Exploring pharmacy interns’ and clinical educators’ experience of university intern programs

Brigid McInerney, Gina Arora, Kirstie Galbraith, Angelina Lim, Kay Stewart, Michelle Vienet

7TH JULY 2018
LIFELONG LEARNING IN PHARMACY CONFERENCE
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA
INTRODUCTION

PHARMACY INTERNSHIP IN AUSTRALIA

• Provisional registration, period of supervised practice

MONASH UNIVERSITY INTERN FOUNDATION PROGRAM (IFP)

• Designed to run parallel with and complement Monash University Intern Training Program (ITP)
• Features bespoke, credentialed Workplace Learning Plan, activities assessed using standardised tools
• Practice-based research component, workshops and other tasks
• Credentialing of workplace and preceptor training
AIM

To evaluate aspects of the Foundation Program, gauging opinion about the impact on:

• workload
• structured workplace learning
• addition of research training
• preceptor-student relationships
• preceptor standardised training
• curriculum design
• interns’ transition to practice.
METHOD

• Two one-hour focus groups at Monash University Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, June 2017.
• Six preceptors (one community, five hospital) and seven interns (five community, two hospital)
• Moderated by external staff member
• Topic guide utilised
• Discussion audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim
• Content analysis by two authors
RESULTS

EIGHT MAIN THEMES

MONASH INTERN PROGRAMS ARE COMPLEMENTARY

“From a community point of view it gelled quite well…ITP and IFP…complemented each other I thought…it was things we were already doing which was excellent, but it also allowed us to extend our practice in the community setting.” Preceptor - Community

WORKLOAD BALANCE

“With the foundation program, I felt it fitted in well…and while it was an additional workload on top of what was already a very crammed in year, it was still manageable I found.” Intern - Community

“I think in terms of the workload it was all based around activities that the interns would be doing anyway in the workplace, so it didn’t really add too much extra for them to do.” Preceptor - Hospital
RESULTS
EIGHT MAIN THEMES

COLLABORATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY

“I found that they knew exactly who you were, knew your name and knew all your background so they were really supportive and helping you, based on your environment, and how to support you…” Intern - Hospital

CONSISTENCY IN TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF INTERN

“It was difficult for me in previous years to actually talk to the managers of different sites and instruct them about the teaching that I wanted when I sent the intern to them. So, from the (IFP) point of view, it gave me structure.” Preceptor - Hospital
RESULTS
EIGHT MAIN THEMES

UPSKILLING OF SUPERVISION WITH CREDENTIALING
“…certainly solidified a certain part of my skill set. There was a part of my skill set that was lacking from an educational point of view, being able to give feedback…that was less emotional.” Preceptor – Hospital

NOVELTY OF RESEARCH TRAINING
“My intern quite enjoyed the research and she actually had quite a talent for it that she didn’t even know…she’s actually considering a PhD in the coming year.” Preceptor - Community

“If you're working in a community pharmacy, there's not a lot of that research-based (opportunity)...I wouldn't have chosen to do research…but I was really glad it was there...Potentially, other people, if they were exposed to the research, they could see themselves doing further studies because of what they’ve done in the IFP.” Intern - Community
RESULTS

EIGHT MAIN THEMES

FOSTERING BETTER STUDENT-PRECEPTOR RELATIONSHIPS
“My intern - we’re not in the same workplace anymore - but our relationship is still quite strong. That mentor relationship, say early career pharmacist relationship, is stronger I feel by doing that program” Preceptor - Community

MAKING THE INTERNS MORE WORKFORCE READY
“We’ve had a lot of feedback previously that we (go on to) employ a lot of our interns and (they are) not workforce ready on registration…so for us it stopped a lot of that noise…because of the structure” Preceptor – Hospital
“She (intern) learnt more skills in the professional services area so she’d become trained sooner in sleep apnea, DNA testing, bone density, even medication checks like MedsChecks and Diabetes MedsChecks. Only the pharmacists are really allowed to undertake it in community settings, but under my supervision…that actually exposed her more to doing the MedsChecks earlier on than if she didn’t do the program” Preceptor - Community
DISCUSSION

Foundation program is a valuable addition to the intern year, facilitates a smooth and effective transition to practice.

Strengths

• Moderator unknown to all participants
• Two intern participants previously trained re. provision of feedback on teaching and learning

Limitations

• Only one community pharmacy preceptor

Implications

• Standardised rubrics and requirements for regular feedback assist interns progress in a structured manner through their intern year
• Interns from different workplaces receive the same standard of supervision
• Engenders research and collaborative culture
CONCLUSION

The foundation program is valuable and provides a holistic intern experience. It facilitates transition to independent practice through implementation of a unique curriculum based largely on workplace-learning, research training, fostering better preceptor-intern relationships, robust preceptor training, and close university-workplace support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• Monash University Faculty Teaching Award funding
• Focus group participants