

Abstract Title: Drug Abuse/Addiction Education (PHRM 316): A Service-Learning Course

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Introduction:

Drug Abuse/Addiction Education (PHRM 316) is a one-credit, elective course for first professional year (P1) PharmD students offered each spring semester. Professors from two disciplines (i.e., Pharmacy Practice and Medicinal Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology) participate in an integrated instructional format. Second professional year (P2) PharmD students serve as teaching assistants in the course. At the end of the semester, the P1 students apply the knowledge and skills gained by presenting a drug abuse/addiction educational program to sixth graders.

Objective:

Specific objectives include: (1) to assess impact of a Drug Abuse/Addiction Education on the perceptions of P1 PharmD students enrolled in the course; and (2) to assess impact of the drug abuse/addiction educational program on the knowledge of the sixth graders.

Methods:

Otterbein Elementary School (sixth grade classes) serves as the community partner for this course. Over a three week period, P1 students enrolled in the course deliver five, drug abuse/addiction educational presentations (45 minutes each) to the sixth graders. Sixth graders complete a 12 item multiple-choice quiz before and after the series of presentations. Paired t-test analysis used to compare change for each item and overall pre- and post-quiz scores. P1 students reflect on the service-learning experience by completing an anonymous questionnaire at the start (16 items) and end (24 items) of the course utilizing a five point Likert scale [(strongly agree (5); strongly disagree (1)]. Wilcoxon sign ranked test used to compare changes in responses to the first 16 items. The Institutional Review Board at Purdue University approved this study for exempt status.

Results:

During the 2014 spring semester, 32, P1 students were enrolled in *Drug Abuse/Addiction Education*. The P1 students delivered the series of presentations to 46 - sixth graders at Otterbein Elementary School. All P1 students and all sixth graders participated in the project. Results indicate a statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) improvement in quiz scores as mean quiz scores increased by 35.2% following the series of presentations. Results indicate a statistically significant change in pharmacy students' perceptions (14 items; $p \leq 0.05$). At the completion of the course, all P1 students agreed/strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to educate the general public about drug abuse/addiction; teaching the sixth graders improved their presentation skills; and teaching the sixth graders was a unique experience that contributed to their pharmacy education.

Discussion/Conclusions:

The P1 students perceived this course as a positive experience which impacted their confidence, knowledge, and perceptions of civic responsibilities. Based on the success of the program, the sixth grade teachers at Otterbein Elementary School continually ask the pharmacy students to return each year.

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