Implementation and Evaluation of Virtual Pharmacy Training

Background
With the COVID-19 pandemic emerging in March 2020, health protocols were established to prevent the spread of the virus. Since many organizations had to turn to virtual training and working in response to the global pandemic, the use of telecommunication software has become increasingly utilized. There is minimal literature on virtual training outcomes in the healthcare field.

Purpose
To determine the outcome of virtual training on newly hired pharmacy team members and evaluate the timelines of onboarding, utilizing standardization of training for the organization. It is hypothesized that the results from this study can be used to support future virtual training for healthcare organizations.

Methods
The idea for a virtual pharmacy training program was created in January 2021, with a pilot program initiated in May 2021. A program was developed that enlisted clinical leaders to develop training materials. A dedicated team was established to include technician and pharmacist training specialists. Attendees are generated based on the organization's new hire list.

Pharmacy training for both technicians and pharmacists spans 3 days, is initiated with a pre-test, and ends with a post-test (Figure 1). The pre- and post-test contain the same multiple-choice questions. The pharmacist training spans 5 additional days and occurs 2 weeks after completion of the pharmacy training (Figure 2).

A satisfaction survey is sent upon training completion. Each pharmacy team member completes a one-on-one follow up with a designated trainer. Topics for both training sessions focus on sources available, and 90% responded that presentations and multi-media made it easier to comprehend the topics.

Results
In 2021, 49% technicians (n=336) participated in virtual training from May to December and 15.5% pharmacists (n=87) participated in virtual training from August to December. The total average pre-test score for pharmacists was 81.3% and the average post-test score was 94.9%. The total average pre-test score for technicians was 73.5% and the average post-test score was 87.7%.

Figure 1: Total Number of New Hire Training Hours

![Graph showing total number of new hire training hours](image1)

Figure 2: New Hire Average Test Scores

![Graph showing new hire average test scores](image2)

Discussion
Test scores for technicians improved by 14.2% and pharmacists by 13.6%, demonstrating a positive overall outcome for training (Figure 2). Focused onboarding with a scheduled timeline for self-study and live interactive training was managed successfully within 30 days of hire.

Survey feedback demonstrated that virtual training successfully met technician and pharmacist expectations, and the multimedia used made it easier to comprehend topics. Positive comments from training attendees and their respective managers were provided from satisfaction surveys (see multimedia boxes within poster).

Conclusion
Based on the results from the pre- and post-test scores for all sessions, virtual training improved clinical knowledge and decreased the time needed for onboarding for both pharmacists and technicians. This led to time alleviation for local management with onboarding by a specialized training team.

Overall, the virtual training has proven to be so successful that it has become the organization's standardized training program. Further study may demonstrate other potential benefits including employee satisfaction and retention.

References

Disclosures
Authors of this presentation have the following to disclose: concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation: Olivia Hanley, Jessica-Anne Chlebda, Craig Gardner, Julia Cowell, Suzanne Kluge, Ashley Hadland. Nothing to disclose.

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