Background

All fourth-year pharmacy students must complete one core advanced pharmacy practice experience (APPE) in a community pharmacy. Community pharmacy-bound students should ideally complete additional higher-level community pharmacy APPEs. Entry-level competencies for community pharmacy practice outlined by the NACPA-ACPE task force don't provide specific recommendations for core and elective learning activities. There is also no clear delineation between core APPE and IPPE learning activities.

Objective

Differentiate learning activities and skills for students in a core community pharmacy APPE versus an elective advanced community pharmacy APPE.

Methods

Semi-structured interviews with individuals and focus groups were conducted with 42 community pharmacy stakeholders (staff pharmacists, pharmacy managers, and district managers; faculty members; pharmacy students; pharmacy organization executives). Interview responses were analyzed to identify common themes needed in community pharmacy training at a core and an advanced elective community pharmacy APPE.

Implications

- The practice-ready community pharmacy-bound student should complete more than one APPE in this practice environment.
- Core and elective community pharmacy experiences should be clearly distinguishable to student, preceptor, and School.
- Preceptors for the elective APPEs will need to be carefully selected, oriented, and nurtured for development of an ideal learning environment.

Results

1 Stakeholders helped identify elements of a core community pharmacy experience for all students.

"So at a core pharmacy, my goal when students come is to have them, by their fourth week, be able to be the pharmacist. I don’t have to be there. So they do all the checking. They do pretty much everything." Pharmacy Manager

2 Stakeholder comments also informed identification and differentiation of purpose for each of the courses in the experiential education curriculum for the community pharmacy-bound student.

3 Examples further distinguish key performance areas in the series.