

ABSTRACT OF PROPOSAL:

Title. An evaluation of health literacy preparedness within a chain community pharmacy environment.

Objective. Although a large national study¹ suggested inadequate health literacy affects greater than one-third of the adult population, pharmacies and pharmacists are not adequately equipped to manage these deficiencies.²⁻³ Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate a sample of community pharmacy physical environments and their associated staff and patient perceptions of health literacy preparedness 6 months after receiving training in health literacy sensitive techniques. Environmental characteristics as well as patient and staff perceptions will be compared to a subset of pharmacies that have not received training. This study will utilize qualitative and descriptive methods to evaluate agreement among pharmacy environment characteristics and patient and pharmacy staff perceptions with respect to health literacy preparedness within and between pharmacies that have and have not been trained in health literacy-sensitive techniques.

Methods. A prospective, posttest control group design using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed to evaluate the health literacy preparedness of a community pharmacy chain. A local community pharmacy chain will be used as the sampling frame for store environmental audits, staff surveys, and patient focus groups. One store will be randomly selected for health literacy training from each of 3 strata determined by store prescription volume and will serve as the intervention group. Each store will be matched to a comparator store within the same strata based on the proportion of patients over 65 years of age and the proportion of patients insured through Oklahoma Medicaid. Matched stores will serve as an untrained comparison group. Personnel from the 3 randomly selected intervention stores will be invited to participate in a 2 hour CE program on enhancing health literacy skills and creating a health literacy friendly environment titled "PILL: Pharmacy Intervention for Limited Literacy". The training will be provided by a nationally recognized health literacy expert from the Rollins School of Public Health from Emory University. Six months after the training program has been delivered to the intervention pharmacies, the study investigators will conduct a pharmacy health literacy audit (pharmacy environment, pharmacy staff, and patient focus groups) in each of the intervention and control group pharmacies using a validated set of data collection tools from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's "Is Our Pharmacy Meeting Patients' Needs? Pharmacy Health Literacy Assessment Tool".⁴ Prior to the main study, two separate stores, not stratified into the control or intervention groups, will be selected for a pilot study, which will serve as the basis for modifications for the main study. The pilot study will include all three facets of the health literacy audit as well. Methods used in the pilot study will be evaluated for efficiency as well as quality and relevancy of audit questions in determining the health literacy preparedness as it relates to the community pharmacy environment. This study was approved by the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Institutional Review Board.