

Fostering psychosocial and diabetes self-management skills among pharmacy students through a hybrid advanced diabetes elective course

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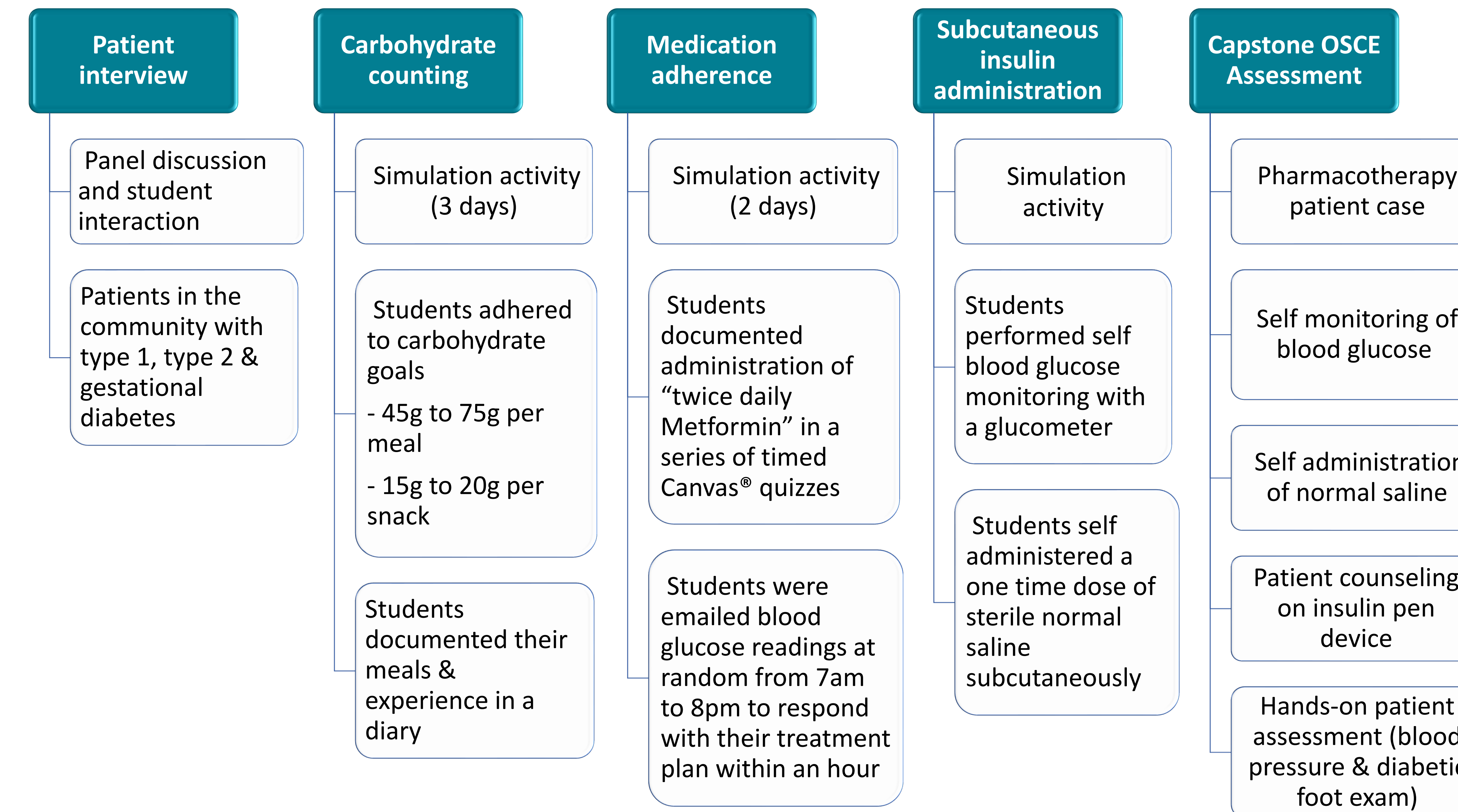
BACKGROUND

- Pharmacists are the most accessible and frequently visited healthcare professionals in the United States.¹
- Pharmacy school programs contain required course content in diabetes management. However, students desire additional experience with self-management skills and activities that promote empathy, patient advocacy, and effective communication.
- An elective course was created to provide pharmacy students with first-hand experience in diabetes self-management and the psychosocial/behavioral aspects of diabetes care.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

- Advanced Diabetes Care is a 2-credit hour course with exposure to advanced concepts and skills for the comprehensive management of diabetes.
- The course is a blend of online modules and live didactic teaching. The integration of pathophysiology, pharmacotherapy, behavioral changes, and lifestyle modifications is emphasized via a “hands on” approach beyond what is offered in the required Endocrine and Male and Female Health Integrated Pharmacotherapy course.
- This course is partially comprised of the certificate training program "The Pharmacist and Patient-Centered Diabetes Care" offered by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA).² Students earn this certificate with the successful completion of the program requirements embedded in the course.

Figure 1: Description of select course activities



OUTCOMES

Table 1: Student assessment outcomes (n = 111 students)

Average capstone OSCE assessment score (patient case)	92.5%
Average capstone OSCE assessment score (hands-on skill assessment – self & patient)	89.5%
Completion rate for the Pharmacist & Patient Centered Diabetes Care certificate program	99.1%
Average assessment score for the Pharmacist & Patient Centered Diabetes Care certificate program	86%

Select student comments from the patient panel and carbohydrate counting activity (2022 cohort)

Patient panel	Carbohydrate counting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I will improve my ability to provide quality patient centered care to patients with diabetes by making empathy key whenever I relate/talk with them. This class has made me understand what these patients go through, I want to be that kind clinician who will help them through their journey and make life easier for them in my own little way. I will put myself in the shoes of those who have diabetes, it's one thing to know about the disease, but another to understand the daily struggles. I learned that there are many challenges that come with the disease, so I ever come across a situation where I can help a diabetic patient such as counsel or help them understand what going on, I would be glad to help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The last three days have been overwhelmingly amazing to have realized how much of an effect could be put into making sure that all my food consumptions are been recorded and accounted for. I feel so humble and have high compassion towards their challenges. Thank you Dr. Atanda for this challenging assignment. It taught me that I can do whatever I set my mind up to do. It also made me feel and understand the daily struggles of patients with diabetes, this has greatly increased my compassion for this group of people. This made me open my eyes to how empathetic we need to be when giving patient lifestyle modifications.

CONCLUSION

- The course had a positive impact on pharmacy students' proficiency in diabetes care and self-management skills, as evidenced by their performance within the APhA certificate program which was originally developed with practicing pharmacists as the target audience.
- Through simulation activities, students gained firsthand experience, and reported improved patient empathy and understanding of the psychosocial aspects of diabetes care, which will contribute to more effective patient communication and advocacy.

NEXT STEPS

- Based on student feedback, the course faculty are exploring an “advanced community practice emphasis pathway” to equip students desiring a career in outpatient pharmacy practice with additional training to foster psychosocial skills through motivational interviewing and facilitate the following clinical services:
 - Smoking cessation
 - Diabetes education and monitoring
 - Pain management support
 - Travel health and immunization
 - Point of care testing
- To ensure the delivery of reputable content, course faculty will maintain collaboration with APhA and other organizations to offer materials and certificate programs relevant to the aforementioned areas.

REFERENCES

- Am J Pharm Educ. 2010 Dec 15; 74(10): S7.
- American Pharmacists Association. The Pharmacist & Patient-Centered Diabetes Care. Available at <https://www.pharmacist.com/Education/Certificate-Training-Programs/Diabetes-Care>