ASHP Foundation Announces 2015 Recipients of Pharmacy Practice Model Initiative Demonstration Grants

BETHESDA, MD (August 10, 2015) — The ASHP Research and Education Foundation has awarded funding to two pharmacist investigators through the Pharmacy Practice Model Initiative (PPMI) Demonstration Grant Program.

This research grant program supports demonstration projects related to the assumptions, beliefs and recommendations from the November 2010 ASHP/ASHP Foundation PPMI Summit. The overarching goal of the PPMI is to increase pharmacists’ participation on patient care teams as the professional who is responsible and accountable for patients’ medication-related outcomes while delegating all medication distribution functions that do not require clinical judgment to qualified pharmacy technicians and technology.

“The face of pharmacy practice is changing before our eyes, and we need to have solid evidence that pharmacists can provide impactful care to patients in health systems,” said review panel member Dr. Charles M. White, an assistant professor of pharmacy practice at the School of Pharmacy, University of Connecticut in Storrs, and co-director of arrhythmia research for the Drug Information Center at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut. “I am proud that the ASHP Foundation has taken a lead in funding studies that evaluate and establish new models of integrated care and was impressed with the quality and variety of applications that I reviewed this year. All pharmacists have a vested interest in the success of this program and the excellent scholarship that results.”

The grant recipients each received a grant of $75,000. Their studies are detailed below.

**Impact of a Multidisciplinary Team on Time to Sepsis Resolution**
Principal Investigator: Joseph Carreno, Pharm.D.
Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Albany, NY

Sepsis is a life-threatening acute illness that is a leading cause of in-hospital mortality. Numerous studies have evaluated the implementation of rapid diagnostic technologies within multidisciplinary antimicrobial stewardship teams on process outcomes (for example, time to appropriate antibiotic, time to de-escalation) and long-term outcomes (i.e., mortality). However, very few have examined the effect on sepsis resolution (i.e., morbidity outcome). The purpose of this study is to address this research gap. Dr. Carreno and his team will evaluate the effect of a multidisciplinary team on time-to-sepsis resolution.
“We anticipate this research will be significant to health-system pharmacy nationwide,” said Dr. Carreno. “Under the new National Action Plan to Combat Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria, by 2020 all acute care hospitals will be required to establish antimicrobial stewardship programs. Adoption of rapid diagnostic technology is one proven method of developing effective antimicrobial stewardship programs within acute care hospitals. Unfortunately, due to the cumbersome staffing requirements associated with implementing these technologies, antimicrobial stewardship programs are often not created or are less than functional. Our study will help bridge the gap between current staffing requirements and best practices.”

He hopes that their research study’s pragmatic staffing approach will be adopted by health systems nationwide and establish life-saving antimicrobial stewardship practices.

“Carving out novel roles for pharmacists is critical to the future of our profession,” Dr. Carreno explained. “This grant will help us illustrate one of numerous unique strengths that only pharmacists can bring to healthcare teams. I am truly honored and humbled to have been selected as a grant recipient.”

**The Impact of a Pharmacy-Driven Transitions of Care Program on Post-Discharge Healthcare Utilization at a National Comprehensive Cancer Center**
Principal Investigator: Bradley Atkinson, Pharm.D., BCPS
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
Houston, TX

“We chose the focus of our project because most reports regarding transitions of care (TOC) programs regularly exclude patients with cancer,” said Dr. Atkinson. “Although our institution specializes in cancer care, our patients are diverse and complex. We recognize that due to their disease burden and complex treatments, patients with cancer have frequent exposures to the healthcare system with many transitions throughout their treatment. Each of these encounters presents a unique opportunity to assess and improve medication safety and adherence. This population would benefit greatly with the interventions associated with a comprehensive TOC process whose aim is to ensure medication continuity and safety.”

Improving medication management during TOC aligns with the PPMI because it is an essential and impactful pharmacy service that all patients should receive. Dr. Atkinson’s TOC model will incorporate all levels of pharmacy personnel trained and functioning at the top of their scope of practice with defined competencies. “At our institution, we have highly specialized clinicians who provide direct patient care in addition to an excellent pharmacy operations model,” he said. “This will give us an opportunity to bridge these practices to provide essential services to our patients and demonstrate meaningful outcomes that can be further applied across health-system pharmacy.”

Dr. Atkinson and his team are excited about this grant for a number of reasons: “It gives us an opportunity to highlight our progressive pharmacy department and the excellent patient care we provide. It is yet another opportunity to train and educate pharmacy personnel at all levels to provide direct patient care. And it helps provide support to develop the essential framework needed to further implement the PPMI at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.”

For More Information
For more information about the PPMI Demonstration Grant Program and to read full abstracts of these research studies, visit [www.ashpfoundation.org/PPMIDemoGrantees](http://www.ashpfoundation.org/PPMIDemoGrantees).

**About the Foundation**
The ASHP Research and Education Foundation ([www.ashpfoundation.org](http://www.ashpfoundation.org)) was established in 1968 by ASHP ([www.ashp.org](http://www.ashp.org)) as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. As the philanthropic arm of ASHP, our vision is that patient outcomes improve because of the leadership and clinical skills of pharmacists, as vital members of the health care team, accountable for safe and effective medication use. Our mission is to improve the health and well-being of patients in health systems through appropriate, safe and effective medication use.

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