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Exposing Students to the Importance of Pharmacy Advocacy

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Abstract

SWOSU students (P1-P4) are recruited each year to be involved in the annual Pharmacy Legislative Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

- Pharmacy Legislative Day events include a briefing meeting, health fair and reception.
- By participating in these events, students are:
 - Exposed to the importance of their role in promoting their profession.
 - Made aware of important pharmacy-related legislative issues.
 - Introduced to the legislative process.

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Exposing Students to the Importance of Pharmacy Advocacy

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Introduction

- SWOSU students (P1-P4) are recruited each year to be involved in the annual Pharmacy Legislative Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol.
- Pharmacy Legislative Day events include a briefing meeting, health fair and reception.
- By participating in these events, students are:
 - Exposed to the importance of their role in promoting their profession.
 - Made aware of important pharmacy-related legislative issues.
 - Introduced to the legislative process.

Objectives

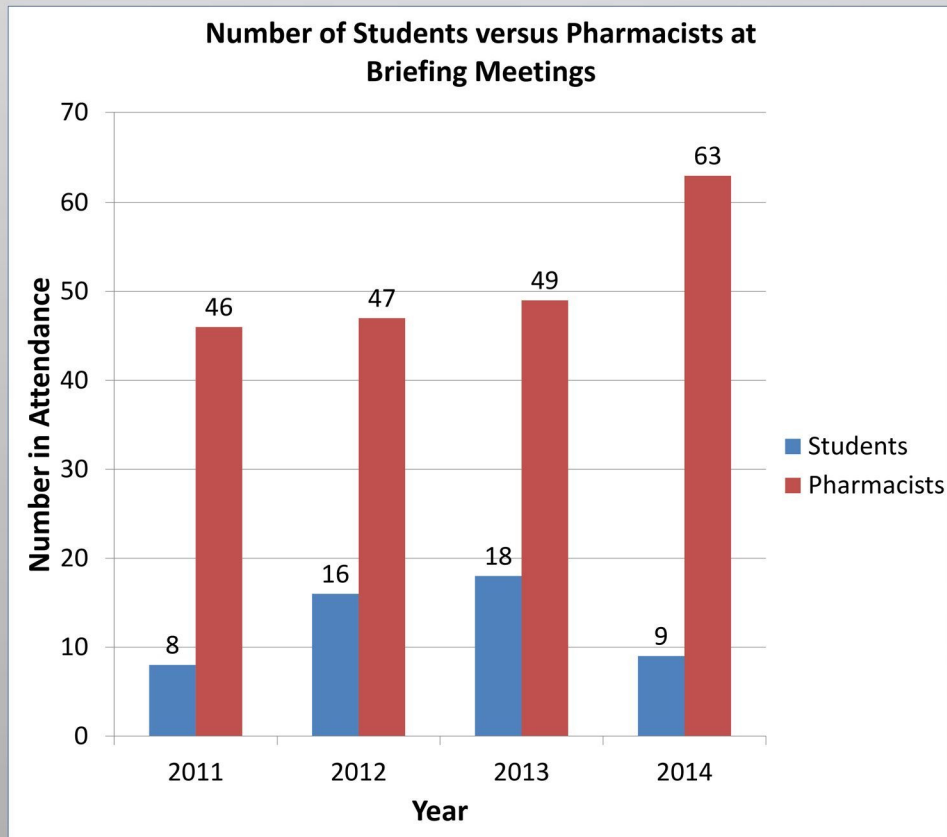
- Primary Objective**
 - To increase student awareness at our College of Pharmacy of the importance of pharmacy advocacy
- Secondary Objective**
 - To increase Oklahoma legislator awareness of the health services that can be provided by pharmacists and issues that concern the profession of pharmacy

Methods

- Students participate in the legislative process by:
 - Helping to prepare informational materials prior to Legislative Day, which include pharmacy legislative issues and health information.
 - Visiting legislative offices to deliver materials and to discuss this information with legislators and their staff (both prior to and on Legislative Day).
 - Attending a briefing session, which is moderated by the Oklahoma Pharmacists Association. The session provides an overview of pharmacy and healthcare issues within the state.
 - Providing healthcare screenings, under the supervision of pharmacists, to legislators and their staff. Screenings include BP, BG, cholesterol and BMI. Students interpret results and are also available to answer medication questions.
 - Attending lunch or evening receptions, which serve as a time for pharmacists and legislators to talk in an informal setting.

Results

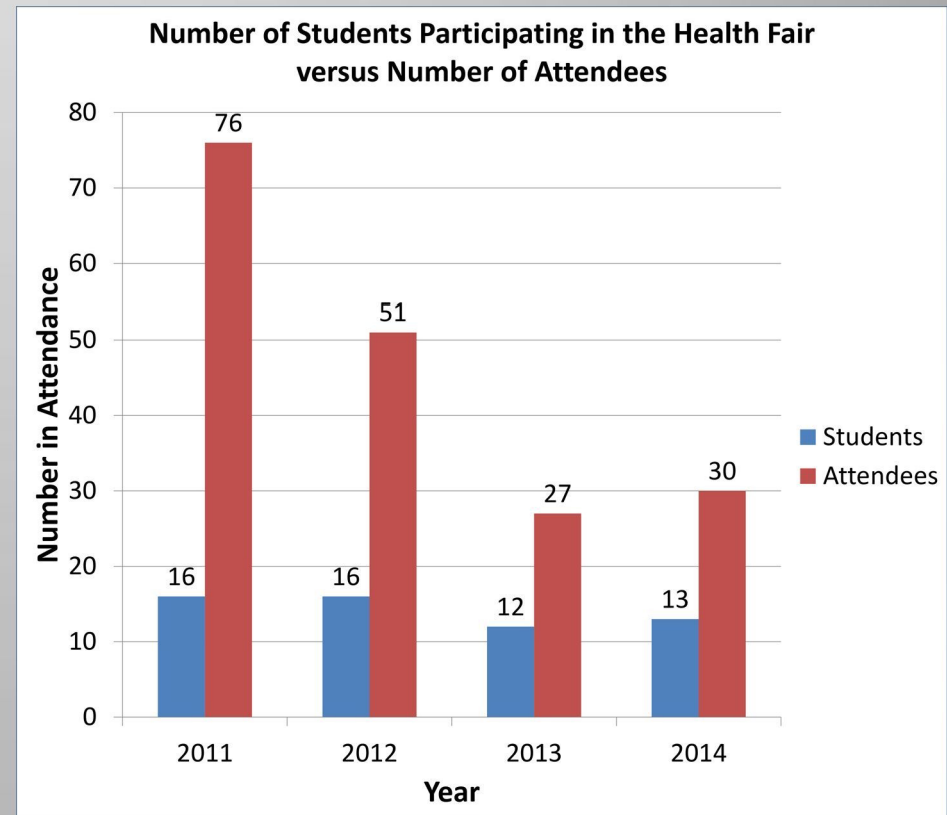
- Participation:** Our students have participated in the annual Legislative Day since 2011.
- Visits to Legislative Offices:** On average, six students visited legislators and their staff each year.
- Attendance at Briefing Meetings:** The number of students and registered pharmacists that attended the briefing meetings each year remained relatively steady (see graph below).



- Attendance at Receptions:**
 - The number of students and legislators that attended the receptions varied considerably.
 - Student attendance was highest at evening receptions.
 - Legislator attendance was highest during lunch receptions.

Results Cont.

- Participation at the Health Fair:**
 - Student participation in the health fair remained consistent each year.
 - The number of legislators and their staff that attended the health fair fluctuated over the years due to competing events at the Capitol and/or bad weather (see graph below).



Conclusions

- Pharmacy student involvement at annual Legislative Day events may develop students into advocates for pharmacy.
- Hosting an annual health fair and talking with legislators and their staff may increase the legislators' understanding of the profession and the health services that pharmacists can provide.

Disclosures

Authors of this presentation have nothing to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.