



The Transition

4th Year Pharmacy Students Entering the Real World of Pharmacy

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Two Ways to Save Lives

John Carroll is a 1988 graduate of the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy. Mr. Carroll has been the Director of Pharmacy at Southwest Georgia Regional Medical Center, as well as the consultant pharmacist for the Joanne Burgin Nursing Home in Cuthbert since 2010. Although his career now includes over 20 years in geriatric pharmacy, it did not initially begin there. Instead, Mr. Carroll spent time at Phoebe Sumter in Americus, as well as Walgreens, before transitioning into a role at Magnolia Manor Nursing Home in Americus as a geriatric consultant pharmacist. He credits his interest in this specialty to one of his professors at UGA, Dr. Jim Cooper.

While Mr. Carroll enjoys practicing pharmacy and teaching students, these are certainly not his only interests. He has served as a volunteer lieutenant at the Sumter County Fire Department since 2012. In this role, he is in charge of leading half of the department's volunteer firefighters. In addition, Mr.



John Carroll, RPh

Carroll was appointed by the Lieutenant Governor to the Georgia Civil War Commission, an organization that serves to help preserve Georgia's Civil War history.

Mr. Carroll's wife, Beth, is also a pharmacist, and she currently practices at Middle Flint Behavioral Health. He also has three children. His oldest son is a graduate of the United States Military Academy, and his youngest son and daughter are both students at the University of Georgia.

Written by: Harrison Jozefczyk (Southwest GA)

GR Health Pharmacy: "Meds to Beds"

GR Health Pharmacy, which opened in May 2015, is an outpatient pharmacy inside Georgia Regents Medical Center. Aside from filling prescriptions for the community, GR Health Pharmacy offers a unique bedside delivery service, also known as "Meds to Beds." This program involves the delivery of outpatient prescriptions to inpatients at their bedsides. As a student working with this program, my main role was to obtain, fill, deliver, and counsel on discharge medications alongside my preceptor, Nick Wimpey, Pharm.D. Because many of the medications are new to patients for acute illnesses, GR Health Pharmacy focuses on extensive discharge counseling to assist the patient in feeling more comfortable taking new medications independently. Medication counseling is important for medication adherence because it stresses the importance of following up with physicians for appointments and refills. This program is an innovative approach to enhancing transitions of care from the inpatient to outpatient settings.

In addition, because the pharmacy is located in

the hospital, problems such as prior authorizations are able to be resolved before a patient is discharged. The process of communicating with in-house physicians and other healthcare providers is also much simpler with this process. "Meds to Beds" is a convenient service for this healthcare team and also for the patient. As healthcare shifts from quantity- to quality-based care, the "Meds to Beds" program hopes to improve patient satisfaction and quality measures, including Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores and star ratings. GR Health Pharmacy also hopes to decrease healthcare costs and readmission rates as this service becomes more utilized.

During my time at GR Health Pharmacy, I feel that I had a strong role in transitioning patients from inpatients to outpatients, and I actively contributed to high quality healthcare.

Written by: Hayley Hodgson (Augusta)

“Hostess City of the South”

Did you know that 21 of the 24 squares in the original city plan for Savannah still exist today? Each square has a unique story, and taken all together, they help make Savannah one of the most charming cities in the South. Coincidentally, there are also 21 bright and aspiring 4th year University of Georgia College of Pharmacy students who will call Savannah home for the next year.

This year, Savannah’s main rotation sites include St. Joseph’s/ Candler Health System, Memorial Health, Southeastern Geriatrics, Savannah VA Outpatient Clinic, LoCost Pharmacy, and Kroger Pharmacy. Previous APPE



students in Savannah reported challenging preceptors and rewarding rotations. Just two rotations into the current APPE year, students are already expressing the same enthusiasm. Spencer Austin, who is on rotation with Dr. Ali Rahimi, M.D., at Southeastern Geriatrics, is beaming with excitement about his experience. He explains, “It’s awesome! Seeing the diagnostic process and getting a taste of the way physicians think about disease states will be invaluable to my career as a clinical pharmacist.”

What does the typical week look like outside of rotations? Among the countless tourist attractions, students have also found recreation in attending the Savannah Sand Gnats minor league baseball games, competing in trivia events, shopping at the brand new outlet mall, and hitting the links

at one of the many local golf courses. Rakiya Nasir, fourth-year Pharm.D. candidate, is currently working hard on an oncology rotation in nearby Hilton Head, South Carolina. She wants to make the most out of her year in the low country, stating, “It’s been great living so close to the beach. Also, the restaurant selection in Savannah is top notch. You can pick a new place for dinner on any given night and not be disappointed.”

It is a three and half hour drive from Savannah to Athens, close enough to make it up for a few Saturdays between the hedges. Other than that, we’re content to stay down here and welcome visitors to the “Hostess City of the South.”

Written by: Brent Sasaki (Savannah)

Preparing for the Real World

In less than a year, the class of 2016 will end our careers as students and begin our careers as pharmacists. There are many things to consider when transitioning from a student to a healthcare professional. Dr. Don Tyson, Director of Pharmacy at Athens Regional Medical Center, has some advice on making the transition.

“Employers are not expecting experts,” he said. “Knowledge is important, but employers also look for someone with a humble presence who is flexible, works well with others, is willing to learn, and has a strong work ethic.” He cautioned against trying to show off or prove our knowledge. “Your knowledge and abilities will become evident,” he said.

Dr. Tyson advises us to look 10-15 years into the future, set a career goal for ourselves, and make decisions with that goal in mind. He urges us to answer honestly when asked what we want to do after graduation. “Don’t be afraid to make [your goals] known,” he said. “Think ahead and vocalize [your goals].” But there’s no need to look for the perfect job right away. Dr. Tyson believes, “You probably won’t stay at your first job forever.” He encourages students to be willing to sacrifice location, hours, or job title to put themselves in a position to achieve their ultimate goals.

Written by: Lillian Otieno (Northeast GA)

Vaccine Update: Meningococcal B

Meningococcal disease caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* is a devastating infection, which usually affects children, young adults, and adults 65 or older. Healthy individuals can progress to death within a few hours after contracting the disease.

In the United States, serogroups B, C, and Y are responsible for the majority of meningococcal disease. The routine quadrivalent meningococcal vaccines cover serogroups A, C, Y, and W-135. In recent years, serogroup B *Neisseria meningitidis* (MenB) has become the most reported serogroup. It was the cause of four meningococcal outbreaks at Princeton University, the University of California - Santa Barbara, Providence College, and the University of Oregon during the past two years.

In response to these outbreaks, the Food and Drug Administration fast-tracked

and approved two meningococcal B vaccines: Trumenba[®] by Pfizer in October 2014 and Bexsero[®] by Novartis in January 2015. Trumenba[®] requires 3 doses administered at 0, 2, and 6 months. Bexsero[®] requires 2 doses administered at least one month apart.

As of February 26, 2015, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) now recommends routine meningococcal B vaccination in high risk individuals aged ≥ 10 years including the following:

- Patients with persistent complement component deficiencies
- Patient with anatomical or functional asplenia
- Microbiologists routinely exposed to *Neisseria meningitidis*
- Patients in close proximity to meningitis B outbreaks.

At their latest meeting on June 24, 2015, ACIP only recommended permissive use of meningococcal B vaccines in adolescents 16-23 years old with a preferred age of 16-18 years due to safety concerns. This recommendation ultimately leaves the vaccination decision up to doctors and their patients (references available on page 4).

Written by: Huong Pham (Columbus)



UGA College of Veterinary Medicine



What do pneumonia, squamous cell carcinoma, UTI, and a pig with a Facebook page have in common? These are all things that you may see while on a rotation at Vet Med! As a pharmacist, animals may not be your typical patients, but the disease states and treatments can be very similar. And the best part is...they are really cute!

While at UGA's Veterinary Teaching Hospital, I was able to learn from and round with veterinary students, internal medicine doctors, and surgeons. With no HIPAA laws and the atmosphere of a teaching hospital, I had many wonderful opportunities. I saw ultrasound-guided tissue biopsies and needle aspirations on a geriatric Dalmatian, cisplatin injections in a goat, MRI interpretation with radiologists, and an endoscopy in a stallion with gastric ulcers, enabling me to observe an abnormal mucosa up close. Having these experiences, rather than just reading about them in school, made the big picture much clearer.

I observed many exciting surgeries, including a donkey's hoof reconstruction, a piggy neuter, a broken maxilla repair with removal of giant mare teeth followed by the application of braces, wound debridement, a uterine lavage, and a surgery on a gelding with 22 feet of necrotic jejunum as a result of a strangulating lipoma growing on the mesentery. If you have never smelled a necrotic jejunum, I encourage you to never do so.

I also had numerous opportunities to practice pharmacy and serve as a drug information resource to the vet students. The most interesting case I saw was the administration of high-dose oxytetracycline (hyphenate) (similar to tetracycline in humans) as a muscle relaxant in a foal who was unable to extend his front legs due to congenital flexural limb deformities. The use of oxytetracycline as a muscle relaxant is most likely due to the drug's ability to chelate calcium. By doing so, there is less calcium available to the muscles for contraction, leading to muscle relaxation. Once the muscles are relaxed, the tendons and muscles can be stretched, and the legs can be splinted. It has been an amazing rotation, and I highly recommend it to future 4th year pharmacy students.

Written by: Julie Anne Waterfield (Northeast GA)

Career Highlight: Managed Care

Why is managed care important to pharmacists, and why should we take an active role to become involved?

The rising cost of healthcare and increasing focus on improving the patient experience leave pharmacists as the equalizers to balance the quality of care with cost efficiency. Whether working for a health plan or a pharmacy benefits manager, the pharmacists' involvement allows them to help counteract the increasing cost of generics and prescription copays, as well as control open access among patients in the benefits pool.

Pharmacists serve in a number of different roles within the managed care setting, and they help ensure that patients are receiving optimal care. They are involved in cost and business management, drug dispensing, and drug benefit design. In addition, they develop clinical programs, monitor patient safety, and facilitate communications between patients, physicians, and other pharmacists. In regards to patient safety, pharmacists rely on drug utilization reviews (DUR), fraud and abuse programs, prior

authorizations, and quality assurance (QA) programs to ensure their patients are receiving the best care, while minimizing adverse effects or poor patient care performance.

How much time each pharmacist devotes to the aforementioned tasks relies on their level of interest and their educational background. Many of the pharmacists working in managed care also have an MA, MS, MBA, or PhD in areas essential to developing understanding of economic principles and business practices. If you are interested in finding out more about the future of pharmacists in managed care and the potential opportunities, check out the AACP and AMCP websites.

Written by: Zuri Hawkins (Columbus)

Food for Thought

Easy Cheesy Company Dip

Ingredients:

- ½ cup of mayonnaise
- 8 oz package of cream cheese, softened
- 1¾ cups of shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- Dash of cayenne pepper, tabasco, or sriracha to taste
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 8 crackers, crushed (Ritz, Cheez-its, Goldfish)

Optional mix-ins:

- ½ cup chopped green onions
- ½ cup of canned green chilies, pimentos, or jalapeños, drained
- 8 slices of bacon, cooked and crumbled

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F
2. In a medium bowl, mix together the mayonnaise, cream cheese, 1½ cups of shredded cheese, cayenne pepper, salt, pepper, and any desired mix-ins

3. Transfer to a shallow baking dish or 9-inch pie pan
4. Top the mixture with cracker crumbs and ¼ cup of shredded cheese
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until heated through and slightly browned on top
6. Serve immediately with pita chips, crackers, and veggies of your choice

Written by: Alison Hunter (Atlanta)



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Upcoming Events

- August 3, 2015: Start of Rotation 3
- September 7, 2015: Start of Rotation 4
- October 1, 2015: Class Meeting
- October 1, 2015: Career Fair
- October 1, 2015: Scholarship Ceremony
- October 2, 2015: Mercer Residency Showcase
- October 12, 2015: Start of Rotation 5
- November 16, 2015: Start of Rotation 6
- November 26, 2015: Thanksgiving Day
- December 19, 2015: Winter Break

