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Research Fellowship Programs in the Department of Health Policy

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Research Fellowship Programs in the Department of Health Policy

With the concern over rising health care costs and the growing need for economic analysis of disease management strategies, the idea of enhancing clinical education with a fellowship program focusing on economic and outcomes research is both appealing and appropriate. The primary purpose of these fellowship programs is to provide formal training as well as experience in conducting pharmacoeconomic and outcomes research, as it occurs in academic, industry, and clinical settings. The Department of Health Policy at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital currently offers four such fellowship training programs. Three of these programs have been sponsored by Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, Rhone-Poulenc Rorer, and SmithKline Beecham and are conducted in conjunction with the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. The fourth fellowship is offered by Thomas Jefferson's Department of Surgery along with the Department of Health Policy. These types of collaborative efforts are unique and are expected to strengthen the skills of the fellowship trainees as well as Jefferson's ability to prosper in the changing health care environment.

Upon the completion of the fellowship programs, the graduates will be well qualified to practice in roles that involve formulary decisions, evaluating the pharmacoeconomic literature, and identifying, designing, and conducting new research. The need for similar programs is evidenced by the growing number of applicants for the limited number of fellowship positions available. The Department of Health Policy is pleased to welcome the following four individuals to our staff.

Richard Solit, MD is a graduate of Jefferson Medical College and received his BA in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. After having completed the first two years of post-graduate training in General Surgery at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Richard is now spending one year as surgical fellow with the Department of Health Policy. Richard hopes to combine his solid clinical training with experience in the policy and economics of medicine. Currently, he is involved in several projects including the evaluation of outcomes improvement following process changes for the Delaware Valley Transplant Program, as well as investigating admission criteria that contribute to variation in length of stay for a national for-profit rehabilitation corporation. In addition, Richard is studying part time at Widener University towards his MBA degree.

Phong Duong is the SmithKline Beecham Pharmacoeconomics Fellow. After completing his undergraduate study from Temple University School of Pharmacy, he practiced as a pharmacist in both hospital and community settings. Phong received his PharmD degree from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy & Science this past spring. Phong's areas of interest include cost-effectiveness evaluation, quality of life assessment, and international health care delivery and payment. His current project work includes economic evaluation of antibiotic stepdown programs at ten community hospitals as well as working on a study that addresses the appropriate use of ACR inhibitors in congestive heart failure patients.

John Fastenau, the Sandoz Pharmaceutical Fellow, completed his MPH degree at Boston University School of Public Health and received his BS degree in pharmacy from Rutgers University. His prior experiences include drug safety surveillance

research as well as hospital and community pharmacy practice. John's current areas of interest include study design methodologies, statistical analytical techniques, and health care delivery systems within the United States and abroad. His current project work includes identifying and prioritizing outcomes of NSAID-induced gastrointestinal complications in long-term care facility residents and evaluating the use of Betaseron™ in treating multiple sclerosis patients at a local health maintenance organization. John will also be assisting our staff in coordinating the monthly Health Policy Forum and tri-annual Newsletter.

Vijay Nadipelli, the Rhone-Poulenc Rorer Pharmacoeconomics Fellow, is a registered pharmacist from India and is also a qualified Foreign Pharmacy Graduate in the United States. Vijay's zeal for advanced education in the field of pharmacy motivated him to relocate two years ago to Athens, Georgia and attend the University of Georgia where he received his MS degree in pharmacy administration. He is currently involved in several projects including one at the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science which involves identifying, prioritizing, and benchmarking the standard of practice in the management of acid-peptic disorders in long-term care facility residents. Vijay will be taking various courses relevant to pharmacoeconomics during the fall and spring semesters at the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. Phong and John will also be enrolled in classes at these academic institutions.

About the Author

John Fastenau, R.Ph, MPH, is Sandoz Pharmaceutical Fellow in the Department of Health Policy, Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University.