



UNDER PRESSURE: INCORPORATING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN TEACHING HYPERTENSION IN A CARDIOVASCULAR PHARMACOTHERAPEUTICS COURSE

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INTRODUCTION

- Social determinants of health (SDOH) play a significant role in cardiovascular disease (CVD) development.¹
- Understanding SDOH and their impact on health outcomes is imperative for future healthcare professionals to fully serve patients' needs and address disparities.
- Despite calls to incorporate health equity concepts into pharmacy curricula, there are gaps in the literature on practical approaches to integrate and assess student knowledge of SDOH concepts within clinical pharmacy courses.^{2,3}

OBJECTIVE

- To determine by survey, changes in student understanding, perceptions, beliefs, and confidence before and after integrating SDOH topics

METHODS

- **Participants:** Students enrolled in PHA 523 Pharmacotherapeutics VIII: Cardiovascular Disorders at Wilkes University and PHAR 631 Integrated Sequence: Cardiovascular Systems at Roosevelt University
- **Intervention:** (1) students attended a lecture provided by course faculty (2) students completed a reading assignment and self-reflection
- Participants completed a pre- and post-intervention survey to evaluate their understanding, perceptions, beliefs, and confidence regarding SDOH and their impact on CV health.
- Survey questions were asked on a Likert-type scale (1=Strongly disagree/Not at all confident, 5=Strongly agree/Extremely confident).
- Mean composite survey scores were calculated by category and compared with Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test.
- Faculty self-reflected on their perceptions, challenges, and workload through a reflective journal.

RESULTS

Students:

- Response rate of 85.3% (93 total participants, 56 from Wilkes University and 37 from Roosevelt University)
- Open-ended knowledge assessment mean score of 5.75 (range 3-6)

Table 2. Combined Institution Pre- and Post-Student Survey Results

Category	Survey Item	Z	p value (two-tailed)*
Understanding Composite			<0.001
Understanding Survey Items	1	-7.528	<0.001
	2	-5.934	<0.001
	3	-7.728	<0.001
	4	-5.678	<0.001
Perceptions Composite			0.003
Perceptions Survey Items	5	-4.955	<0.001
	6	-1.005	0.315
	7	-4.448	<0.001
	8	-4.696	<0.001
	9	-4.483	<0.001
	10	-3.505	<0.001
	11	-45.043	<0.001
Confidence	12	-6.397	<0.001
Beliefs	13	-3.276	0.001

* p-value<0.05 represents a significant value

Faculty:

- Self-reflective journal common themes:
 - Increased workload
 - Curriculum integration via modified lecture reduced curricular strain
 - Improved student performance
 - High student engagement
 - Faculty comfortability

KEY FINDINGS

- Survey results showed improved understanding, perceptions, beliefs, and confidence regarding the impact of SDOH on CV health
- A high mean assignment score indicated that students were proficient in applying SDOH concepts to CVD
- This intervention provides a reproducible example of how to integrate SDOH concepts into clinical content without a significant increase in curricular strain

LIMITATIONS

- Differences in faculty teaching styles
- Varied time frame to complete assignments between institutions
- Other institutional differences: mission and vision, curriculum type, geopolitical climates, student population
- Variability in students' baseline public health knowledge
- Lack of time in the course for debrief and class discussion

REFERENCES

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