

Adriana Poenitzsch

Mentor: Caitlin Geisler, Miranda Wilhelm

Title: *Confidence Level of Immunization Recommendation and Barriers to Administration Among Community Pharmacists*

#### Abstract

**Purpose:** The community pharmacist is at the forefront of patient healthcare and is a major force in the prevention of disease through immunization services. However, adult immunization rates remain suboptimal. Community pharmacist barriers are just as significant as patient perceived barriers. Community pharmacists cannot overcome patient perceived barriers if they themselves cannot overcome their own barriers. The purpose of this study is to understand community pharmacists' confidence in immunization recommendations, identify barriers, and identify practices which can be improved to increase confidence and knowledge of immunization and administration of vaccinations.

**Methods:** An anonymous survey sent to pharmacists at a supermarket chain consisted of demographic questions, case-based, multiple-choice questions, and questions identifying barriers and improvements to reduce barriers to increase confidence when assessing, recommending, and administering vaccine

**Results:** Overall, 37% of participants answered case-based questions correctly, 41% answered incorrectly, and 22% selected "I do not know". The participants that answered correctly, 27.3% were very confident, 46.9% were somewhat confident, 22% were somewhat unconfident, and 3.7% were very unconfident. The participants that answered incorrectly, 21.7% were very confident, 41.7% were somewhat confident, 32.3% were somewhat unconfident, and 4.4% were very unconfident. Participants identified time (88.1%), proper staffing (66.1%), and lack of patient information (37.3%) as the top three barriers. Participants identified improved immunization chart/guide (35%), improved training (25%), and improved immunization history/database (20%) as the top three opportunities to reduce barriers.

**Conclusion:** Community pharmacists are immunization experts; however, the results show there are opportunities for improvement. A majority of the participants answered questions incorrectly or "I do not know". A majority of the participants that answered incorrectly were very confident or somewhat confident. The need for immunizations is going to continue to grow and community pharmacists must be proactive immunization advocates in order to provide patients with the best practices.