

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ACADEMIC COMPONENT IN A POSTGRADUATE DOCTORATE IN PHARMACY PROGRAMME

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## INTRODUCTION

Clinical rotations within the three year postgraduate Doctorate in Pharmacy programme, offered by the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Malta in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy of the University of Illinois at Chicago USA, are intended to provide the student with an immersion in real practice. The programme has been running for three academic years.

## AIM

To develop academic, practice-oriented clinical rotations which provide the student with advanced practice skills development

## METHOD

Students follow five clinical rotations;

- Two rotations of four weeks each are undertaken in the first year with a core undertaken in a rehabilitation hospital
- Three rotations of six weeks each are carried out over the second and third year with a core undertaken in an acute general hospital.

During the core rotation in the first year, skills in patient clerking at hospital admission, patient profiling and patient discharge are elaborated.

In the second core rotation at the general hospital, students follow direct patient care clinical pharmacy services in a medical speciality, such as rheumatology, cardiology and respiratory care.

The elective rotations include ambulatory care, community pharmacy, and medicines safety. Students are required to complete a workbook and present weekly reflections, which are discussed with a preceptor. At the end of each experience, two seminars of three hours each are held, where students present a case presentation and share experiences.

## RESULTS

- Preceptors assess students using an evaluation form, which identifies 7 goals that the student should have achieved at the end of each rotation (Table 1).
- Students are graded as 'Needs Improvement', 'Satisfactory Progress' or 'Goal Achieved' so as to feed this information in the next rotation.
- Preceptors rate students' skills on a five-point Likert scale, anchored by 1 'Poor' and 5 'Excellent'.
- 44 students have completed both four week rotations.
- 17 students have completed three rotations of six weeks and 17 other students have completed one six week rotation.

Collect and organise all patient specific information needed by the pharmacist to prevent, detect and resolve medication related problems

Identify presence of medication therapy problems in a patient's current medication therapy

Document direct patient-care activities appropriately

Accurately assess and follow patient's progress towards therapeutic goals

Development of patient-oriented health-related educational material

Recognise social and economic needs of patients that impact on pharmaceutical care

Prioritise patients requiring advanced pharmaceutical interventions

Table 1: Goals to be achieved at the end of each rotation

## CONCLUSION

The developed academic clinical rotations were smoothly implemented in the practice sites and students completed them successfully.