

A NEW SCRIPT TO REFILL THE PHARMACY PIPELINE

Brooke Hudspeth, PharmD, CDCES; Gavin T. Howington, PharmD, BCCCP, BCPS; Mandy Jones, PharmD, MPAS, BCPS; Jason Edwards; Rosa Mejia-Cruz, MA; Abigail Hammond, PharmD Candidate; Chandra Tallent, PharmD Candidate; University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy, Lexington, Kentucky



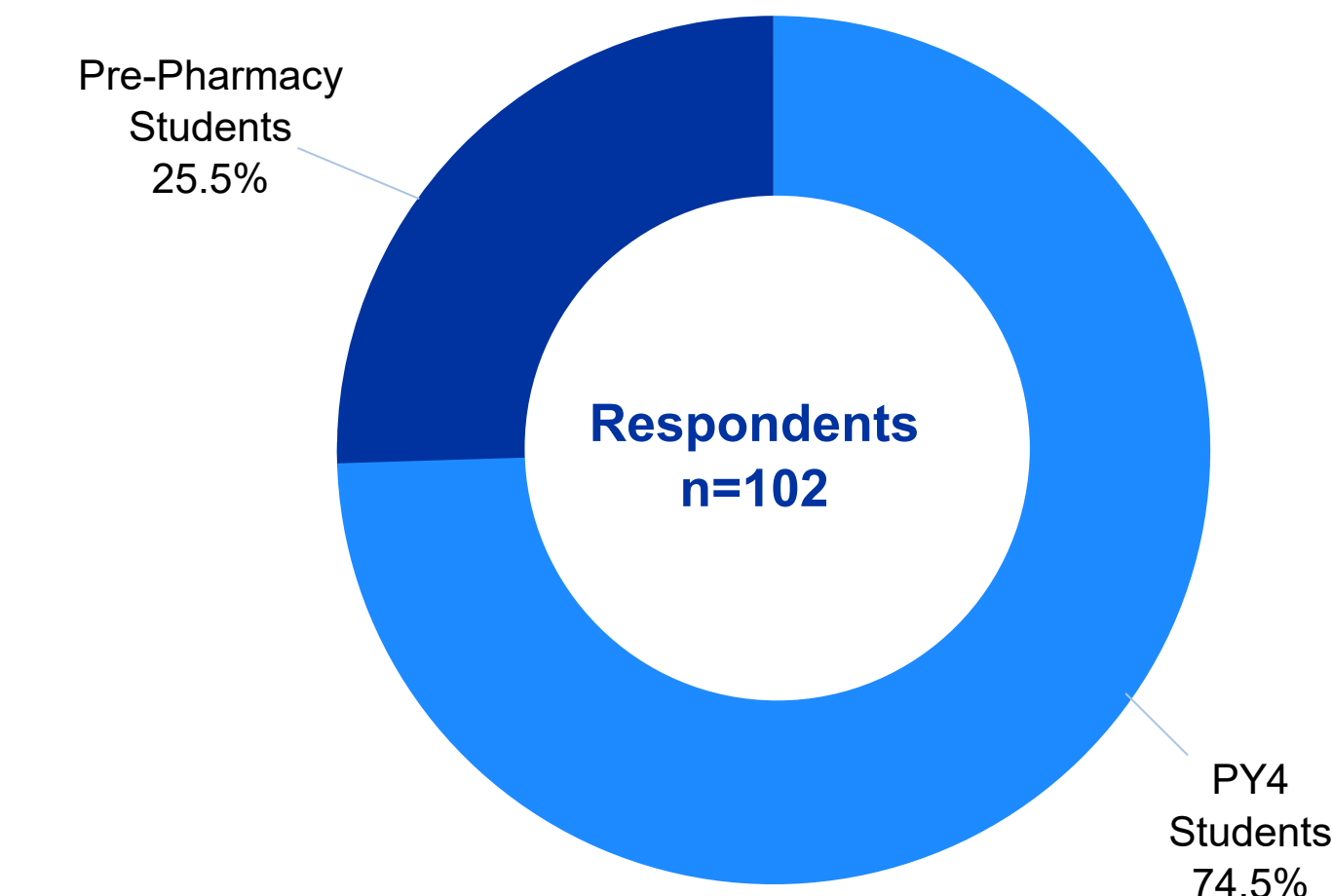
BACKGROUND

- Public perception of pharmacy tends not to reflect the breadth of pharmacy practice opportunities.
- Concerns regarding public perception of pharmacists stem back to 2015. Yanicak et al. found that pharmacists' portrayal in film from 1970 to 2013 was notably negative.
- Inaccurate perceptions may be negatively impacting prospective student interest.
- Diminishing interest in the field of pharmacy can deleteriously affect college of pharmacy enrollment and subsequently lead to pharmacist shortages.
- To better understand student perceptions of pharmacy we surveyed pre-pharmacy students and current 4th year student pharmacists (PY4) regarding perceived roles, responsibilities, and practice settings.

METHODS

- Pre-pharmacy undergraduate students and currently enrolled PY4 students at UK were surveyed.
- A 7-item questionnaire was developed to gather information pertaining to attitudes and perceptions about the pharmacy profession, roles, responsibilities, and practice settings. Questions were identical for PY4 and pre-pharmacy students, except PY4 students were asked the questions using retrospective pre- and post-methodology to measure changes in their perceptions now that they have had professional pharmacy training.
- The questionnaire was anonymous and contained "select all that apply" questions and short answer questions pertaining to roles, responsibilities and pharmacy settings. Attitudinal questions were asked on a 10-point Likert scale with 1 being little to no knowledge and 10 being extremely knowledgeable. The questionnaire was pretested, and questions were modified based on respondents' feedback.
- Survey dissemination followed a modified Dillman approach. The survey was sent electronically via email to all currently enrolled PY4 and pre-pharmacy students along with an internet link directing them to an electronic version of the survey. Non-respondents were sent a total of 2 reminders approximately 5 days apart.
- Electronic survey data was collected and managed using Qualtrics.
- 102 students responded to the survey (76=PY4 and 26=Pre-Pharmacy)
- Descriptive statistics were used to describe data.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS



CONNECT WITH US
pharmacy.uky.edu



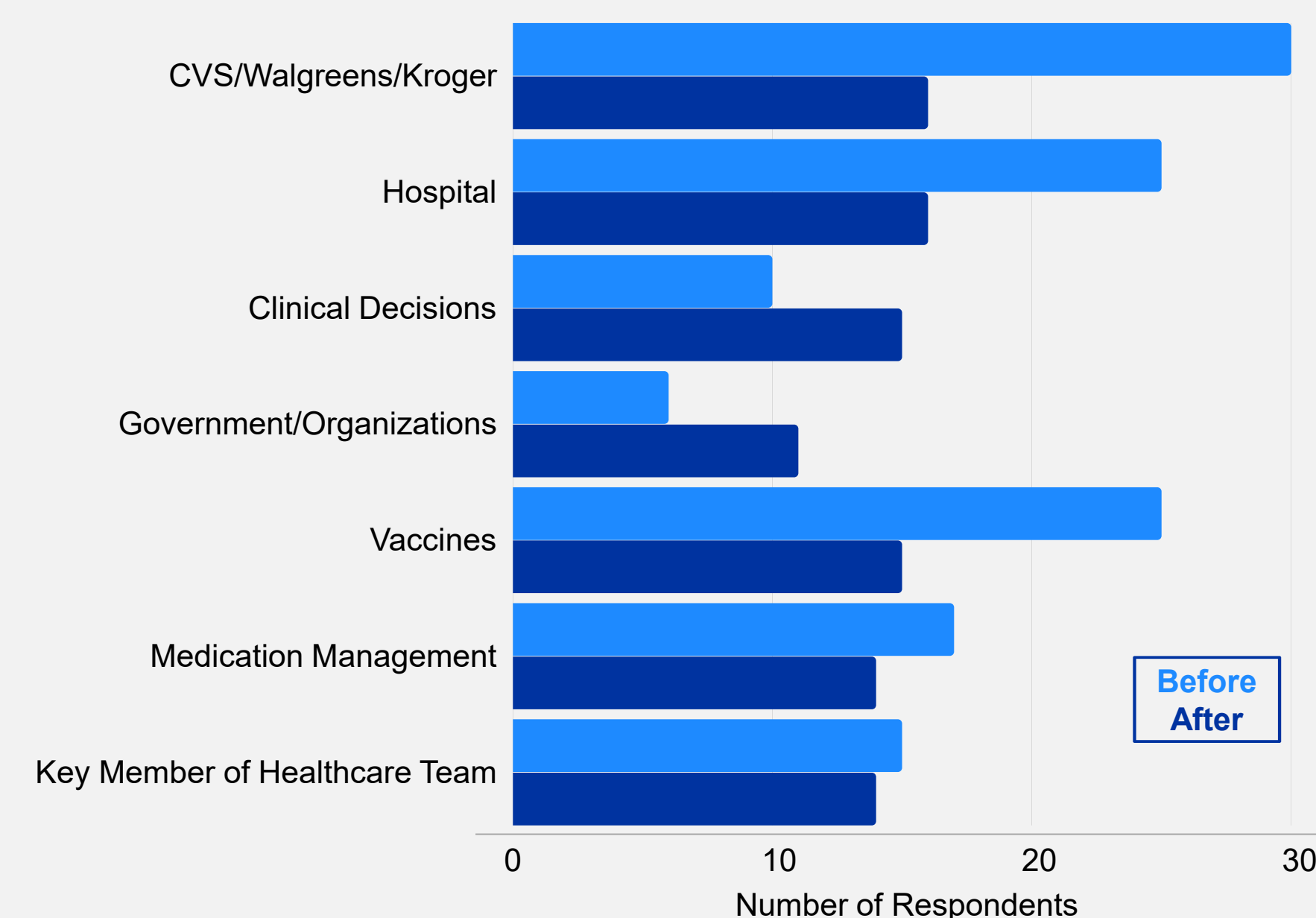
CONCLUSION

- A structured approach to engage with prospective students, aimed to grow awareness of the pharmacy profession and enhance knowledge of the role of the pharmacist on the healthcare team is an effective way to enhance student perceptions of the profession.
- Undergraduate pre-pharmacy students reported a higher confidence in their knowledge of the role of the pharmacist than current PY4 student pharmacists' reflective assessments of their pre-pharmacy knowledge. This demonstrates the Dunning-Kruger effect, a cognitive bias that makes individuals with lower experience in a certain domain overestimate their own knowledge or expertise.
- Experience and education obtained throughout the pharmacy curriculum increases student knowledge of the pharmacist's role and the opportunities for pharmacy practice. This was demonstrated in the survey responses of the current PY4 student pharmacists comparing their pre-pharmacy and current knowledge.
- Future efforts to increase the public perception of pharmacy are needed to help students make better-informed decisions to pursue pharmacy as a career.

PILOT PROJECT

- A pilot project was conducted in the Spring of 2022 with a group of local high school students.
- Students were invited to the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy to interact in both hands-on and observational activities to learn about different aspects of pharmacy.
- Students were surveyed before and after the event to gauge their understandings of pharmacy.
- There were 31 responses to the initial survey and 17 responses to the final survey.

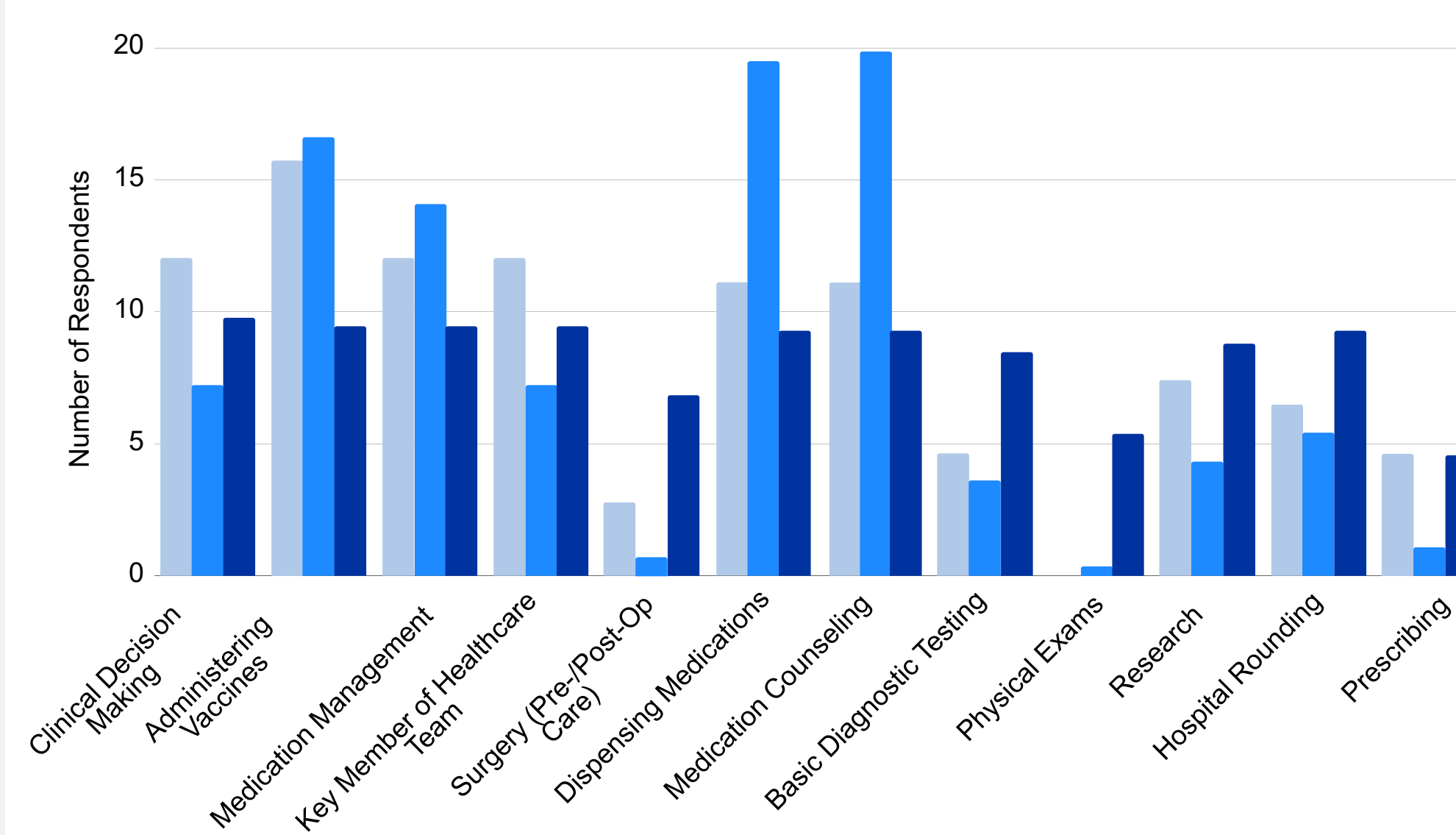
What comes to mind when you think about pharmacy?



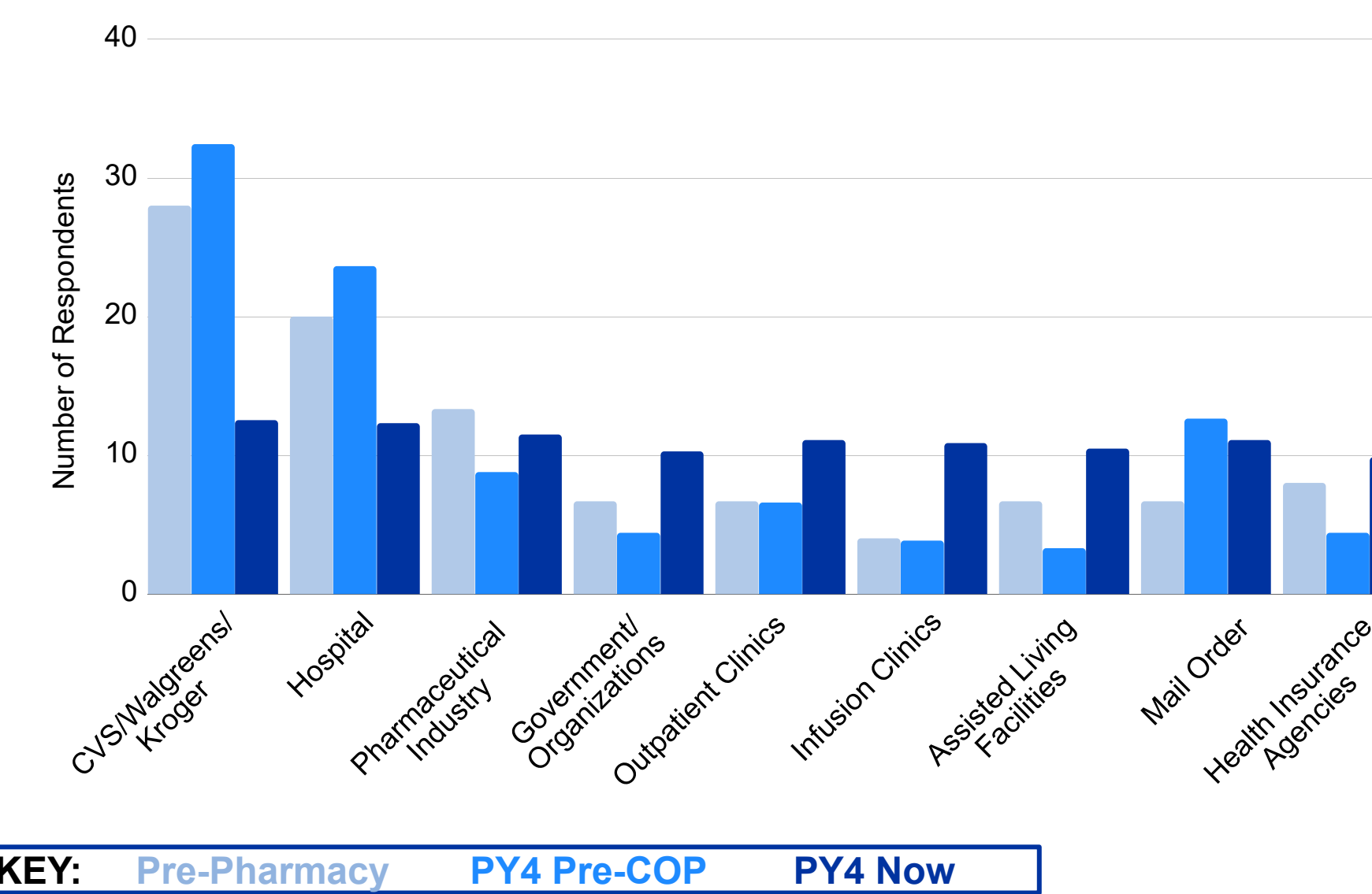
Acknowledgments: Faculty Partner: Jennifer Muncy, PharmD Candidates: Palmer Stooksbury, Bryce Elliott, Micaela Wilhoite, Brooke Lewis, Amal Agarwal, Austin Logier, Dylan Roberts, Nick Sandusky, Rachel Kral

RESULTS

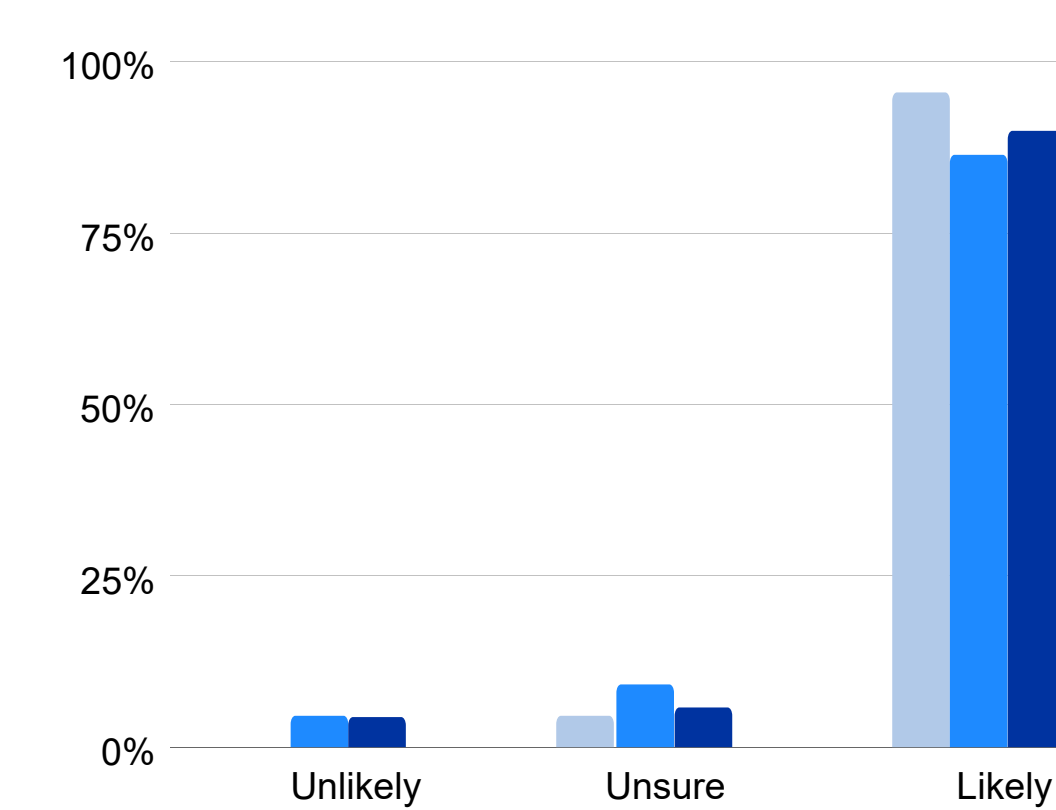
What comes to mind when you think about pharmacists' roles?



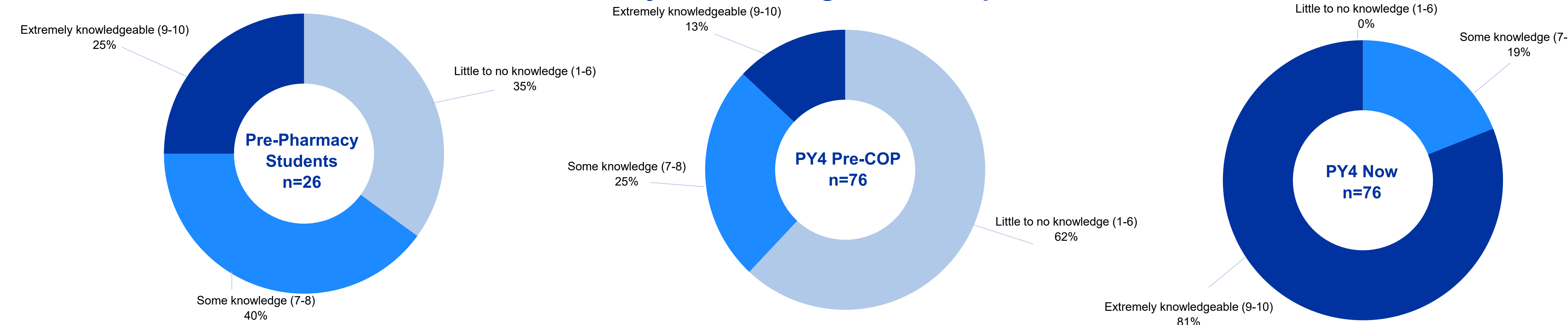
What practice settings come to mind when you think about pharmacy?



How likely are you to pick pharmacy as a career?



Confidence in your knowledge of what a pharmacist does



REFERENCES

Majchrowska A, et al. Public Perception of the Range of Roles Played by Professional Pharmacists. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2019;16(15):2787.
 Yanicak A, et al. Public perception of pharmacists: Film and television portrayals from 1970 to 2013. *J Am Pharm Assoc*. 2015;55(6):578-586.
 Kruger J, Dunning D. (1999). Unskilled and unaware of it: how difficulties in recognizing one's own incompetence lead to inflated self-assessments. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 1999;77: 1121-1134.
 Hoddinott, S Bass M. The Dillman Total Design Survey Method. *Can Fam Physician*. 1986;32:2366-2368.



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Comprehensive Public Education Campaign:** Develop a campaign to inform the general public about current roles, practice settings, and impact of pharmacists in healthcare.
- School Outreach Programs:** Raise awareness about careers available in pharmacy by partnering with local schools to provide hands-on opportunities, such as classroom visits, laboratory experiences, shadowing, and volunteer programs.
- Community Engagement and Service-Learning:** Continue the College's Community Service-Learning Program and encourage student engagement in community outreach initiatives. Collaborate with local community organizations to organize events that increase awareness and knowledge of the profession.
- Social Media and Online Presence:** Develop a robust social media campaign to reach a broad audience and raise awareness about pharmacy roles and potential careers. Use platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn to share success stories, faculty research, student achievements, and community engagement initiatives.
- Alums and Ambassador Involvement:** Recruit alum ambassadors to actively participate in communication efforts. Involve alums and ambassadors in career fairs, panel discussions, and networking events to share their experiences and inspire prospective students.
- Survey and Evaluation:** Conduct regular surveys to assess the public's perception of pharmacy practice and the impact of communication initiatives. Use the feedback and data collected to refine communication strategies and tailor outreach efforts.