COURSE TITLE: Drug Information APPE
PHAR 981

REQUIRED/ELECTIVE: Required/Elective

Purpose

The purpose of this six week (240 hours) Drug Information APPE is to demonstrate an ability to retrieve, analyze, and communicate appropriate information on medications and healthcare issues to pharmacists, physicians, nurses, other healthcare professionals and the public.

Justification

Practical experience is necessary to integrate concepts learned in Drug Information (DI). Only by handling references, and gathering and using information will a student obtain the background necessary to provide accurate, timely information when he or she begins professional practice.

Goals and Objectives:

By the end of the session, the student should be able to:

A. Communicate with the client to determine the nature and immediacy of the request as well as the appropriate depth of response;

B. Accurately document the drug information request;

C. Develop a logical, step-wise approach to searching the drug information resources;

D. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of available resources;

E. Select appropriate databases/resources;

F. Perform literature searches on Medline, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, PubMed, HealthStar, and Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature databases;

G. Critically evaluate primary, secondary, and tertiary medical literature;

H. Identify potential solutions/answers;

I. Apply information in a clinically relevant manner; and

J. Clearly express and justify your recommendation(s) in both written and oral forms;
Activities

A. Staff the Drug Information office between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (lunch is from 12:00 to 1:00; the student will be excused ½ hour before seminar during the appropriate semester)

B. Answer all drug information requests that come in (the student may be supervising P1 students in the afternoons, assisting with journal club, etc.)

C. Write a Drug Consult appropriate for publication in Drugdex by the Thursday of the third week of the session (remember to supply preceptor with a copy of all references utilized)

D. Write a Drug Information Analysis Service Rounds paper for publication in *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy* OR write a case for WebStudies by the Thursday of the sixth week of the session (again, remember to supply preceptor with a copy of all references utilized)

Grading

Grading will be based on assignments and participation in session discussions. Letter grades will be given.

Operations

A. Answer the phone courteously by introducing the service and yourself (use first name only):

   “*Idaho Drug Information. This is *<your first name>*.””

B. Write all information on the front of the Idaho Drug Information form. Use the form as the guideline.

   1. Obtain the first and last name of the caller
   2. What is the caller’s phone number?
   3. Where is he or she calling from? Get facility name and city.
   4. What is the question?
   5. Get relevant background information (other drugs the patient may be taking, etc.)
   6. Any other information that might help answer the question.
   7. How soon is the information needed?
   8. Type of response needed: verbal or written material, mailed or faxed?
   9. Get mailing address and/or fax number if necessary.
   10. If a caller requests material that is not in the ISU library, it will have to be ordered, and may take up to two weeks to receive.

C. **REPEAT** question to the caller to verify the specific question. Ask for spelling when necessary.

D. Research the question. Document **ALL** the sources checked on the back of the form (whether or not they contain relevant information) to prevent someone else from
repeating research and wasting time. Mark information intended for caller with an asterisk. Do not highlight information that needs to be faxed – this will make it difficult to read on the receiver’s end. Important items should be underlined or marked with “star” in black or blue ink.

E. Obtain approval from instructor BEFORE returning call or faxing information.

F. Call or write the requestor with the appropriate answer:

1. Envelopes for mailing and fax transmittal cover sheets are located on the shelving unit in copy room. Make certain the code “CD 209” is written under the return address on any items that are to be mailed.
2. Place outgoing mail in the white box near the Interlibrary Loan office.

G. Document on the form whether the information has been called, faxed or mailed. This may be abbreviated – for example, “mailed * info 11/3/99.”

H. Attach any relevant information – searches, written notes to the form by stapling. Full-text articles should NOT be attached. Indicate the full citation on the form and whether it was mailed or faxed. Place the copied articles on top of the filing cabinets to the left of the main entry doorway. These will be filed later.

I. Initial the form, have the instructor co-sign it, and place completed form on top slot of sorter by telephone.

**Important Notes:**

A. If the situation requires immediate action to prevent harm (poisoning or drug overdose cases), get the caller’s number then refer **immediately** to Poison Control (number is posted above the phone). Call back later to confirm that the situation is being taken care of.

B. All calls are completely **CONFIDENTIAL**.

C. If the caller asks more than one question, document each question on a **different** DI form.

D. Keep a record of **all contact** with the caller. If the client later returns the call and provides new information, document it and date it. Drug information services and specialists can and have been sued. The DI form is the official record of information retrieved and provided.

E. If the caller is satisfied with the information given, document that. If the caller refuses to accept the information, document that as well, including any cautions given (such as, “You really need to speak with your doctor and get a physical exam”).

F. Every question should be documented in such a way that a staff person can walk in, pick up the form, and continue the process without having to ask for clarification, where items have already been researched, etc.
G. Every answer should be traceable in the literature. If the answer was found in AHFS, copy that page and attach it to the form. If the answer was found in a journal article, include the full citation or attach the search printout to the form.

H. Document which statements came from which references. If the DI ends up in a lawsuit over a question/call, its steps must be easily traceable.

I. Be sure to initial the form when completed, have the preceptor or other staff person cosign it, and indicate the amount of time spent on the question (include time spent retrieving journals, faxing, mailing, and other clerical functions).

J. IHSL carries many subscriptions/textbooks that drug information does not. In order to avoid duplication, the DI often has less current versions of important resources. Be sure to check IHSL if a reference in the DI is more than a year or two old.

K. Return all material to appropriate area before leaving for the day.

**Failure of this APPE may result from any one of the following:**

A. Not respecting the confidential nature of drug information responses

B. Inappropriate use of the long distance code

C. Inappropriate use of the copy card

D. Disrespectful interaction with drug information clients

E. Failure to refer poisoning/drug overdose cases where the patient is in immediate danger to Poison Control