ABSTRACT

The JSE-HPS includes a series of 20 questions using a 7-point Likert Scale (Table 2). Each question assesses the student’s level of agreement with a statement related to patient care and/or the healthcare professional-patient relationship. Questions that used an inverse (reverse) Likert Scale, were reversed scored to allow higher numerical scores to represent higher degrees of empathy. Cumulative score ranged from 20 to 140.

RESULTS

Changes in empathy was also assessed by baseline empathy scores. Students in the lowest quartile (scores 74-88) had the greatest increase in empathy. Students in quartile two and three also saw significant increases; however, there were no significant changes in scores for students in the highest quartile at baseline.

RESULTS CONTINUED

The results presented include only the inaugural PharmD students. As additional class years are enrolled in the program, the JSE-HPS will be administered at years 1, 2, 3, and 4. Initial results from the first class do raise some interesting revelations, such as the increases in empathy scores as a whole and significant change in empathy noted in quartile one.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Our goal is to track the longitudinal changes of empathy in our students over four years. Whether or not empathy scores will continue to increases as the curriculum progresses or if scores will fluctuate is yet to be seen. When empathy scores were tracked pre- and post- simulation, empathy scores tended to increase immediately post-simulation and then decrease with time.21 Additionally, effect of one year of Advanced Practice Experiences on empathy is of great interest.

While it is helpful to measure the degree of empathy in our students, the practical implications of the JSE-HPS still needs to be determined. Namely, can the JSE-HPS scores be correlated to empathy components of an objective structured clinical examination and how do pharmacists behave or perform differently based on their JSE-HPS score. We hope to explore these aspects as more data is gathered.

CONCLUSIONS

Empathy scores significantly increased after one year. Increases in empathy was seen in all students regardless of race, ethnicity, and gender. The greatest increase in empathy was seen in students with the lowest baseline empathy scores at year one.

REFERENCES

3. Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. Accreditation standards and key elements for the professional degree program in pharmacy leading to the Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Standards No. 11.1. Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). Available at: https://www.acpe-accredit.org/standards/053011.html.
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