

Change agents

NCPA Innovation Center-CPESN fellowship program trains pharmacists to transform practices

by Carlie Traylor, PharmD

What inspires change? Desperation? Loss? Trials? What about hope? We have experienced all of these emotions over the last decade in community pharmacy. So here's a different question: have you changed? Changed how you practice pharmacy, how you interact with patients, how you view your business relationship with PBMs?

At NCPA, we are constantly working to prepare our members for the ever-evolving landscape of community pharmacy practice. We partnered with Community Care of North Carolina in 2016 to form CPESN[®] USA because we viewed it as our profession's best hope for the future. This network of pharmacies is built on the tenets of practice transformation, with the ability to open opportunities for contracts unavailable to the current billing model. It has grown to more than 2,500 pharmacies, in 49 networks, and engaged in more than 50 payer relationships based on service instead of product.

REINFORCING PRACTICE TRANSFORMATION

Reinforcing practice transformation is paramount to NCPA's agenda, and we are thrilled to announce the NCPA Innovation Center/CPESN Community Pharmacy Fellowship, the latest training opportunity to get our members the resources they need to transform their practice. The fellowship is an intensive 12-month online educational program, focused on implementation of enhanced services, for an individual pharmacist practicing in a CPESN network pharmacy. The fellowship instructors are industry-leading owners and pharmacists who will share their practical experience in growing profitable clinical services, providing the background, guidance, and encouragement to make transforming

your practice a reality. Faculty members include Amina Abubakar, Tripp Logan, Randy McDonough, Joe Moose, and Matt Osterhaus.

EDUCATION STRUCTURE

The NCPA Innovation Center will produce recorded and live webinars on NCPA's Learning Management System. Education is delivered in a flipped classroom format with recorded lectures viewed by the fellows on their own time and then followed by a live webinar to discuss the content covered in the lecture. These dyads (a recorded lecture paired with a live discussion) will address three main topic areas: practice transformation, management, and patient care. Topics covered during the educational sessions include implementation science, the appointment-based model, immunizations, behavioral health, opioid use disorder, asthma/COPD updates, and collaborative practice agreements.

CANDIDATES AND BENEFITS

Who is the ideal fellowship candidate? Any licensed pharmacist practicing at a CPESN network pharmacy can apply to participate in the fellowship. The fellow can be an established employee, a new hire, an experienced pharmacist, a new grad, or even the owner themselves. Benefits to the pharmacies and fellows participating in the program include access to a cohort of pharmacies and luminary educators to mentor them through the changes they need to make to grow profitable enhanced services. This is an opportunity to have a staff member who can reach into the minds and pharmacies of the nation's best practitioners. To track





their growth, pharmacies will receive custom reports from CPESN USA. Fellows will gain leadership and implementation training from leaders in CPESN networks, which allows them to expand their professional network to include both their instructors and other fellows within the program. As mentioned previously, pharmacies have flexibility on who they choose as their fellow. The fellow can be an existing staff member or a new hire who is brought on as a trial to participate in the program. In the case of a new hires, fellows can use their year to demonstrate their value to the

month for the remainder of the year. Fellows can also engage in elective learnings such as the Payer Engagement Learning Series from CPESN USA, research, precepting, and more.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Discussion groups will be introduced in October and will consist of 8-10 fellows, with a focus on technology, workflow, and business. This will also offer fellows an opportunity to provide feedback on the program and their progress. The discussion groups will be divided into the type of pharmacy management software used at the

will submit a report at the end of the fellowship year in the form of an instruction manual, which will be added to the fellowship resources for future classes.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

There are several requirements for both pharmacies and fellows. The pharmacy must provide a letter of recommendation from its local CPESN network that attests to the pharmacy being in good standing. They must provide their employees access to a Pharmacist eCare Plan-capable system (list available at www.ecareplaninitiative.com/software-solutions) for pharmacy-based patient care. The fellow is an employee of the pharmacy, so his or her salary and benefits are covered by the pharmacy itself. The pharmacy is serving as a laboratory for the fellow so that person must be given no less than 12 hours a week to dedicate to fellowship-directed activities, such as webinar attendance and implementation of clinical services. Pharmacies can give the fellow more time for fellowship-directed work activities but not less. Feedback between the fellow and pharmacy is paramount, so the pharmacy must engage in frequent touchpoints with the fellow including quarterly evaluations based on the pharmacy's quarterly progress report from CPESN to review progress and set new goals for the next quarter. The fellow must be licensed and participate in all required virtual educational offerings. The fellow must engage with staff to update workflows and train for new job responsibilities.

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pharmacy while building the necessary infrastructure to support growing enhanced services.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

The fellowship begins Sept. 1, 2020 and runs through Aug. 30, 2021. Orientation will occur the last week of August and cover topics such as support provided by NCPA and CPESN USA, project expectations, elective opportunities, discussion group functions, care planning, flu clinics, and social determinants of health. Two educational dyads will be covered during orientation, including a practice transformation dyad covering augmented dispensing and a patient care dyad covering clinical refreshers on diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. After orientation, the fellows will meet weekly throughout the month of September to participate in additional educational dyads. After September, the regular meetings will move to twice a month until March and then at least once a

pharmacies, with each group being led by a luminary who utilizes the same pharmacy software system as the fellow. This will allow the participating fellows to ask specific questions about their system to a leader who is considered an expert. The fellows will also be able to share best practices with each other. The workflow and business discussion groups will pull from recent material covered in the main webinars.

PROJECT CREATION

The fellow is required to create a capstone project, presented at the end of the fellowship year. The project should entail creating a new service or improving an existing clinical service at the pharmacy and be implemented by the fellow. Examples include starting a PrEP/PEP clinic or enhancing the pharmacy's clinical medication synchronization program. The project is decided by the pharmacy and fellow in the first month of their fellowship. The fellow

Our goal for the fellowship is to provide the industry with a scalable means to train change agents who will join the fight for independent community practice as well as continue the fight for our patients and our businesses. You are the future of pharmacy. Will you join the fight? Look for updates in the coming months as the program gets underway. ■

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