BACKGROUND

• Entreatable professional activities (EPAs) describe units of work that consumers, patients, society, and employers trust professionals to competently perform.1,2 Ideally, an EPA statement should describe a focused, observable unit of work and be pertinent to the profession and applicable to most practice environments.

• In 2017, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) developed and published a list of 15 core EPAs for new pharmacy graduates that are intended for use by colleges/schools of pharmacy to prepare “practice-ready and team-ready” pharmacists.4

• While the core EPAs for new pharmacy graduates were developed through a rigorous profession-wide consensus-driven process, the face validity of the statements has not been formally established.

OBJECTIVES

Among experienced pharmacy preceptors, determine:

• the face validity of the core EPAs for new pharmacy graduates published by the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy in 2017.

• whether the EPA statements are: 1) focused and observable, and 2) transferable to multiple settings and require the integration of multiple knowledge, skill and attitudinal competencies.

• whether regional differences exist regarding the perceived pertinence and expectations of each EPA statement.

METHODS

This was a prospective content validation study to identify and rate the quality of the 15 EPA statements for new pharmacy graduates. Only pharmacists with an appointment at one of the investigators’ academic institutions for at least 5 years and who had supervised at least 6 students in the previous 24 months were eligible to participate in this study.

A 28-item online questionnaire was sent to study participants. In addition to demographic information regarding education, training, credentialed, and practice setting, participants were asked whether each EPA statement was pertinent to pharmacy practice and an expected activity that all pharmacists should be able to perform. Questions regarding the secondary attributes of the EPA statements examined whether the activity was focused, observable, transferable to multiple practice settings, and an integration of multiple competencies.

The questionnaire used in this study was based on the validated Quality of Entrustable Professional Activities (QUEPA) tool that was originally designed to rate the quality of EPAs developed for internal medicine residents.5 We modified the QUEPA tool to reflect differences in professional practice settings. The modified tool was piloted with 8 individuals (7 experienced pharmacists not invited to participate in the study and 1 biostatistican).

Results were aggregated into descriptive summaries and compared based on demographic characteristics. Pearson Chi-square and Exact Pearson Chi-Square tests were used to evaluate institution demographics and response rates. Fisher’s Exact tests were used for 2x2 associations between K/S/A and the following attributes: Site Type (Ambulatory vs. Acute Care), Practitioner FTE (Full-time vs. Part-time), any Board Certification (Yes vs No), and Post-Graduate Training statuses. Fisher’s Exact tests were used to identify the EPA statements that describe activities pertinent to pharmacy practice (≥ 85%), articulate what pharmacists are expected to do regardless of practice setting (> 75%), and required integration of multiple competencies (> 60%).

RESULTS

The questionnaire was distributed to 137 eligible participants and 71 usable survey responses were received.

DISCUSSION

• Consistently high agreement was found among experienced pharmacy practitioners that the 15 EPA statements describe activities pertinent to pharmacy practice (≥ 85%), articulate what pharmacists are expected to do regardless of practice setting (> 75%), and transferable (≥ 72%), observable (≥ 65%), and transferable (≥ 72%); and required integration of multiple competencies (≥ 60%).

• A consistent level of agreement was observed regardless of preceptor’s employment with a college or school, geographic location, board certification status, or completion of postgraduate training and no statistical differences in level of agreement were found based on these attributes.

• These findings align with the rigorous development process used by AACP to determine the core EPAs.

CONCLUSION

The fifteen core EPA statements appear to have strong face validity. Experienced pharmacy preceptors believe the EPAs are reflective of pharmacy practice and pharmacists should be expected to perform these activities, regardless of practice setting.

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Face-Validity of AACP’s Entrustable Professional Activities for New Pharmacy Graduates: Survey of Experienced Pharmacy Preceptors

Stuart T. Haines, PharmD; Brenda L. Gleason, PharmD; Amy L. Pittenger, PharmD, MS, PhD; Melissa S. Medina, EdD; Stephen Neely, MPH

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