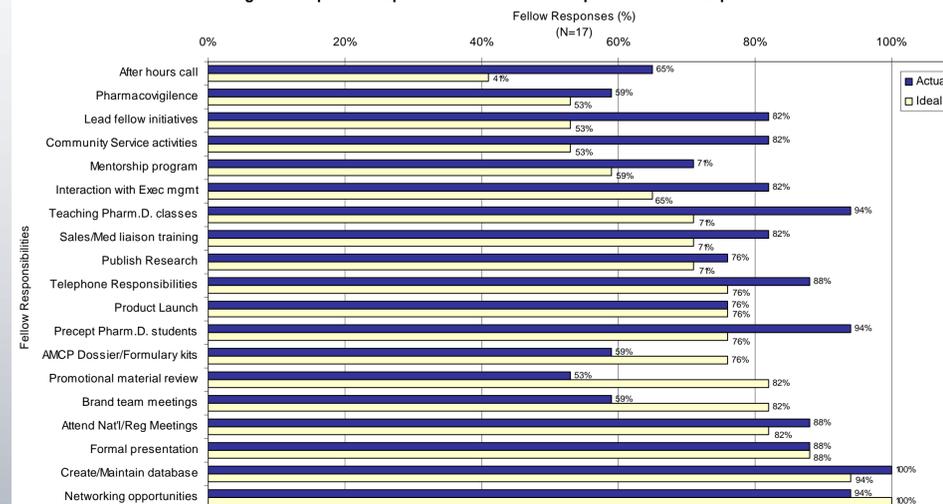
### Target Population

Thirty questionnaires were distributed via email to the following companies for the fellows and residents to fill out:

- AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals
- Aventis Pharmaceuticals
- Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
- Centocor, Inc.
- Eli Lilly and Company
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Hoffmann-La Roche Inc.
- Janssen Pharmaceutica
- Ortho-Biotech
- Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- PPD Medical Communications
- Schering-Plough Corporation

## RESULTS

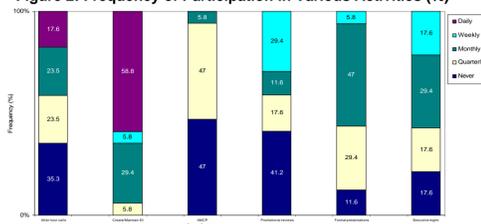
Figure 1: Important Aspects to an Ideal Fellowship Versus Actual Exposure



### Data results:

AMCP Dossier/Formulary kit: Ideal: 76%, Actual: 59%  
 Promotional Material Review: Ideal: 82%, Actual: 53%  
 Brand Team Meeting: Ideal: 82%, Actual: 59%  
 Networking: Ideal: 100%, Actual: 94%

Figure 2: Frequency of Participation in Various Activities (%)



**Never participate**  
 AMCP Dossier/Formulary kits: 47%  
 Promotional review: 41.2%  
 After hour calls: 35.3%  
 Interact with executive mgmt: 17.6%  
 Formal Presentation: 11.6%  
 Create/maintain DI database: 0%

**Participate daily**  
 Create/maintain DI database: 58.8%  
 After hour calls: 17.6%  
 AMCP Dossier/Formulary kit: 0%  
 Promotional review: 0%  
 Formal presentations: 0%  
 Interact with executive mgmt: 0%

Figure 4: Time Spent on Phones Weekly

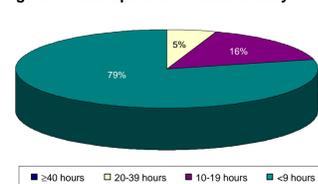
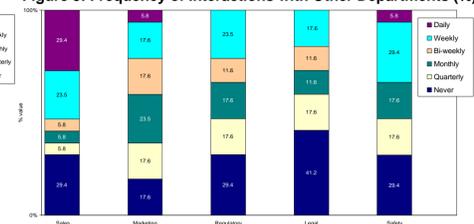


Figure 3: Frequency of Interactions with Other Departments (%)

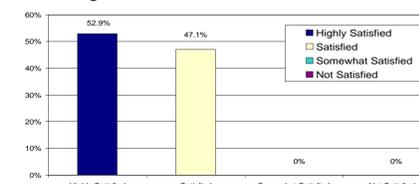


**Never interacts**  
 Legal: 41.2%  
 Sales, Regulatory, Safety: 29.4%  
 Marketing: 17.6%

**Interact daily**  
 Sales: 29.4%  
 Marketing, Safety: 5.8%  
 Regulatory, Legal: 0%

**Brand team meeting role 58.8%** - lead 0%, participate 23.5%, attend 35.3%

Figure 5: Fellow and Resident Satisfaction



**Improvements suggested by fellows/residents**  
 Less time on phones  
 Attend national meetings  
 Field visits with Sales Reps & Medical Science Managers  
 Option of choosing one rotation within the company  
 Sales training exposure

## DISCUSSION

Core responsibilities are defined as any task >50%, therefore all exposures listed in figure 1 would be considered a core responsibility. Although core responsibilities were thought to be functions directly related to drug information (i.e. letter writing, responding to phone inquiries) many of the core responsibilities were not directly related to drug information activities (i.e. teaching or preceptor to students, mentorship program)

In evaluating interactions with other departments, fellows had the least interactions with the Legal department possibly due to the nature of the work. In addition, a number of fellows do not interact with Sales, Regulatory and Safety departments. These interactions are important for the fellow/resident to:

- Gain exposure to these departments in order to understand the company business
- Expand opportunities with brand team meetings, routing information through a copy approval system, making business initiatives, etc.
- Increase interaction with Safety because reporting adverse events is an integral part of drug information

Lack of daily participation was identified in four areas. However, these activities may not be available to the fellow on a daily basis or may be conducted in another department.

- AMCP Dossier/Formulary kits (*least participation overall*)
- Promotional review
- Formal presentations
- Interactions with executive management

Of the four areas lacking daily participation, an increase in the amount of opportunities for formal presentations may be beneficial for programs as it will enhance career development for the fellow/resident. Daily interactions with executive management may not be realistic, but should be available on a quarterly basis which is the case in approximately 65% of the responses.

There was no correlation between activities and fellow/resident satisfaction.

Improvements made by the fellows/residents that are listed under figure 5 could be the reason why some individuals were only satisfied as opposed to being highly satisfied.

AMCP Dossiers/Formulary kits, promotional review of materials, attending brand team meetings and networking opportunities are areas where fellow/resident exposure could be increased to give fellows/residents a more ideal and diverse experience leading to increased satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION

Many of the core responsibilities and fundamentals of industry-based drug information post-doctoral fellowship and residency programs are similar. However, the unique responsibilities and activities in each program provided a broad range of comparable learning opportunities. Drug information fellows and residents were all exposed to a diverse array of responsibilities, but not necessarily to the same extent.

This survey will hopefully assist preceptors in improving the already excellent fellowship and residency opportunities available.