

Value-Driven Pharmacy Student-Led Rapid Cycle Process Engagement in Experiential and Didactic Settings Jennifer M. Malinowski, Wilkes University, Teresa Lacey, RN, Director Behavioral Health Initiative, Commonwealth Medical College, Linda Thomas MD, CEO, The Wright Center for Primary Care

## Background

Leveraging pharmacy students to satisfy additional workload requirements introduced by quality metrics promotes a mutually beneficial relationship that complements the missions of the academic institution and the health care organization.

## Objective

To explain student pharmacist-led projects that apply rapid cycle quality improvement (QI) processes (the "Plan-Do-Study-Act" model) to demonstrate value in didactic and experiential settings.

## Methods

During a 5-week advanced pharmacy practice experience (APPE) in ambulatory care, students lead a small QI project focused on population health and/or medication safety. Project assignments are decided upon by previous APPE students and/or in collaboration with clinic staff.

Recently, a primary care elective was developed for P2 and P3 students that incorporate similar principles used during the APPE rotation. A specialist in quality improvement taught students fundamentals of the PDSA process and self-directed learning and reflection was guided by outside readings that incorporated online quality improvement (QI) courses. Students applied the PDSA process to projects focused on unmet needs identified by local partners for a portion of their course grade.

## Results

Approximately 25% of the forty-three PDSAs completed were nominated or awarded with regional/national recognition. The data suggests that leveraging student pharmacists as system improvers helps to promote an accountable, innovative culture of learning in pharmacy education.

## Conclusion

Student pharmacist leadership of QI projects helps to satisfy some of the more challenging domains of leadership and innovation, entrepreneurship and self-awareness. Proactive engagement of academic partners to identify unmet needs that may be addressed by student pharmacists promotes a mutually beneficial relationship between academic and health care institutions.