

Assessing the Impact of a Real-World Legislative Visit on Student Pharmacists' Perceptions of Advocacy and Political Skill Inventory Skills

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BACKGROUND

- Advocacy and legislative advocacy engagement is one of the key strategies being used at Colleges and School of Pharmacy¹⁻³
- Previous literature has assessed incorporation of advocacy in didactic curriculum and simulated visit; however, there is limited literature that evaluates the impact of a real-life legislative visit on student pharmacists' perceptions of advocacy and political skill inventory scores^{4,5}

OBJECTIVE

- To assess the impact of a real-life legislative visit on student pharmacists' perceptions of advocacy by comparing changes in Political Skill Inventory (PSI) and perceptions of advocacy skills and responsibility scores prior to and after the legislative visits

METHODS

- During February 14-18, 2022, student pharmacists throughout New York State participated and engaged in NYSCHP's Advocacy Week⁶
- Touro College of Pharmacy (lead institution) performed a multi-center pre- and post-intervention survey-based study comparing changes in political skills inventory (PSI) scores and perceptions of advocacy prior to and after the legislative visits to assess whether a real-life legislative visit would improve the advocacy skills of student pharmacists
- Study population included student pharmacists who are enrolled in a PharmD program in New York State
- Written informed consent was obtained from eligible student pharmacists prior to administration of the pre-intervention survey with the participation of multiple institutions/organizations in New York
- Pre- and post-intervention anonymous surveys were given via Qualtrics XM (Qualtrics, LLC), and analyzed with JASP software using a Mann-Whitney U Test to determine a difference between pre- and post-intervention groups in Political Skill Inventory and Perceptions of Advocacy Skills and Responsibilities with alpha less than 0.05
- Each item is scored using a seven point Likert-type scale, with answers ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree

DISCLOSURES

- Dr. Andrade has given presentations for Shionogi Inc. and has received compensation; all other authors have no conflicts of interests

RESULTS

Table 1. Political Skill Inventory Survey Instrument⁷

1. I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others (NA)
2. I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me. (II)
3. I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others (II)
4. It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people (II)
5. I understand people very well. (SA)
6. I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done. (NA)
7. I am good at building relationships with influential people at work. (NA)
8. I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others. (SA)
9. When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do. (AS)
10. At work, I know a lot of important people and am well connected. (NA)
11. I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with others. (NA)
12. I am good at getting people to like me. (II)
13. It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do. (AS)
14. I try to show a genuine interest in other people. (AS)
15. I am good at using my connections and network to make things happen at work. (NA)
16. I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others. (SA)
17. I always seem to instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence others. (SA)
18. I pay close attention to people's facial expressions. (SA)

NA = Networking Ability II = Interpersonal Influence SA = Social Astuteness AS = Apparent Sincerity

Table 2. Perceptions of Advocacy Skills and Responsibilities⁸

Statement	Pre-Intervention, Strongly Agree or Agree, % (N = 40)	Post-Intervention, Strongly Agree or Agree, % (N = 23)
I am able to effectively communicate my position to legislators and/or their staffers	15 (37.5)	8 (34.8)
I know what to expect when I meet with legislators and their staffers	11 (27.5)	11 (47.8)
I can describe how public policy affects the populations that I serve	15 (37.5)	11 (47.8)
As a student pharmacist, I believe I can influence policy	20 (50)	15 (65.2)
As a student pharmacist, I believe it is important to contact my legislators about issues affecting my future patients	25 (62.5)	16 (69.2)
As a student pharmacist, I believe it is important to contact my legislators about issues that will affect the way I practice within the profession of pharmacy	25 (62.5)	18 (78.3)
Participating in the legislative process is a professional responsibility of pharmacists	24 (60)	17 (73.9)
Meeting with legislators is a worthwhile use of my time	23 (57.5)	17 (73.9)
Meeting with a legislator's staff is a worthwhile use of my time	23 (50)	17 (73.9)
It is part of my role as a student pharmacist to advocate for health needs within society	24 (60)	18 (78.3)
I plan to engage in health legislative advocacy activities in the future	25 (62.5)	16 (69.6)
I plan to participate in a professional society in the future	29 (72.5)	18 (78.3)

DISCUSSION

- Overall, the individual PSI scores were 5.67 and 6.00, pre- and post-intervention, respectively, which is comparable to previous literature evaluating the impact of a simulated legislative visit and our study additionally demonstrated statistically significant improvement in the sub-category of networking ability⁵
- Sub-categories of apparent sincerity, social astuteness, and interpersonal influence were not statistically significant comparing before and after student pharmacists participated in a real-life legislative visit
- Compared to previous literature of a simulated legislative visit, investigators have shown statistically significant improvement in networking ability and in interpersonal influence, however, the findings of our study failed to show statistical significance in the sub-category of interpersonal influence⁵
- Similar to previous literature, a majority of the statements of perceptions of advocacy skills and responsibilities increased when comparing pre- vs. post-intervention
- Similarly, we found comparable results amongst previous literature in that we did not find statistical significance in the sub-categories of apparent sincerity and social astuteness⁵
- Limitations include a small sample size limited generalizability to other states and schools/colleges of pharmacy

CONCLUSION

- A face-to-face legislative visit demonstrated improvement in networking ability among student pharmacists, however, larger studies are needed to determine the overall effectiveness of a real-world legislative visits in developing advocacy skills of student pharmacists for a lasting impact

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Table 3. Political Skill Inventory Scores Before and After Student Pharmacists Participated in a Real-life Legislative Visit

PSI Component	Pre-Intervention (n = 40) PSI Score, Median [IQR]	Post-Intervention (n = 23) PSI Score, Median [IQR]	P – value
PSI Composite	5.667 [4.917 – 6.000]	6.000 [5.556 – 6.500]	0.059
PSI Subscales			
PSI – Networking Ability	5.167 [4.292 – 5.875]	6.000 [4.667 – 6.750]	0.044
PSI – Interpersonal Influence	5.750 [5.188 - 6.000]	6.000 [5.125 - 6.625]	0.198
PSI – Social Astuteness	5.900 [4.950 – 6.000]	6.000 [5.550 – 6.400]	0.257
PSI – Apparent Sincerity	6.000 [5.917 – 7.000]	6.667 [6.000 – 7.000]	0.061

Abbreviation: IQR, interquartile range