



COMPLETED GRANT SYNOPSIS



Assisting Rural Community Pharmacies in Transforming their Practice through the Development of a High-Quality Pharmacy Technicians and Future Pharmacists

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Objectives	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High-quality pharmacy support personnel and technicians will be trained to assist with activities that support pharmacy practice transformation. The training will focus on non-dispensing, non-patient care tasks. 2. Interest will be sparked in high school students for the pharmacy profession as they experience the “behind-the-scenes” work of a community pharmacy and see a different aspect of the community pharmacy business. More importantly, they will be able to see the future of community pharmacy as being critical to patient care and overall individual and community health improvement. 3. This program can easily be replicated by other pharmacy programs that are equally committed to supporting the growth of community pharmacies and exposing young, bright high school and community college students to the pharmacy profession. 	
Methods	
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase I: Identify and Recruit Communities – CPESN pharmacies within Iowa were identified. The sites were recommended by the CPESN Iowa Director. • Phase II: Recruit High School Students – Once the sites were identified, high school students in each pharmacy’s area were recruited to be paired with the pharmacy. • Phase III: Student Training – Cultivating Interest, Knowledge and Skills – the students attended a 2-day comp to gain training on important skills needed to be working in a pharmacy. • Phase IV: Cultivate Experience – Following the camp and orientation session, students spent 6 months working in the pharmacy as a support personnel. • Phase V: Evaluate the effectiveness of Cultivate – following the completion of the 6 month experience, students and pharmacies were interviewed to determine the impact. • Phase VI: Produce a guide for other pharmacy programs to replicate Cultivate
Study endpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of high school students who participate. • Number of high school students who matriculate into pre-pharmacy programs or certified technician programs at community colleges. • Number of pharmacies who wish to continue in the program due to the perceived level of value.
Results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five (5) pharmacies participated in the two years of the grant. Pharmacists appreciated the opportunity to have another staff member, in most cases a pharmacy support person, available to assist the pharmacy technicians. • A total of 24 students attended the Cultivate summer training over the course of the two summers (2021 and 2022); 14 students completed the Cultivate Experience for 6 months during the 21-22 and 22-23 academic years with 9 students in year 1 and 5 students in year 2. Ten (10) students were hired from Year 1 to work at the 5 pharmacies; five students from Year 2 worked at the 5 pharmacies. • Two students from the first cohort of 9 attended Drake to study pre-pharmacy or health sciences (pre-nursing). One student became certified as a pharmacy technician and continued to work in the pharmacy. • The following training materials were developed and were shared with another school to incorporate into their own inner-city program: 	

1. Recruitment of Pharmacy Sites, including an email for state CPESN Executive Director to send out to pharmacy managers
2. Recruitment how-to/best practices for the recruitment of high school students (Slide deck, Promotional materials, How-to/best practices),
3. Outline of logistics of preparing for on-campus program
4. Cultivate Program (Agenda, Curricular content, Exit survey for attendees)
5. Monthly Qualtrics check-in survey to send to Cultivate students while they are working in their hometown pharmacies.

Conclusion

A program like Cultivate can provide high school students the opportunity to learn and experience pharmacy in a setting that inspires them to become a pharmacy technician or enroll in a pharmacy or other health-care related program. Those that participated who did not enroll in pharmacy had a better understanding of the pharmacy profession. The pharmacies found value in having additional staffing within the pharmacy.

Future research and pharmacy opportunities were created because of the opportunity to free up pharmacy technicians to provide more assistance to CPESN pharmacies. Future opportunities exist for participants as they are introduced to the pharmacy profession and a potential career as a pharmacy technician and/or student pharmacist.

Future opportunities for the expansion of Cultivate include a model outreach, curriculum, partnerships with CPESN pharmacies, assessment, and other activities utilizing a Cultivate Coordinating Center (C3) to provide support to the participating pharmacy schools. The support provided could include materials and trainings for other colleges/schools of pharmacy, provide support through the first round of Cultivate at their institution, and capture outcome results and compile impact of the programs.