



## Wellness Initiatives Across the Profession: Addressing the Mental Wellbeing of our PharmD Students

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## Learning Objectives

- Discuss literature on PharmD student mental health
- Describe one PharmD program's evolution related to the student mental health



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## Overview

- Mental health is among many challenges our students face in their programs
  - Students (practitioners) cannot provide optimal patient care if they are not in a good place
  - Share story of how one program has/still is tackling ongoing challenge
    - multi-faceted & collaborative approach
- Disclaimer – most of story & data is pre-COVID
  - Seen exacerbation (social isolation)

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## Our time together

- Tell a story
  - Storytelling is a powerful teaching method
- Select review of literature
- Share our PharmD student data
- Q&A
  - learn what others have done/are doing/plan to do to meet the challenges you may be facing related to student mental health issues

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## Story begins

Fall 2014

- Grassroots effort by 3 students [Fabian (Class of 2017), Pasternak (Class of 2016), Sinclair (Class of 2017)]
  - "noticed trends about attitudes and morale"
  - "immense need for better access to mental health and counseling services for our students."
  - "other colleges such as Medicine and Veterinary have in-house counselors for students to see."
    - "push for the same at College of Pharmacy"
- Aided by Lora Eberhard (COM), students created an anonymous online survey (mid-October 2014)
  - assessed wellness parameters including sleep, stress, anxiety, and suicidality and more...
- Results (100 responses) provided more data that a need exists

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## 2014 Data

"During the past 4 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following?"

	Not at all	Some of the time	A lot of the time	Most or all of the time
Feeling hopeless	43%	43%	10%	4%
Feeling nervous or worrying a lot	3%	25%	47%	25%
Feeling desperate	52%	36%	8%	4%
Feeling intensely anxious or having anxiety attacks	27%	44%	24%	5%
Feeling a lack of interest or pleasure in doing things	34%	41%	16%	9%
Feeling bad about yourself –or that you are a failure or have let yourself/others down	29%	40%	20%	11%
Thoughts of harming yourself	90%	8%	1%	1%
Done things to hurt yourself	97%	2%	0%	1%
Had thought of taking your own life	88%	11%	0%	1%
Planned ways to take your own life	92%	7%	0%	1%

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## Defining the problem

*American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education 2019; 83 (10) Article 7558.*

### RESEARCH

#### Pharmacy and Medical Students' Mental Health Symptoms, Experiences, Attitudes and Help-Seeking Behaviors

Rebecca Fischbein, PhD, Natalie Bonfine, PhD

- Pharmacy students:
  - 18% & 21% met clinical cut-offs for depression & anxiety
  - ~1 in 10 likely to seek student counseling services & unsure where to seek help on campus if needed
  - high levels of stigma regarding mental health treatment
    - Conclusion "...opportunities exist to improve campus-based mental health education and offerings for pharmacy and medical students."

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## Defining the problem

BRIEF AJPE pre-print



### Prevalence of Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms Among Pharmacy Students

Ann M. Shangraw, PharmD, Jacob Silvers, PharmD, Terri Warholak, PhD, RPh, Nina Vadieli, PharmD

- "30% and 22% students self-reported clinically significant anxiety and depressive symptoms, respectively"
- More 2<sup>nd</sup> year students self-reported anxiety and depressive symptoms as the semester progressed
  - Conclusion. ...These findings support the need for optimizing the delivery of well-being resources to pharmacy students."

uneven

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## Defining the problem

*American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education 2020; 84 (3) Article 7547.*

**RESEARCH**



**Patterns of Stress, Coping and Health-Related Quality of Life in Doctor of Pharmacy Students**

Jan D. Hirsch, PhD, BSPharm,<sup>a,b</sup> Poorna Nemlekar, MS, BSPharm,<sup>b</sup> Patrick Phuong, PharmD,<sup>b</sup> Kathryn A. Hollenbach, PhD,<sup>c</sup> Kelly C. Lee, PharmD, MAS,<sup>b</sup> David S. Adler, PharmD,<sup>c</sup> Candis M. Morello, PharmD<sup>b</sup>

- *"Increasing levels of stress, increasing use of maladaptive coping strategies, and declining mental health-related quality of life among pharmacy students across the first three years of the four-year curriculum were very similar to findings in the cohort of pharmacy students observed in the preceding five years."*


unchanging

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## College of Pharmacy's Mental Health Initiative

- Led to:
  - Collaborative Commitment
    - Students, faculty, staff and administrators
  - Mental Health Programming
    - REACH suicide prevention trainings for pharmacy students, faculty & staff
    - RUOK? Buckeyes
  - Resources
    - Though CCS existed
      - two embedded counselors hired for health science programs
        - » Shared across colleges with 2 full days/week in Pharmacy



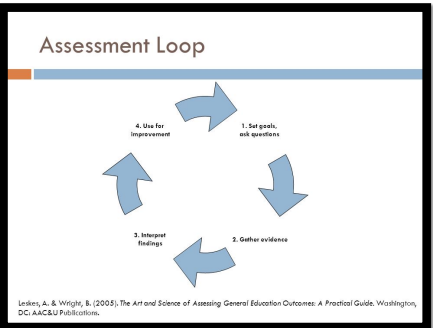
Shawn Lavstak, Psy.D.

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## Continuous Quality Improvement

Assessment Loop



1. Set goals, ask questions



2. Gather evidence

3. Interpret findings

4. Use for improvement

Linley, A., & Wright, B. (2005). The Art and Science of Assessing General Education Outcomes: A Practical Guide. Washington, DC: AACSB Publications.

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## Assessing the Mental Health of Pharmacy Students and their Utilization of Resources (IRB #2015B0472)

- OBJECTIVES:
  - to assess the mental health in our P1, P2, P3 and P4 students
  - to determine the P2, P3 and P4 student utilization and perception of services related to mental health
- METHODS:
  - anonymous survey (Qualtrics) examining well-being and resource utilization
    - January/February 2016
    - Online survey open for 25 days

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Demographics of 2016 Survey Respondents (n=202)*	
Characteristic	Frequency
Gender	
Male	33%
Female	66%
Prefer not to answer	1%
Year	
P1	24%**
P2	31%
P3	27%
P4	18%
Did you participate in 2014 survey?	
Yes	n=89 (59%)
No	n=63 (41%)

\* Incentive provided

\*\* Not in COP for 2014 survey

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What did data look like 15 months later?				
"During the past 4 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following?"	Not at all	Some of the time	A lot of the time	Most or all of the time
Feeling hopeless [2014]	43%	43%	10%	4%
[2016]	56%	37%	4%	3%
Feeling nervous or worrying a lot [2014]	3%	25%	47%	25%
[2016]	12%	42%	31%	15%
Feeling desperate [2014]	52%	36%	8%	4%
[2016]	69%	24%	5%	2%
Feeling intensely anxious or having anxiety attacks [2014]	27%	44%	24%	5%
[2016]	44%	40%	9%	7%
Feeling a lack of interest or pleasure in doing things [2014]	34%	41%	16%	9%
[2016]	50%	35%	10%	5%
Feeling bad about yourself/you are a failure/let yourself or others down [2014]	29%	40%	20%	11%
[2016]	43%	39%	10%	8%

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What did data look like 15 months later?				
"During the past 4 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following?"	Not at all	Some of the time	A lot of the time	Most or all of the time
Thoughts of harming yourself [2014]	90%	8%	1%	1%
[2016]	90%	7%	1%	2%
Done things to hurt yourself [2014]	97%	2%	0%	1%
[2016]	97%	1%	1%	1%
Had thought of taking your own life [2014]	88%	11%	0%	1%
[2016]	91%	6%	1%	2%
Planned ways to take your own life [2014]	92%	7%	0%	1%
[2016]	96%	2%	1%	1%

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Feedback from Embedded Counselor...				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I think any students having thoughts of suicide is certainly concerning. However, to put things in perspective, the following data is for the OSU student population (2014). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 in 3 report prolonged periods of depression</li> <li>1 in 4 had suicidal thoughts or feelings</li> <li>1 in 14 (7%) actively considered suicide</li> <li>1% attempted suicide</li> </ul> </li> <li>Extrapolating from this data, we could also theoretically conclude that the pharmacy students are generally doing better than the average. I think the most important thing is that these students were made aware of and offered any available resources, including my services and others at CCS."</li> </ul>				
<p><i>Bottom line: Though progress seen, efforts not done. Always room for improvement</i></p>				

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Utilization of Resources					
Question (P2-P4 only)	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
Over the last year, I have noticed an increase in mental health awareness within the College of Pharmacy	69%	25%	4%	1%	1%
Relative to a year ago, I feel more respected by my peers	19%	26%	50%	3%	2%
Relative to a year ago, I feel more respected by my professors	23%	23%	49%	2%	3%
Relative to a year ago, I feel more comfortable talking with faculty on a more personal level	27%	21%	37%	12%	3%
In the past year, have you become more aware of your own mental health?	Yes=74%	No=11%	Don't Know=15%		
Have you taken steps to address your mental health?	Yes=70%	No=30%			
Would you attribute your increased awareness of mental health to a shift in mental health awareness within the College of Pharmacy?	Yes=45%	No=37%	Don't Know=18%		

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### Key parts of our success

- Student collaborators
  - Problem identification AND solution
- Colleagues outside our college
  - College of Medicine embedded counselor
  - Health Science Deans
  - Counseling & Consultation Services
- Support from college leadership
  - Committed to helping students succeed

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### Where are we now - Mental Health Initiative?

- Part of the fabric - other college & university wellness initiatives
  - OSU has 9 dimensions of wellness
- Culture has shifted
  - REACH suicide prevention training now required
  - RUOK? Buckeyes offered annually
  - Embedded Counselor
    - “Sorry, I can’t go to lunch with you as I’m going to see Shawn”
    - Shawn interwoven – all students access to him
      - Meet in orientation/revisit periodically - class & student organizations
    - Shawn is very busy (☹, 😊)
      - Not limited to PharmD (undergraduates & graduate students)

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### Where are we now - Mental Health Initiative?

- Explicit/“we talk about it”
  - Syllabus statement
  - JMc teaches the CNS module (Neuro/Psych)
  - Examples from student organizations
    - Patient speakers
    - SNPhA - Mental Health co-chairs
    - APhA-ASP - Mental Health student panel
    - CPNP
  - Topic for teaching roundtables in teaching certificate program
- Used as a model for other initiatives
  - Engage students, faculty, staff and administrators

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## Embedded counselor model at Ohio State

- Health Sciences (FTE):
    - Pharmacy (0.4)
    - Optometry (0.4)
    - Dentistry (1.0)
    - Medicine (2.0)
    - Veterinary Medicine (2.0)
    - Nursing (1.0)
  - Across campus (FTE):
    - Residence life (1.0)
    - Business (1.0)+
    - Engineering (1.0)+
    - Social work (0.6)
    - Office Diversity & Inclusion (1.0)
- Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS) ~40

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What guidance do we have from the literature about options?

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## What can be done?

*American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 2018; 82 (2) Article 6150.

### REVIEW

#### Review of Grit and Resilience Literature within Health Professions Education

Jaclyn M. Stoffel, PharmD,<sup>a</sup> Jeff Cain, EdD, MS<sup>b</sup>

- “Educational interventions aimed at increasing grit and resilience have produced mixed results. Developing protective factors\* appears to be the most common approach in helping students become more resilient.”
  - \*(def.) building positive nurturing professional relationships and networks, maintaining positivity, developing emotional insight, achieving life balance and spirituality, and becoming more reflective.

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## What can be done?

RESEARCH AJPE pre-print

#### Exploring How Post-Millennial Pharmacy Students Balance Life Priorities and Avoid Situations Known to Deplete Resilience

Jacob D. Dresser,<sup>a</sup> Karen M. Whitfield, MClmPharm, PhD,<sup>b</sup> Lisa J. Kremer, BPharm,<sup>c</sup> Kyle J. Wilby, PharmD, PhD<sup>a</sup>

- “top priorities were: family, finance, health, friends/relationships, study, career prospects, fitness, personal growth, travel, and mental health/wellbeing”
- themes of ‘being prepared’ and ‘being present’ were strategies identified that students used to avoid resilience depletion
  - Conclusion. ...these findings support the notion that student support mechanisms must be modernized to accommodate students’ needs.”

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## What can be done?

Int J Public Health (2016) 61:797–807  
DOI 10.1007/s00038-016-0846-4

REVIEW

SSPH+

CrossMark

### Setting-based interventions to promote mental health at the university: a systematic review

A. Fernandez · E. Howse · M. Rubio-Valera · K. Thorncraft · J. Noone · X. Luu · B. Veness · M. Leech · G. Llewellyn · L. Salvador-Carulla

**Opportunity**

- “Universities should invest in creating supportive physical, social and academic environments that promote student and staff mental wellbeing.
- However, the current body of evidence is scarce and more research is needed to recommend what are the best strategies.”

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## What about COVID-19?

American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education 2020; 84 (6) Article 8144.

### THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ACROSS THE ACADEMY

#### Improving and Restoring the Well-being and Resilience of Pharmacy Students during a Pandemic

Lauren S. Schlesselman, PharmD, MA, Ed Psych,<sup>a,b</sup> Jeff Cain, EdD,<sup>c</sup> Margarita DiVall, PharmD, MEd<sup>d,e</sup>

Table 1. Activities and Services That Schools Can Implement to Provide Support to Doctor of Pharmacy Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Activity Focus	
Health and wellness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recalibrate</li> <li>2. Use your resources</li> <li>3. Give grace</li> <li>4. Choose kindness always</li> </ol>

Table 2. Six Guiding Principles

Principle	Logical Steps
Foster students' emotional, intellectual, and interpersonal safety	Provide training for faculty and staff on supporting students post-trauma Create a physical environment that promotes safety and calm Avoid retraumatization or secondary traumatization Allow student to determine how much they can withstand Ask students what makes them feel safe Communicate often Invite conversation Address students by name Address students by name

Portions of 2 tables

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## Select References

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