Student Pharmacist Roles and Opportunities: COVID-19 Vaccinations

December 22, 2020

Unprecedented Opportunity. Public access to healthcare during this pandemic has become more challenging. Pharmacies have kept their doors open – allowing ready access to care and education by pharmacists. Pharmacists have taken on new roles – including planning and executing novel vaccine storage and delivery. You, as a student pharmacist, have a vital role to contribute in each environment you practice. Your ability to listen to a patient, collect information and actively participate in the flow of care to people is critical. The opportunity to demonstrate the value you bring to the people you serve has never been so clear to the public. This document provides background and guidance for how you can be involved in COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

COVID-19 Vaccinations. The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has specifically recognized the contribution of pharmacy interns in administering and supporting vaccinations through a series of emergency waivers (see timeline, Appendix A). The Pennsylvania Department of Health further recognized pharmacy interns by expanding authorization to administer vaccinations to people ages 18 and older, and age-appropriate influenza vaccine to children ages 3 to 18 (see timeline, Appendix A).

Your Role.
1. Be knowledgeable and able to provide education to people regarding vaccinations based on available evidence. (see Appendix B for resources).
2. Be ready to assist with workflow of vaccination delivery (see Wilkes Pharmacy Student Vaccinator Guidance below).
3. Consider how you can be trained, or use your training, for vaccination delivery.
Resources for You.

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Pennsylvania Pharmacy Intern Vaccination Requirements.

In order to immunize, **students must have a/an:**

1. Active Pennsylvania Pharmacy Intern license/registration.
2. Certificate of Completion from the APhA Pharmacy-Based Immunization Program (mandated training).
3. Active CPR certification (basic life support)

Once these criteria are met, students must submit an “Intent to Administer Vaccines under Supervision” form (Appendix C) to the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy via email **ST-PHARMACY@pa.gov** prior to administering vaccine for the first time. You will need the name and immunization license number of your supervising pharmacist to complete the form.

- **Note:** The supervising pharmacist cannot be the pharmacist that conducts the large group student training programs. You do not need additional waiver forms if you are vaccinating in multiple clinics or pharmacies.
- The supervising pharmacist does not need to be the same pharmacist as the student’s intern supervisor, but they do need to have an immunization license number in Pennsylvania.

This “Intent to Administer Vaccines under Supervision” waiver shall extend for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, plus an additional 90 days after the emergency ends.

**Pharmacy Interns Outside Pennsylvania.** Must follow the guidelines of the state and pharmacy/clinic you are practicing within.
Wilkes Pharmacy Student Vaccinator Guidance.

Wilkes University Nesbitt School of Pharmacy has established the following guidance for student, pharmacist, and patient safety:

Carry Your Intern License and Waiver Form.
- Students should carry a copy of their Pennsylvania Pharmacy Intern license and a copy of their completed “Intent to Administer Vaccines under Supervision” waiver form (including a copy of the email sent to the state), CPR card and APhA Immunization Training Program certificate to each clinic/pharmacy site.

Following State-specific and Pharmacy/Clinic-specific Guidelines is a MUST.
- In Pennsylvania, the pharmacist overseeing intern administration of immunizations at any mass immunization clinic, community, or health system-sponsored event must be a licensed pharmacist authorized in Pennsylvania to immunize.
- Outside of Pennsylvania, students must follow those state-specific guidelines.

Know your Role.
- Students may participate in immunization clinics by aiding with patient screening and intake, vaccine preparation, patient observation, administering approved vaccines, documentation and assuring overall safe clinic operation.
- Students must follow the directive of the immunizing pharmacist regarding their exact role during the clinic.

Highly Recommended – Professional Liability Insurance.
- Although not required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, it is highly recommended that students obtain individual professional liability insurance. Student insurance can be obtained at Pharmacists’ Mutual (www.phmic.com) or the Healthcare Providers Service Organization (http://www.hpso.com/individuals/professional-liability/student-malpractice-insurance-coverage-description).

Volunteer Hours can count toward SD-IPPE Patient Care Hours.
- Students who volunteer for vaccine clinics (in any state) may obtain SD-IPPE patient care hours. Students should document their participation using the Wilkes Pharmacy SD-IPPE Activity Log. Other SD-IPPE rules must also continue to be followed (e.g., you cannot count events toward SD-IPPE if they are part of a paid internship or a requirement for a class).
- In order for your volunteerism to count toward SD-IPPE, you must:
  - Fill out this pre-event form at least 7 days before you participate in the event. This will help with contact tracing efforts. Events that do not meet SD-IPPE program requirements (e.g., not related to vaccines) may be declined by the SD-IPPE coordinator.
  - Fill out the normal Activity Log within 3 days after of the event completion date. Failure to complete the activity log within 3 days of the event will result in a forfeiture of hours.
**Faculty Contact List for Questions:**

For questions related to:

**Experiential Learning Hours and Site Expectations:**
- Ms. Holt Macey: Shelli.holtmacey@wilkes.edu

**SD-IPPE Hours/Documentation:**
- Dr. Kheloussi: Steven.kheloussi@wilkes.edu

**Immunization Training for Students & Pharmacists:**
- Dr. Kim Ference: Kimberly.ference@wilkes.edu

**Pharmacy Implementation of COVID-19 Vaccinations:**
- Dr. Pezzino: Nicole.pezzino@wilkes.edu
Tools and Resources

Appendix A: Timeline of Federal and Pennsylvania COVID-19 Emergency Waivers – Pharmacy Interns

August 19, 2020:
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Expands Access to Childhood Vaccines during COVID-19 Pandemic - specifically including pharmacy intern:

• “The amendment authorizes State-licensed pharmacists (and pharmacy interns acting under their supervision to administer vaccines, if the pharmacy intern is licensed or registered by his or her State board of pharmacy) to order and administer vaccines to individuals ages three through 18 years…”


September 3, 2020:
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Guidance for Licensed Pharmacists and Pharmacy Interns Regarding COVID-19 Vaccines and Immunity under the PREP ACT - states:

• “…state-licensed or registered pharmacy interns acting under the supervision of the qualified pharmacist to administer, to persons ages three or older COVID-19 vaccinations that have been authorized or licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)."


October 20, 2020:

• "This guidance clarifies that the pharmacy intern must be authorized by the state or board of pharmacy in the state in which the practical pharmacy internship occurs, but this authorization need not take the form of a license from, or registration with, the State board of pharmacy."


November 12, 2020:
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services partners with chain and independent pharmacies to increase access to future COVID-19 vaccines - states:

• “...pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians also provide vaccinations in retail and grocery stores. Therefore, pharmacy vaccinators are crucial public health partners for increasing access and convenience of COVID-19 vaccines. Many pharmacists and the
Interns and technicians working under their supervision are trained to provide immunizations and are already important immunizers in their communities.


November 22, 2020:
The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported Pennsylvania's Plan for COVID vaccine distribution - including the **PA Department of Health's plan to work with pharmacy interns (students) during the mass vaccination clinics:**

- "State and local officials also plan to set up mass vaccination clinic in each county in the state, with the department working with the seven Pennsylvania schools of pharmacy to recruit and enroll pharmacy students as vaccinators at those centers."

December 8, 2020:
**Pennsylvania Department of Health expands authority of supervised pharmacy interns to administer vaccines.**

- "...authorizes pharmacy interns to administer COVID-19 vaccinations to persons who are at least 18 years of age, but only under the direct, immediate and personal supervision of a licensed pharmacist who holds an active authorization to administer injectable medications."
  And "...temporarily, pharmacy interns may administer any age-appropriate influenza vaccination to children 3 years of age and older."

- "Before administering a vaccine for the first time, registered pharmacy interns who have completed the required education and training are required to notify the Board at [ST-PHARMACY@pa.gov](mailto:ST-PHARMACY@pa.gov) in writing of their intent to proceed to administer vaccines under the provisions of this waiver and provide the Board with their supervising Pharmacist's name, license number and authorization to administer injectable medications number."
- Available from: [https://www.dos.pa.gov/Pages/2020-12-08-waiver-pharmacy-interns-administer-vaccines.aspx](https://www.dos.pa.gov/Pages/2020-12-08-waiver-pharmacy-interns-administer-vaccines.aspx) Accessed December 20, 2020
Appendix B: COVID-19 Immunization Resources for Pharmacists and Students

General Information:
1. American Pharmacists Association: Breaking News Weekly webinars: 
   https://www.pharmacist.com/coronavirus/weekly-webinars?is_sso_called=1
2. American Society of Health System Pharmacists COVID Vaccine Information: 
   https://www.ashp.org/COVID-19?loginreturnUrl=SSOCheckOnly
3. CDC: What every clinician should know about COVID-19 Vaccine Safety: 
   https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2020/callinfo_121420.asp

Pennsylvania Pharmacy COVID Updates:
1. Pennsylvania Department of State: Pennsylvania Expands Authority of Supervised Pharmacy Interns to Administer Vaccines: Available from: 
   https://www.dos.pa.gov/Pages/2020-12-08-waiver-pharmacy-interns-administer-vaccines.aspx Accessed December 20, 2020
2. Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association: 
   https://www.papharmacists.com/page/Coronavirus
Pennsylvania Registered Pharmacy Intern: Intent to Administer Vaccines under Supervision

Background:
On December 8, 2020, Pennsylvania Department of State expanded authority of supervised pharmacy interns to administer vaccines. By completing this form, registered pharmacy interns can provide age-appropriate influenza vaccinations to children 3 years of age and older and vaccinations to anyone 18 years of age or older, including COVID-19 vaccine, when available, under the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist who holds an active authorization to administer injectable medications. Full statement available: https://www.dos.pa.gov/Pages/2020-12-08-waiver-pharmacy-interns-administer-vaccines.aspx

The following MUST be completed and emailed to the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy BEFORE administering a vaccine for the first time:

- Pharmacy Intern Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial): ________________________________
- Pennsylvania Pharmacy Intern License Number: ________________________________
- Supervising Pharmacist Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial): ________________________
- Supervising Pharmacist Pennsylvania License Number: ________________________________
- Supervising Pharmacist Pennsylvania License to Administer Injectable Medications Number: ________________________________

I attest that I have completed required immunization training on _____________ (date) and have a current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate active until _____________ (date).

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Registered Pharmacy Intern Signature  Date

_________________________________________  ______________________________________
Supervising Pharmacist Signature  Date

This form MUST be emailed to the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy BEFORE administering a vaccine for the first time: ST-PHARMACY@pa.gov

Maintain a personal copy of this form and the email sent to the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy and provide a copy to your supervising pharmacist.
Appendix D: Volunteering in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) is seeking registered pharmacy interns from all seven Pennsylvania pharmacy schools to sign up as potential volunteers for their upcoming COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Clinics.

Over the next several months, the PA DOH will be holding mass vaccination clinics across Pennsylvania. By signing up, you will receive notifications of when volunteer opportunities arise. You may also sign up for the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) at the same time. Here are the steps to sign up:

1. Go to the SERVPA home page: [https://www.serv.pa.gov](https://www.serv.pa.gov)
2. Click on the registration link.
3. Under “Organization” click “Add Organizations.” This is where you can sign up as a potential volunteer for either the mass vaccination clinics and/or the MRC.
   a. Select “COVID Mass Vaccination (PADOH); Click on the + and select “Wilkes University” from the drop-down selections
   b. Select Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Organizations; Click on the + and select the desired county
4. Under “Occupation type” select “medical.”
   a. Under “Occupation” select “Pharmacist.”
   b. Under “Current Professional Status” select “Non-Licensed and Student”
5. Fill in any other remaining required information.

Community Pharmacy COVID Vaccine Volunteer Opportunities.

As the COVID vaccine efforts are continuing, our independent pharmacy colleagues are asking for student volunteer help with the clinics they are conducting. As part of her work with the PA Department of Health, a central spreadsheet link has been created by Dr. Kim Coley with opportunities in these independent pharmacy clinics, and you can sign up to volunteer. Your volunteering can include helping with screening, customer flow, or vaccinating (if you completed the proper steps).

Vaccine Clinic link:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18dQdmNZXnh9KuDaXWrK_047ZW6Xdfi4lewZ09omA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18dQdmNZXnh9KuDaXWrK_047ZW6Xdfi4lewZ09omA/edit?usp=sharing)
**Community Pharmacy Workflow Recommendations.**

As independent pharmacies hold vaccine clinics, they might need support. PittPharmacy put together a playbook to help support independent pharmacies and there will be a google form that pharmacies utilize to ask for students. We ask students to frequently check this form for opportunities in our community. Please see below for additional details:

Pharmacists who wish to obtain or who currently hold the authorization to administer injectable medications, biologicals and immunizations must hold a current basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification issued by one of the following organizations:

1. American Heart Association
2. American Red Cross
3. American Safety & Health Institute
4. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American College of Emergency Physicians under the Emergency Care and Safety Institute (approved only for the Adult CPR and AED course, Adult, Child & Infant CPR & AED course or the Health Care Provider CPR & AED course)
5. National Safety Council (approved only for the Standard First Aid, CPR and AED course or the Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers course)
6. EMS Safety Services (approved only for the CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer course)
7. ProTrainings.com:
   a. ProCPR Blended Program (Adult/Child/Infant CPR & AED Certification for Health Care Provider (BLS)) (requires in person skills evaluation)
   b. Healthcare Provider CPR (BLS)/AED & First Aid Certification (skills evaluation via web conference or in person)
8. Military Training Network
9. Pacific Medical Training (approved only for the BLS Certification Course)
10. Geisinger Resuscitation Program CPR

*Please note that the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy does not accept programs that are done completely online.