

## I Have an Institutional IPPE Student; what should I do?



Here's a sampling of activities that might be appropriate for your IPPE student. There is also a set of focus areas for each day of the rotation—maybe some of these ideas will work for you. We've included checkable objectives or suggested topics for each day. Tailor these to fit the needs of your pharmacists, technicians, and other personnel as well as to the needs of your facility. This is just a GUIDE, not a set of absolute requirements. As a preceptor, some of your most significant teaching for the student will come from your role modeling and your

own pharmacist actions and behaviors to the student. IPPE students may only have a rather vague idea of what a pharmacist does.

### Suggested Daily Activities for Students

Students should observe and participate (as appropriate to your facility) in the routine, on-going, daily activities related to medication distribution that occurs in your facility. This would most likely include activities related to preparing medications for patients, inputting patient medication orders into the pharmacy computer system, delivery of medications to patients/and or areas of the facility, stocking medications, ordering medications, storage of medications, monitoring of patients, communicating with patients and/or health care providers, performing medication-related interventions, etc. Students should experience each day as a day for learning about the “pharmacist in the trenches”.

### Week One

#### Day 1—Orientation Day

This is the best opportunity to meet and greet pharmacy and other personnel in the facility, find out important locations, gather some important information from one another such as:

- Who are the pharmacists? Who are the technicians?
- Where do we store any personal items? Where's the bathroom?
- What are the local policies regarding appropriate attire and grooming?
- What behaviors are prohibited? (e.g. rules about cell phone use in the workplace, telephone etiquette; Remember: if a behavior or action would be inappropriate from one of the employees, it most likely will be inappropriate for a student.)
- Discuss your facility's dress code.
- What elements of professional behavior are expected in this environment?
- Where are the refrigerated drugs located? How do we get to the ICU?
- What can we expect from each other the next three weeks?
- Who will evaluate the student for this rotation?
- What factors will be key in that evaluation?
- Find out what the student's goals for the rotation might be and see which of those goals might be reasonable to accomplish during the three weeks.



There are some great resources for preceptors to use at the *Pharmacists Letter* website ([www.pharmacistsletter.com](http://www.pharmacistsletter.com)) in the preceptor development area that might help everyone get off to a great beginning.

## Day 2—Drug Distribution Day

- Discuss some of the aspects of the drug distribution system at this facility.
- How do we complete a cart fill or process prescriptions?
- How do the different technologies help us provide medications and other services to our patients?
- How do we make certain patients get the correct medications?
- Who fills? Who checks? How will the pharmacy intern fit into these procedures?
- How do the medications get to the patients?
- What processes and procedures do we have in place to improve safety in medication use?



## Day 3—Drug Storage Day

- Discuss drug storage and inventory maintenance at this facility.
- How do we deal with drug storage issues at our facility?
- Where are certain medications located?
- How do we verify appropriate storage conditions? How is this checked and by whom?
- How do we deal with out of date medications?
- Why some drug products are stored differently—legal issues, safety issues, etc?
- How do we handle drug recalls at our facility?
- What are some of the different dosage forms used in our facility?
- What are the different uses for the medications we dispense at our facility?

## Day 4—Focus on Technology Day

- Discuss the types of technologies used at our facility. (Computers, portable electronics, bar code scanners, automated dispensing devices such as Pyxis or MedDispense, pneumatic tube systems, robotics, on-line MARS, POE Physician Order Entry, etc)



- How does the staff handle problems that occur with the technology?
- How does the technology help/hurt our operation?
- How did we decide to use certain technologies in our facility, but not use other available technologies?
- How do certain economic realities drive our pharmacy operation?

### Day 5—Shadow the Pharmacy Technician(s) Day

- Have student shadow pharmacy technician
- What do pharmacy technicians really do?
- How is the division of labor determined?
- What are some of the legal aspects that determine a technician’s duties?

Students can really learn a lot from technicians and the technician can be a great teacher for the student if s/he is kept involved in student training. Students may need to be reminded that the technicians are experts in many of the steps in drug distribution and may be the very best sources of instruction for those processes.

- Give the student a generic/brand name question and answer type oral quiz. Student will love you for this one!

### Week Two

#### Day 6—Professionalism in the Practice of Pharmacy Day

- Discuss the meaning of professionalism with the student
- What does professionalism mean to the pharmacists in this practice setting?
- How do we interact with others in ways that demonstrate the tenets of professionalism? What kinds of behaviors and activities do we view as “unprofessional”?
- How are incidents of unprofessional behavior dealt with in our facility?

#### Day 7—Focus on the Larger Community Day

- Discuss the relationship of this practice site with the larger community.
- In what activities do the pharmacists and employees at our facility get involved to promote public health in general (e.g. providing immunizations to the public, participating in local drug education programs at schools or with civic groups)?
- In what ways do the staff members here get involved in other community affairs (e.g. membership in local civic organizations, involvement with local school organizations, local government involvement etc.)

- How are pharmacists viewed within the local community as leaders or valued members of society?
- What additional responsibilities to society in general does the pharmacist have that might be different for non-professionals in the community?



### Day 8—Other Health Care Professionals Day

- Have the student follow other health care providers (nurse, respiratory therapist, physician, laboratory technician, etc. in the facility.)
- How does pharmacy interact and work with other departments/areas of the facility?
- Just what do nurses, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, ward clerks, physicians, lab technicians, x-ray technicians, etc do during their days at work in our facility?
- How can pharmacy help the other areas of the facility be more effective in their work?
- How have we dealt with some of the communication problems among different health care professionals at our facility?
- What kinds of drug *administration* might the student observe at the facility? (medication pass, IV medication administration, etc.)

### Day 9—Infection Control Day or Patient Counseling Day



- Discuss how personnel can prevent infection in the facility.
- What are appropriate hand-washing techniques for various activities?
- How do we maintain cleanliness of various work areas?
- What is a clean room?
- What does 797 compliant mean?
- What are antibiotic audits?
- How does the pharmacy use culture and sensitivity information for the facility?
- What are we doing to prevent *MRSA* or *C. difficile* infections at our facility?

AND/OR

- Discuss how students can improve communication skills with patients and or health care providers.
- How can students learn to speak in both the professional language needed in practice as well as the lay language needed to improve patient understanding of medication use?

### Day 10—Formulary Management and Alphabet Soup Day

- Discuss the reasons formularies are usually a part of institutional pharmacy practices
- How is the formulary determined?
- What are the procedures for adding new drugs to the formulary?
- Who in our facility are included as members of the P & T committee?
- What are some of the cost containment processes and procedures for our facility?
- What are some of the different acronyms and abbreviations for various entities in health care?
- Discuss the importance of these agencies or entities to pharmacy. (JACHO, HIPPA, HHS, DEA, BNDD, ISMP, etc)



## Week Three

### Day 11 —Pharmacy Project Day

- Assign the student to help with a small project in the pharmacy that s/he can help complete (i.e. antibiotic audit, warfarin audit, formulary review, renal drug dosing protocols, medication administration audit, etc).  
These kinds of projects may help the student feel like he/she can contribute something to the practice site.

### Day 12 —Drug Information Day

- Assign a small drug information project to the student to complete.
  - What kinds of references and resources do we use at our facility?
  - How do we convey information to other interested parties?
  - Do we have a newsletter? If so, how is it written and distributed?
  - What are some interesting drug information questions that we have had presented to the pharmacy recently?
  - How did we answer them?
  - What do we know about the impact our answers had?
  - How do we document the impact that our pharmacy interventions have on patient care?
  - How would the student find information about common drug interactions?
  - How do we use drug interaction information at our facility?



### Day 13 —Communication Challenges Day

- Discuss some of the communication challenges that have arisen at this practice site.
  - How have these challenges been managed? What would you do differently if similar circumstances occurred again?
  - How can the pharmacist best walk the fine line between being aggressive in communicating with others and being appropriately assertive?
    - What are some suggestions for developing a collaborative communication style for dealing with patients, colleagues, or other health care professionals?
    - How does our practice collect and document accurate and complete medication information from the patients we serve?
    - What is our involvement in communication of medication use in transition of care?



### Day 14 —Legal and Ethical Issues in Pharmacy



- Discuss some of the methods that are used at this practice site to ensure that all relevant laws are followed.
- What kinds of experiences have the pharmacy staff members had with state board of pharmacy inspections?
- How do the local policies and procedures go beyond what is required by the law?
- What ethical dilemmas have the pharmacists had to grapple with in this practice? How have they resolved those dilemmas?
- What areas do the pharmacy staff members see as areas of potential concern for the future in the realm of professional ethics?

### Day 15 —Last Day of the Rotation

- Complete an exit interview with the student; share your final evaluation with student. Constructive feedback to the student is vital for his/her professional growth.
- In turn, ask for the student's feedback about his/her experiences during this rotation. Perhaps the student might have some ideas for improving the experience for a future student rotation.
- Make sure student gathers all personal belongings and the Intern license before leaving the pharmacy.
- Send completed, (with preceptor signature), student evaluation to the IPPE office (Electronic submission preferred, Fax, or snail mail)



Can you believe it went so quickly? What a great job we've all done! We all deserve an award! Let's have a going away party; bring on the cake and ice cream to the break room/cafeteria.

Review with staff—how did this go from our perspective? What can we do differently next time to improve the experience for staff and for students?

**What can the IPPE office do to make this better for you and your staff—and let us know!**

**Contact Nina Morris (580) 774 – 3193 or Casey Merryman (580) 774 -7170 at the IPPE Office with any comments, concerns, or suggestions.**