



ASHP Foundation News Release

ASHP Foundation Awards Medication Safety Team Grants to Study Barcode Technology and Medication Errors, Medication Repackaging

BETHESDA, Md. (May 20, 2010) — The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Research and Education Foundation has awarded the 2009-2010 Medication Safety Team Grants to two multidisciplinary research teams from the Midwest.

The Medication Safety Team Grant Program: Optimizing Bedside Technology Solutions program, which is supported by Omnicell, Inc., funds research related to the use of barcode scanning technology at the point of medication administration to enhance the safe use of medications. The program is open to research teams composed of a combination of pharmacists, physicians, nurses and informatics experts.

“Bar code medication administration [BCMA] is a key element in assuring both safety and efficiency in the delivery of medications to hospitalized patients,” says grant selection panel member William E. Fassett, Ph.D., R.Ph., Professor and Vice-Chair, Department of Pharmacotherapy, College of Pharmacy, Washington State University – Spokane. “This year, the Medication Safety Team Grant program supported studies that may help pave the way for many more hospitals to adopt BCMA and for institutions with BCMA to extend it to patients in isolation for infection control. The partnership between the ASHP Foundation and Omnicell, Inc., has been an important stimulant to research in an area where other funding – particularly for interdisciplinary scholarship – is lacking.”

The 2009-2010 grantees, which each received a \$40,000 grant, are:

“Impact of Isolation for Resistant Pathogens on Barcode Technology Utilization and Medication Errors”
Pharmacist Investigator: Erika J. Ernst, Pharm.D.

Co-Principal Investigator: Philip M. Polgreen, M.D., M.P.H.

University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa

This study will 1) compare medication administration errors in patients in isolation for infection control with patients not in isolation, 2) review infection control procedures for the use of bar code medication administration (BCMA), 3) observe use of barcode technology in patients in isolation with patients not in isolation using standardized typology for clinicians’ workarounds and 4) develop recommendations for the use of BCMA for patients in isolation for infection control.

“Ready or Not: Development of a Validated Medication Repackaging Assessment Tool for Bedside Bar Coding Implementation”

Pharmacist Investigator: Jill Strykowski, R.Ph., M.S.

Co-Principal Investigator: Ron Hadsall, Ph.D.

Allina Hospitals and Clinics and University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minn.

This study will evaluate a validated medication repackaging assessment instrument that can be used to: 1) predict the percentage of medications a hospital would have to repackage as they engage in a BCMA transition and 2) determine the likelihood that a specific medication will require repackaging. The study will also examine how the tool could aid hospitals in identifying appropriate feedback loops to address immediate medication failures, staffing needs related to repackaging, pharmacy and nursing workflow impacts related to repackaging and optimal equipment to manage the repackaging process.

“Omniceil is very pleased to support this important research that will ultimately lead to improved patient care,” said Marga Ortigas-Wedekind, Vice President, Global Marketing and Product Development, Omnicell. “We are committed to providing management solutions to enhance medication safety, improve user workflow efficiency and meet regulatory requirements. The work of these grantees is well aligned with Omnicell’s efforts to enhance the safety of the most critical step in the medication use process, medication administration.”

Related Resources

Abstracts of each of the research studies funded by this year’s Medication Safety Team Grant Program can be found at the ASHP Foundation’s online Research Resource Center at www.ashpfoundation.org/ongoingresearch.

About the Foundation

The ASHP Research and Education Foundation was established in 1968 by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. The mission of the Foundation is to improve the health and well-being of patients in hospitals and health systems through appropriate, safe and effective medication use. The Foundation provides leadership and conducts education and research activities that foster the coordination of interdisciplinary medication management leading to optimal patient outcomes. Emphasis is given to programs that will have a major impact on advancing pharmacy practice in hospitals and health systems, thereby improving public health.

Contact Information

Daniel J. Cobaugh, Pharm.D., Senior Director for Research and Operations
ASHP Research and Education Foundation
Bethesda, Md.
301-664-8767
dcobaugh@ashp.org

Bethany Coulter, Director of Communications
ASHP Research and Education Foundation
Bethesda, Md.
301-664-8795
bcoulter@ashp.org

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