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CPPI Practice Forum

Practice Forum: A new section led by the Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Pharmacy

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INTRODUCTION

It is our pleasure to introduce a new section in Pharmacy Practice entitled "CPPI Practice Forum", which will be led by the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Pharmacy Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation (CPPI). This invitation-only section will serve as a platform for individuals to share opinions on key issues affecting pharmacy practice across a wide range of areas. The purpose of this initial commentary is to describe the CPPI, how the collaboration with Pharmacy Practice became a reality, and what you can expect from this section.

THE CENTER FOR PHARMACY PRACTICE INNOVATION

VCU is an urban, public research-intensive university known for its commitment to the community, embrace of diversity, and providing state-of-the-art healthcare to everyone. Established in 1898, the VCU School of Pharmacy has embodied these core principles and long been a leader and innovator in pharmacy practice, education, and research. Faculty at the VCU School of Pharmacy have played a significant role in advancing the pharmacy profession across a wide spectrum of practice areas and served as leaders of major professional organizations. In light of the School's history and commitment to advancing pharmacy practice, the School held a Practice Transformation Conference in 2011 to bring together leaders and innovators to advance pharmacist-led patient care activities. Based on the input from conference attendees and the critical need to devise novel solutions to mitigate our nation's health care crisis, the VCU School of Pharmacy launched a research center in October 2015 to lead its pharmacy practice innovation efforts - the Center for Pharmacy Practice Transformation.¹

In 2016, the Center was officially established under new leadership and renamed the Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation (www.cpqi.pharmacy.vcu.edu). The Center

leadership and core faculty agreed on the shared mission to help pharmacists maximize patient outcomes. The CPPI aims to become a leader in transforming ambulatory and community pharmacy practice to advance pharmacists' roles on patient-centered, collaborative care teams. We approach this work from three core values: 'connected' with the reality of the real-world practice; 'committed' to our mission of working with pharmacists to demonstrate the impact of the care they provide; and 'collaborative' with partners from health-systems, community pharmacies, professional associations, and governmental agencies. The four goals of the CPPI are to:

1. Develop, implement, and evaluate innovative and sustainable care models that incorporate pharmacists to optimize medication-related patient health outcomes.
2. Foster collaboration among clinicians and outcomes researchers to determine pharmacist impact on clinical, humanistic, and economic outcomes.
3. Equip pharmacists with the knowledge, skills and abilities to engage in interprofessional, collaborative care.
4. Partner with clinicians, health systems, policymakers, and payers to advance medication and health policies at the local, state, and national level.

Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation's Research agenda

Similarly to VCU, several other Schools of Pharmacy have established centers focused on practice-based research to propel pharmacy practice advancement and innovation. One of the first research endeavors that CPPI embarked on was to identify and characterize existing centers at Schools of Pharmacy in the United States whose missions involve advancing pharmacy practice through research (manuscript under review). We identified 20 centers across 20 different states as of March 2017. In general, pharmacy practice research centers are relatively small, few conduct multi-site experimental studies, and funding received since center inception is low. We hope that this work will increase awareness of other pharmacy practice research centers and prompt our academic and clinical practice communities to work collaboratively and leverage resources for the conduct of multi-site studies, which will contribute to generate high-quality evidence, improve competitiveness for large funding opportunities, and advance policy to further the pharmacy profession.

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Articles in the CPPI Practice Forum section are the sole responsibility of the VCU School of Pharmacy Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation and do not undergo the standard peer review process of Pharmacy Practice.



To help us achieve our mission, we established partnerships with various health systems in Virginia, including: VCU Health, Bon Secours Mercy Health, and University of Virginia (UVA) Health System. At VCU Health, we are currently working with health system leadership to innovate the existing care model by shifting to value-based, team-oriented care with a specific focus on improving the quality of care for patients with diabetes and hypertension. The new care model will integrate more clinical pharmacists into endocrine specialty clinics, as well as primary care, to provide chronic disease management. We are also working with our Bon Secours Mercy Health partners to establish the impact of clinical pharmacist services provided by pharmacists incorporated into 12 of the 63 primary care practices in Virginia. The ultimate goal of this collaboration is to provide evidence of the value of pharmacists to the medical group with regard to population health efforts and individual patient health outcomes that could justify expansion of the pharmacists' scope of practice and increase the number of pharmacists providing care within the primary care setting. Finally, our collaboration with the UVA Health System aims to help disseminate several innovative pharmacy services developed and implemented by the pharmacy department in recent years, including a transition of care meds-to-beds program. Given many pharmacists are employed by health systems that are seeking to provide high-value care at low cost, there is significant opportunity for pharmacists to play a major role in these efforts.

Funded research is important for any research center's success. Recently, the CPPI has successfully obtained its first two extramural grants. In collaboration with the Virginia Department of Health, the CPPI was awarded USD1.3 million in funding over 5 years from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to implement evidence-based strategies to increase awareness and capacity for the National Diabetes Prevention Program and to improve the management of high blood pressure.² The project will seek to utilize pharmacists to meet both of these goals through collaborations with VCU Health, Virginia Premier, Virginia Pharmacists Association, and local community pharmacies. A second project funded by the Community Pharmacy Foundation will explore the feasibility of implementing 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring in community pharmacies. These projects have several commonalities that highlight the Center's focus on ambulatory/community pharmacy practice, sustainable services, and collaboration with community partners.

Center for Pharmacy Practice Innovation's Commitment to Education and Professional Development

In tandem with the CPPI's research efforts is its commitment to graduate education. Many of the CPPI core faculty are graduate faculty in the VCU School of Pharmacy which facilitates incorporation of PhD students within the

research activities of the Center. Additionally, we continuously host PharmD students for research summer internships and research electives. As a means to promote the visibility of CPPI among students, we organize quarterly student engagement activities with key opinion leaders or pioneers in pharmacy practice innovation. In the future, we plan to establish a fellowship to train PharmDs interested in practice-based research who may wish to enter academia or acquire research skills to measure the impact of their work in clinical practice. The CPPI's education efforts also extend to practicing pharmacists in need of education and training to develop new skills as pharmacy practice continues to evolve.

PHARMACY PRACTICE AND CPPI COLLABORATION

In August of 2018, the CPPI established a partnership with **Pharmacy Practice**, wherein CPPI is responsible for managing a dedicated section within the journal named "CPPI Practice Forum". The goal of this section is to serve as a platform for researchers and clinicians to share innovations in pharmacy practice that are under way at their institutions, whether it be academic or clinical-based, and to publish short articles (up to 2,000 words) expressing viewpoints on pharmacy practice-related topics. This section will not publish original research articles, which should be submitted to the journal following the standard process. Authors interested in providing a contribution to this section should contact CPPI prior to submission (cpipi@vcu.edu), as this is an invitation-only section. We hope to see the contribution of national and international leaders in pharmacy, both practicing clinicians and researchers.

Future topics lined up for upcoming issues of **Pharmacy Practice** include: pharmacist expansion to outpatient pediatric immunizations, role of Board certification in advancing pharmacy practice, role of pharmacists promoting the use of biosimilars, conflict management in health care, amongst others.

CONCLUSION

We are excited about this partnership with Pharmacy Practice and invite you to become part of the conversation about pharmacy practice advancement. We look forward to welcoming your contribution to the dissemination of innovations that are taking place in your country.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None to declare.

FUNDING

No external funding was received.

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