

# Integration of Health Disparities Activities and Assessment of Student Perceptions within Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences

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## BACKGROUND

- The social determinants of health can have a large impact on health disparities, which are a “particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage.”<sup>1</sup>
- Pharmacists may have the most impact on increasing healthcare access and quality since they are often the most accessible healthcare providers, particularly in medically underserved areas.
- ACPE Standard 3.5 highlights the need for graduates to “recognize social determinants of health to diminish disparities and inequities in access to quality of care.”<sup>2</sup>
- A few studies have shown improved student confidence with addressing health disparities within the pre-APPE curricula.<sup>3-6</sup>
- No published study to date has evaluated this during advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs).

## OBJECTIVE

- To evaluate changes in APPE students’ confidence, knowledge, and perceptions of health disparities (HD) before and after completing assigned readings and health disparities cases while providing care to indigent and vulnerable patients

## METHODS

- Retrospective review of pre- and post-rotation surveys for students completing a 5-week primary care APPE with four full-time faculty members
- Students provided direct patient care to indigent and vulnerable populations throughout the APPE.
- Students completed case-based activities related to HD with preceptor discussion during APPE.
- Cases included:
  - Patients with diabetes or asthma requiring multiple high-cost medications
  - Older adult patients with multiple chronic conditions
  - Loss of or change in insurance
  - Medicare coverage gap
  - Limited regional healthcare access
- On a 5-point Likert scale, the pre- and post-survey evaluated:
  - Perception of HD
  - Confidence in addressing HD
  - Confidence in identifying risk factors and resources to address HD
- Data collected from May 2019 to April 2021
- Data underwent quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Approved by Auburn University IRB

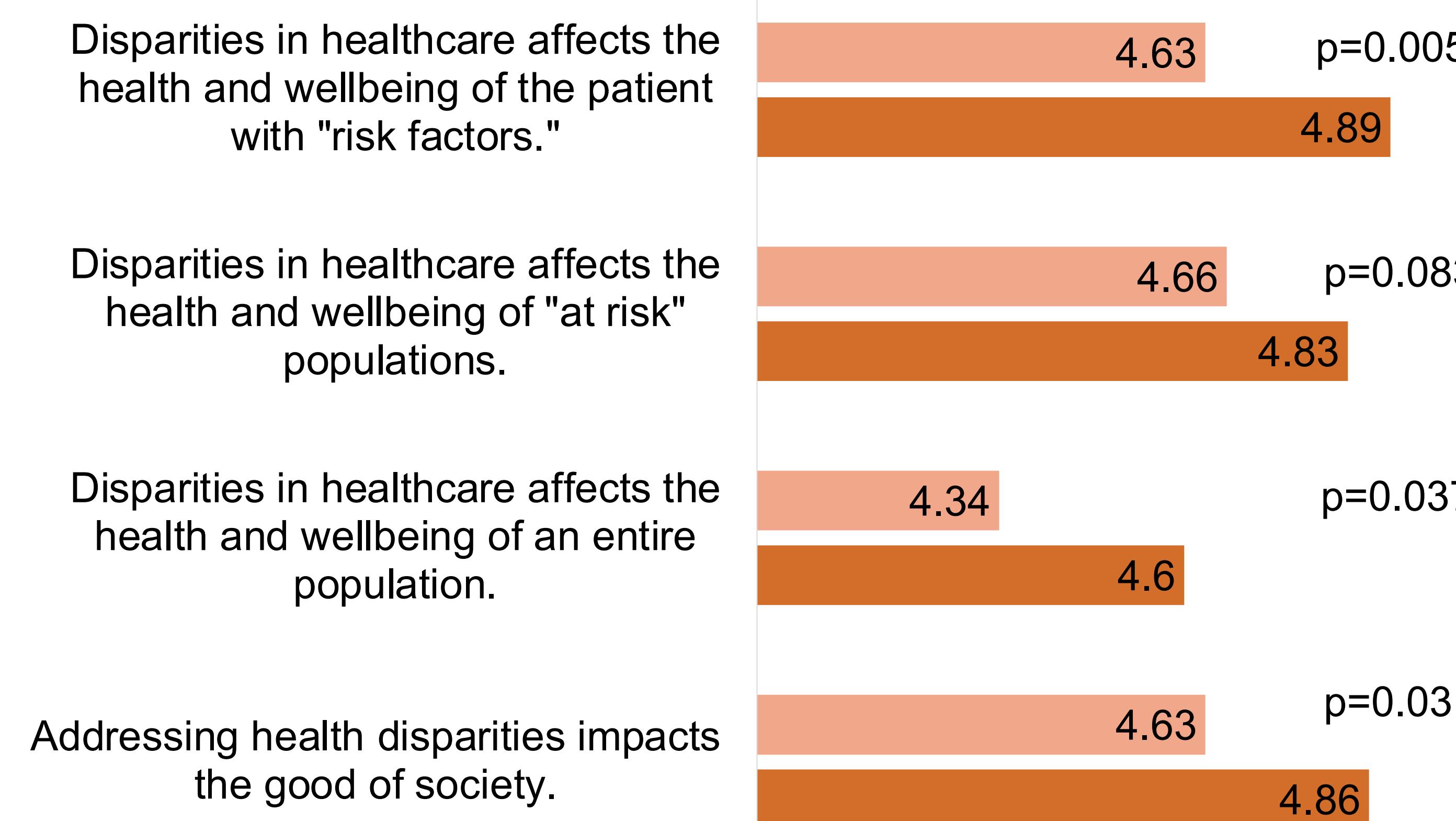
## RESULTS

- A total of 35 students completed both pre- and post-APPE surveys
- Compared to the pre-APPE survey, the post-APPE survey indicated:
  - Greater confidence in identifying and helping patients with HD
  - Increase in the willingness to work with patients with limited resources
  - Stronger belief in the importance of addressing HD

### Student Agreement with Health Disparities Concepts

■ Pre-APPE ■ Post-APPE

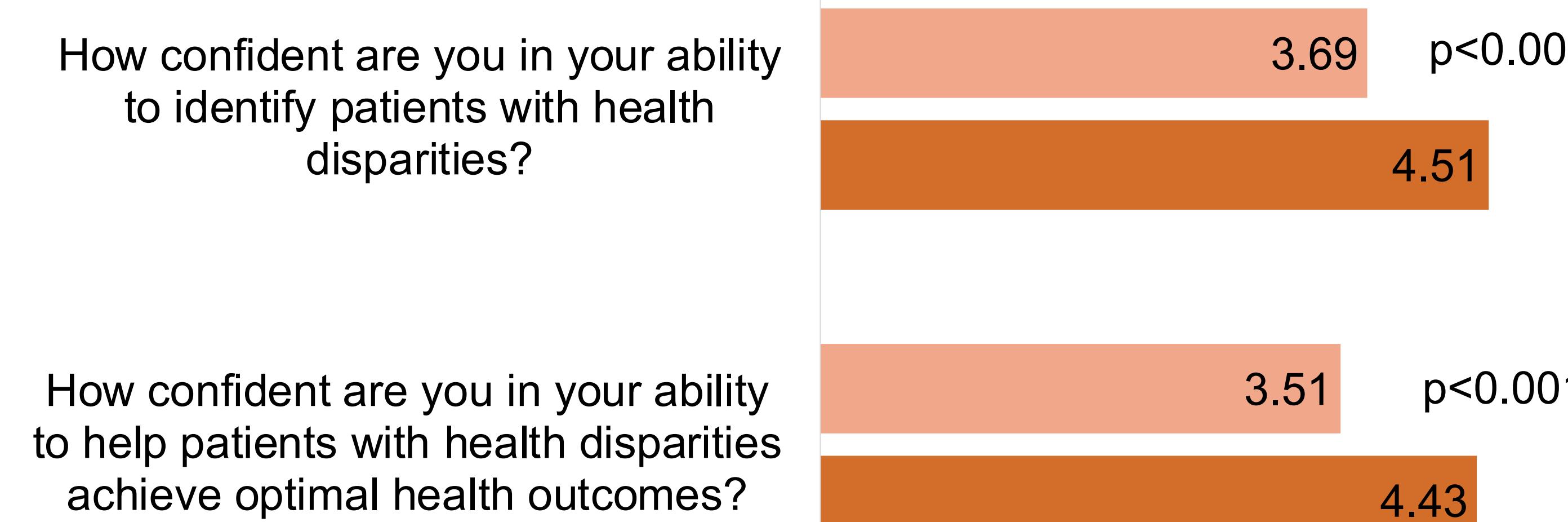
1 = strongly disagree  
5 = strongly agree



### Student Confidence

■ Pre-APPE ■ Post-APPE

1 = not very confident  
5 = very confident



## RESULTS

Survey Questions Related to Diabetes Case	Pre-APPE	Post-APPE	P-Value
How confident are you in your ability to manage DB's diabetes given his financial constraints? 1 = very confident 5 = very unconfident	2.6	1.66	<0.001
How challenging was it to come up with a solution for DB's diabetes management given his financial and social limitations? 1 = extremely challenging 5 = not challenging at all	2.91	3.4	0.008

Survey Questions Related to Willingness to Work in Certain Settings	Pre-APPE	Post-APPE	P-Value
Upon graduation, how would you rate your willingness to work in settings where patients have limited access to and limited resources for healthcare? 1 = very willing 5 = very unwilling	1.6	1.34	0.018

## CONCLUSIONS

- Completing a primary care APPE with an indigent, vulnerable population along with focused health disparities activities helped to improve students’ understanding of and confidence in managing health disparities.
- Students’ perceptions of and willingness to address health disparities improved after these focused activities.
- Activities were not time intensive for the preceptors or students.

## REFERENCES

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