

Pharmacy Residency Growth in Wisconsin

Awareness grows along with the number of available residencies

by Bradley Shaw

On October 25, 1999, the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin held a pharmacy residency conference which resulted in the development of new Wisconsin pharmacy residencies and expansion of existing programs. Providing more opportunities for participation in residencies allows new graduates to hone their skills and become more confident in their career path. Completing a residency is an excellent way to network and gain an upper edge in the job market. For a residency program, providing such an opportunity is a way for the program to give back to the profession of pharmacy and enhance its pharmacist recruitment capabilities.

One example of the growth of residency opportunities is the University of Wisconsin Community Pharmacy Residency Program (UWCPRP) created in 2003. The program enhanced community pharmacy practice by establishing high quality residency training programs. It now provides numerous residency sites for graduates to pursue. During recent years, some residency programs have created more specialized opportunities. For example, some hospital affiliated programs have expanded from a few residencies such as administration, pharmacy practice, and critical care to programs like administration, pharmacy practice, critical care, oncology and transplant.

In 1998, there were only eight Wisconsin residency programs and 23 positions reported to PSW. As indicated in Fig. 1, those numbers have grown to 19 and 54, respectively. After the 1999 conference on residency development, the number of residency sites grew and has stayed consistent at around 20 programs each year (Fig. 2). While the number of programs remains steady, a slight increase per year in resi-

dency positions indicates the expansion in capacity to train residents (Fig. 2).

When looking specifically at the number of UW School of Pharmacy graduates going into residencies, it is apparent that both the number and percentage of graduates has steadily increased over the

years (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4). According to the School of Pharmacy, nearly a quarter of recent graduates have participated in a residency program, as compared to approximately 10% in 2002. Even though not every graduate reports his or her post-graduation plans, most do, and this information is indicative of the growing interest in pursuing residency training. This growth may be due to the increased number of available residencies as well as the greater awareness of existing residencies.

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) is the sole pharmacy residency accrediting organization in the United States and has established an excellent accreditation system. Anyone

FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF WISCONSIN PHARMACY RESIDENCY PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS SINCE 1998

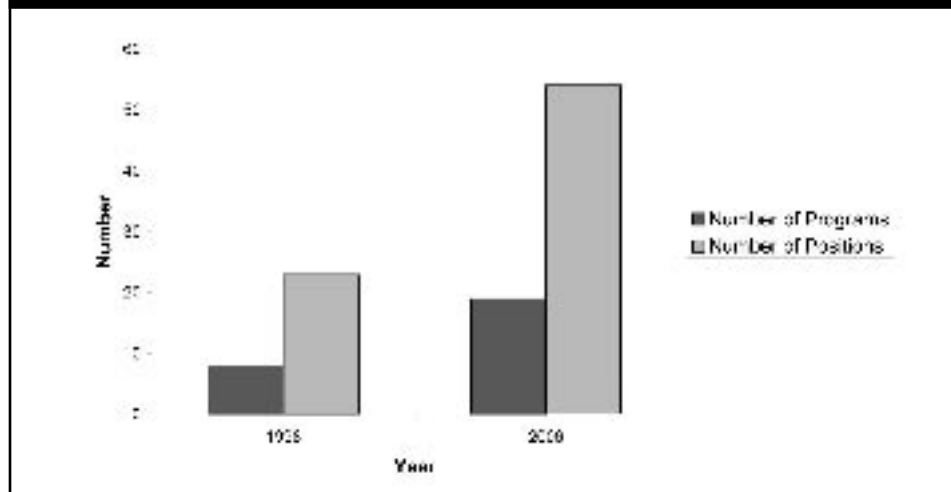
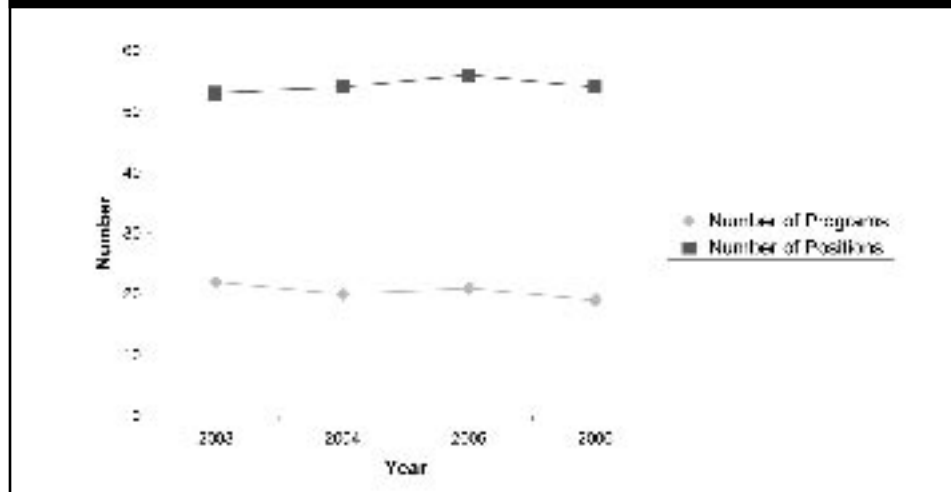


FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF WISCONSIN PHARMACY RESIDENCY PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS



seeking an accredited residency must go through ASHP. Procedures and rules have been established to make the residency program run smoothly. However, with the growth and diversification of residency programs, it is only natural for procedures to change. For example, the procedure for securing a residency through ASHP is currently changing. It remains to be seen what the impact of these changes will be; however, changes are needed to continue the expansion of residency programs, particularly in Wisconsin.

Previously, graduates and residency program directors would register with ASHP. Then each applicant would rank his/her choices of residency sites, and each residency program would rank its choice of applicants. All of this would be done within a predetermined time limit. Next, the applicants and residency sites were matched based on preferences; this was known as the Resident Matching Program (RMP). The residencies were differentiated into two groups, pharmacy practice or specialized. According to the accreditation rules, a graduate was required to complete a pharmacy practice residency prior to completing a specialized residency, but many specialized programs accepted graduates who did not complete a prior pharmacy practice residency. ASHP wanted to rectify this situation, among others; hence new guidelines have been established.

The new process, starting in 2007, still requires graduates and residency programs to register with ASHP and go through the RMP, but now residency programs have been re-defined as PGY1 (post-graduate year one) and PGY2 (post-graduate year two). PGY1 is the equivalent of the former pharmacy practice residency and PGY2, the former specialized residency. Now, any graduate pursuing a specialized residency (PGY2) must first complete a pharmacy practice residency (PGY1). All accredited programs will also be required to participate in the RMP. ASHP will enforce these new rules to eliminate any unfairness in the system. By enacting the new rules, graduates will be matched more effectively and graduates who have completed a PGY1 residency will not have to compete for a PGY2 position with candidates who have not completed a PGY1.

Opponents of the new system are unhappy about not obtaining a preferred

site. In the past, some graduates obtained residencies through inside knowledge and connections. This was an asset to residency program sites because it gave them peace-of-mind knowing they had candidates who would do a good job and could be trusted, and it pleased graduates because they didn't have to worry about competing for a residency.

Pharmacy residency programs in Wisconsin have grown greatly since the late 1990s. Although the numbers are staying constant, there is nowhere to go but up. Residency programs are expected to see continued growth as more graduates choose to complete residencies and as the residency programs further develop their infrastructure to keep up with the demand created by graduates. ASHP awaits feedback on the new PGY1 and PGY2

guidelines. That feedback will also help further develop residency programs to better assist graduates. The graduate is the driving force behind creating and developing residency programs in Wisconsin. As the graduate becomes more and more concerned with honing professional skills, the more likely he or she will seek a residency. ●

Bradley Shaw is a third-year PharmD student at the UW School of Pharmacy. This article was written in partial fulfillment of an independent study project.


 A DIRECTORY OF WISCONSIN PHARMACY RESIDENCY PROGRAMS IS AVAILABLE FROM PSWI. WWW.PSWI.ORG/PROFESSIONAL/RESIDENCIES/

FIGURE 3. NUMBER OF UW GRADUATES PARTICIPATING IN A RESIDENCY

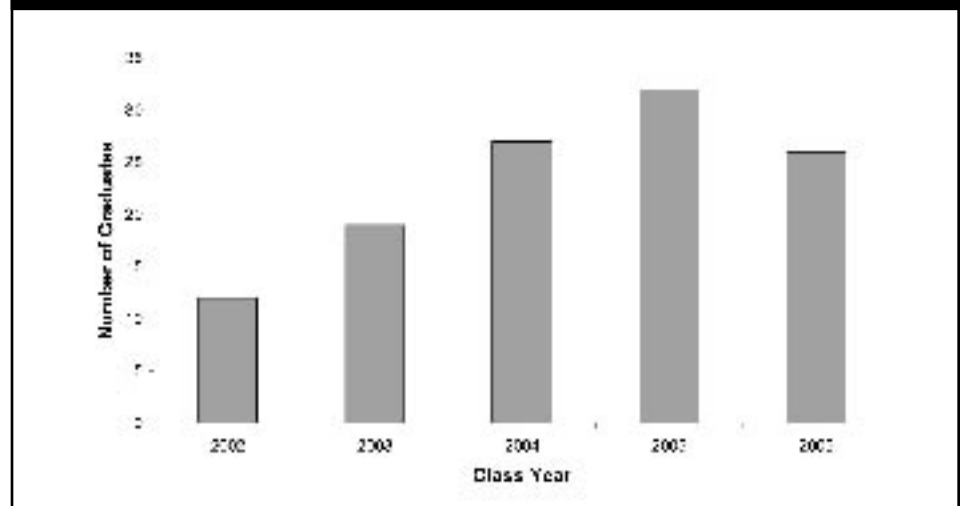


FIGURE 4. GROWTH IN POST-GRADUATION RESIDENCY INTEREST

