

# Comparison of Hiring Rates at Host Companies for Medical Information Post-Doctoral Fellows versus Other Disciplines and Potential Influencing Factors

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## Introduction

The Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program is designed to prepare pharmacists for a career in the pharmaceutical industry through 1- and 2-year fellowships in various fields including Medical Information, Medical Affairs, Clinical Research, Regulatory Affairs, Marketing Research, Medical Education and Marketing, among others. Since its inception in 1984, approximately 450 post-doctoral fellows have completed the RPIF Program.

Access to a pipeline of talent is an important benefit for the 13 companies in the pharmaceutical industry and medical communications business currently participating in the Program. Trends have indicated that many Fellows pursued careers either in their host company or with one of Rutgers' other partner companies. Each year the hiring rates of all graduating Fellows are measured in an exit survey, however the hiring rates among various disciplines at host companies have not been measured.

## Objectives

- To compare the host company hiring rates between medical information and other disciplines within the RPIF Program.
- To identify potential influencing factors that may have contributed to Fellows' decisions to accept a position with the host company upon completion of the Program.

## Methods

A comprehensive 17 question survey was sent via Zoomerang™ (an online survey tool) to 224 RPIF Program alumni between 2003 and 2007.

For the purpose of this study:

- Medical Information = Drug Information and Medical Communications
- Medical Affairs = Medical Strategy and Scientific Affairs
- Clinical Research = Clinical Pharmacology, Clinical Development, Clinical Operations, Translational Medicine, and Clinical Investigations
- Potential for career advancement = the ability to achieve career goals and company commitment to personal development
- Personal factors = relationships built with co-workers, flexible working arrangements and onsite day care

## Results

- 124 of 224 (55%) alumni responded and were included in the analysis. The percentage of respondents from each Fellowship class was similar.
- 90% of respondents accepted a position within the pharmaceutical industry after completing the RPIF Program. Of the 10% that did not choose to work for a pharmaceutical company, alumni chose careers within government agencies (i.e., FDA, CDC), managed care, community pharmacy, and hospital pharmacy, among other fields.

## Results (continued)

Figure 1. Survey Respondents' Area of Fellowship Focus, n=124

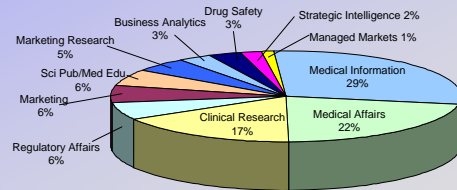


Table 1. Hiring Rates of Fellows at Host Company Immediately Following the Program

| Area of Focus                | Positions In Area of Focus and at Host Company |                 |                 | Total number that accepted positions at host company |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|--|
|                              | Applied  | Offered         | Accepted        |  |
| Medical Information (n=36)   | 21 (58%)                                       | 14 (39%)        | 11 (31%)        | 15 (44%)   |
| Medical Affairs (n=27)       | 21 (78%)                                       | 14 (52%)        | 10 (37%)        | 17 (63%)   |
| Clinical Research (n=21)     | 17 (81%)                                       | 15 (71%)        | 12 (57%)        | 14 (66%)   |
| Regulatory Affairs (n=8)     | 6 (75%)  | 6 (75%)         | 4 (50%)         | 4 (50%)  |
| Marketing (n=7)              | 4 (57%)  | 3 (43%)         | 2 (29%)         | 3 (43%)  |
| Sci Pub/ Med Edu (n=7)       | 3 (43%)  | 3 (43%)         | 3 (43%)         | 3 (43%)  |
| Marketing Research (n=6)     | 2 (33%)  | 2 (33%)         | 2 (33%)         | 2 (33%)  |
| Drug Safety (n=4)            | 4 (100%)                                       | 2 (50%)         | 2 (50%)         | 3 (75%)  |
| Business Analytics (n=4)     | 1 (25%)  | 1 (25%)         | 0 (0%)          | 0 (0%)   |
| Strategic Intelligence (n=3) | 3 (100%)                                       | 2 (66%)         | 1 (33%)         | 2 (66%)  |
| Managed Markets (n=1)        | 1 (100%)                                       | 0 (0%)          | 0 (0%)          | 0 (0%)   |
| <b>Total (n=124)</b>         | <b>83 (67%)</b>                                | <b>62 (50%)</b> | <b>47 (38%)</b> | <b>64 (52%)</b>                                      |

Figure 2. Time Spent in Area of Focus Since Program Completion

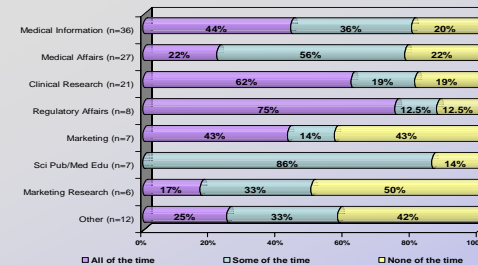


Figure 3. Amount of Time Spent in Host Company Since Program Completion, n=124

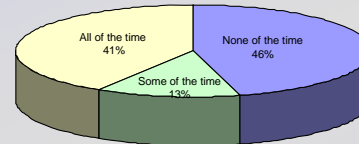


Figure 4. Potential Factors Influencing Respondents' Decisions to Accept a Position After the Program

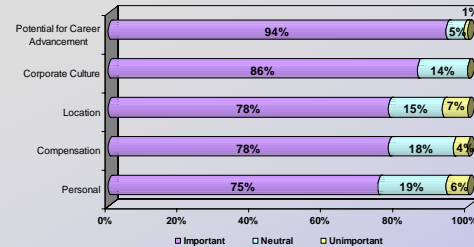
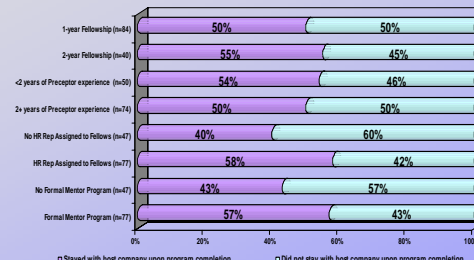


Figure 5. Fellowship Attributes and Respondents' Decisions to Stay with Their Host Companies upon Program Completion



## Discussion

Immediately following the Program, 38% of respondents accepted positions in their area of focus at their host companies. Overall, 52% of respondents accepted positions at their host companies immediately following the Program. This number was similar to the average hiring rate of all graduating Fellows at their host companies (53%), as measured in the annual RPIF exit surveys.

The majority of Fellows remained in their areas of focus for at least some of the time after completing the Program: 38% Regulatory Affairs, 86% Scientific Publications/Medical Education, 81% Clinical Research, 80% Medical Information and 78% Medical Affairs. In contrast, 43% of Marketing and 50% of Marketing Research respondents spent none of their time in their area of focus after completing the RPIF Program.

Career advancement and corporate culture were rated as the most important factors in accepting a position, with location, compensation and personal factors being ranked as slightly less important.

The hiring rates of Fellows who stayed with their host companies upon Program completion were similar among 1- and 2-year Fellowships and the years of preceptor experience.

More respondents stayed with their host companies upon Program completion when the company assigned an HR representative and/or a formal mentor program to their Fellows.

## Limitations

The survey title may have created a lower response rate from those alumni that did not complete Medical Information Fellowships. The response rate to this survey among Medical Information alumni was 80% compared to a response rate of 59% for Medical Affairs alumni and 45% of Clinical Research alumni.

There was not enough representation among certain areas of focus (e.g. Managed Markets and Strategic Intelligence) or Fellowships that were newly established (e.g. less than 5 years in the Program).

The study did not factor the number or type of positions available at the time that alumni were looking and this may have affected the acceptance rates at the host companies upon completion of the Program.

## Conclusions

Overall hiring rates of respondents at their host companies immediately following the Program were 66% for Clinical Research alumni, 63% for Medical Affairs alumni, 50% for Regulatory Affairs alumni and 44% for Medical Information alumni.

This information can be used by host companies to assist in talent retention. Companies looking to improve the hiring rates of their Fellows may consider adding dedicated HR representatives and offering formal mentor programs. Host companies should also be aware that graduating Fellows consider the potential for career advancement and corporate culture as the two most important factors when making their decisions about initial positions.

## Disclosures & Acknowledgements

All authors of this study are paid employees of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Acknowledgements: Karen Cohen, PharmD and Lucy Jiang, PharmD