

FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program

Another non-traditional clerkship opportunity for pharmacy students

The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program provides an opportunity to learn about the FDA's multidisciplinary processes for addressing public health issues involving drugs, biologics, and medical devices. Pharmacy students who participate in the FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities beneficial to their professional career.

Each FDA rotation site has its own list of objectives which will be provided on the first day of the rotation. An FDA rotation allows pharmacy students to become familiar with:

- The missions, functions and organizational structure of the Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the U.S. Public Health Service
- FDA's organizational structure
- Other government agencies, national pharmacy organizations, and institutions in the Washington area such as American Pharmaceutical Association, American Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists; National Institutes of Health, United States Pharmacopeia, United States Public Health Service Pharmacist Professional Advisory Committee
- Laws, regulations and guidances governing drugs, biologics and devices for human use
- The drug review process within the United States

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program includes opportunities to attend FDA advisory committee hearings, congressional hearings, and a monthly lecture series. In addition to learning about FDA

operations, students interact with other pharmacy students from schools across the country and learn about pharmacist career opportunities available in government.

COMPENSATION

The FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program is part of the FDA Volunteer Program for Students. The positions are unpaid. However, the program provides academic credit hours required for the PharmD degree.

Housing, transportation, and parking are not provided by the program. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements prior to the rotation.

HOUSING

If you do not reside in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, the following websites may help you find temporary housing:

- National Institutes of Health housing: WWW.RECGOV.ORG/HOUSING/HOUSING.HTML
- Oakwood housing: WWW.OAKWOOD.COM
- Rooms for rent in private residences: WWW.RECGOV.ORG/HOUSING/ROOMRENT.HTML

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

The FDA has office buildings located in several sites in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Most of the FDA Pharmacy Student Experiential Program opportunities are available in Rockville, MD. Free parking is limited, and paid

parking can cost up to \$7 per day. There are shuttles between some of the buildings and others are accessible by Metro rail and bus systems.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Students are prohibited from releasing, publishing, or disclosing non-public information, specifically any confidential commercial or trade secret information obtained while serving as an FDA student. Students will be subject to a background check in order to obtain security clearance before their rotation.

All students must complete the following forms and mail them together to their preceptor one month prior to their rotation:

- SF-85: Background check
- Form 306: Declaration for Federal Employment. Students must bring two forms of government issued identification (drivers license, passport, social security card, etc) to the rotation.
- FD-258: Fingerprinting. Students must obtain this form from their preceptor, and then take it to the Police Station to get fingerprinted.

HOW TO APPLY

Rotations are offered only in the last year of pharmacy school. Students are encouraged to apply in the year preceding their last year of pharmacy school. Rotations are available throughout the entire year, and may last anywhere from four to six



ADDITIONAL LINKS

U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED CORP (USPHS) [HTTP://WWW.USPHS.GOV](http://WWW.USPHS.GOV)
STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES: [HTTP://WWW.HHS.GOV/PHARMACY/STUPROG.HTML](http://WWW.HHS.GOV/PHARMACY/STUPROG.HTML)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) [HTTP://WWW.HHS.GOV](http://WWW.HHS.GOV)

FDA: [HTTP://WWW.FDA.GOV](http://WWW.FDA.GOV)

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) [HTTP://WWW.NIH.GOV](http://WWW.NIH.GOV)

weeks, depending upon the school's experiential program. If you are interested in an experiential rotation at FDA, please submit an application containing the following:

1. resume or curriculum vitae
2. one-page paper focusing on how a rotation at FDA would facilitate achievement of your career goals
3. three potential time slots for your rotation, keeping in mind that flexible rotation slots will expand placement opportunities
4. rank order of top three preferred rotation sites. Rotations are available in the Office of Special Health Issues, and in various divisions within the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. You may pick rotations in any of the Offices or Divisions listed below:
 - Office of Special Health Issues
 - Center for Drug Evaluation and Research
 - Office of the Director, Medical Informatics
 - Office of Drug Safety - MedWatch
 - Office of Generic Drugs
 - Office of Orphan Drug Products
 - Office of Policy
 - Division of Drug Information
 - Division of Metabolic & Endocrine Drug Products
 - Division of Neurology Products
 - Division of Special Pathogen Immunologic Drug Products

Applications are to be submitted electronically by each school's experiential coordinator to Pharmacy.Student@fda.gov

Upon receipt of the application, we will e-mail a confirmation to verify receipt of the application. Please contact us again if you do not receive a receipt confirmation. Applications must be received by December 31, 2006. Students who are selected will be notified directly by their preceptor. Those that are not selected will receive notification via e-mail by February 28, 2007. Please note that these dates have changed from last year. The application process is highly competitive. ●

This announcement appears on the FDA website (www.fda.gov/cder/offices/ddi/pharmstudent.htm) with hyperlinks to documents, URLs, and organizations mentioned.

FDA and ISMP Launch Campaign to Reduce Medication Mistakes Caused by Unclear Medical Abbreviations

From a news release issued on June 15, 2006 by the FDA

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) today launched a nationwide health professional education campaign aimed at reducing the number of common but preventable sources of medication mix-ups and mistakes caused by the use of unclear medical abbreviations.

"Some abbreviations, symbols and dose designations are frequently misinterpreted and lead to mistakes that result in patient harm," said FDA Acting Commissioner Andrew C. von Eschenbach, MD. "This joint campaign will promote safe practices among those who communicate medical information to help avoid serious and even potentially fatal consequences of medication errors."

According to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies, there are more than 7,000 deaths a year due to medication errors. Mistakes can occur anywhere in the medication-use system, from prescribing to administering a drug in a variety of settings (hospitals, outpatient clinics, nursing homes, home care, etc.).

FDA and ISMP's educational campaign focuses on eliminating the use of potentially confusing abbreviations by health care professionals, medical students, medical writers, the pharmaceutical industry and FDA staff. The campaign will address the use of mistake-prone abbreviations in all forms of medical communication, including written medication orders, computer-generated labels, medication administration records, pharmacy or prescriber computer order entry screens and commercial medication labeling, packaging and advertising.

"We recommend that ISMP's list of abbreviations, symbols and dose designations www.ismp.org/pdf/errorprone.pdf most often associated with medication errors be considered whenever medical information is communicated," said Michael Cohen, ISMP President. "ISMP's list includes abbreviations that have been associated with medication errors reported to the USP-ISMP Medication Errors Reporting Program."

Examples of common error-prone notations that the campaign will seek to eliminate include:

ABBREVIATION	REASON
U	Mistaken for zero, number four, cc (write as "unit")
IU	Mistaken for IV, number ten (write as "international unit")
Trailing zero	Decimal point is missed (five milligrams should be presented as "5 mg" and not "5.0 mg") SHOULD use leading zeroes before decimal points (e.g., use "0.5 mg" instead of ".5 mg")
MSO4 and MgSO4	Can be confused for one another (write as "morphine sulfate" or "magnesium sulfate")

FDA and ISMP's campaign materials promote ISMP's list and include: 1) a brochure to be distributed to medical professionals, the pharmaceutical industry and medical publishing professionals; 2) a print public service ad that will be sent to professional trade publications; 3) posters with reminders about commonly used error-prone abbreviations for health care facilities; 4) an online toolkit of materials, including PowerPoint slides for presentations at conferences and meetings; and 5) a patient safety video. All of these materials are available on the Web at www.fda.gov/cder/drug/mederrors and www.ismp.org/tools/abbreviations. ●