

Jonathan Sontag

Mentor: James Lynch

Title: *Assessing viewpoints on mental health barriers impact on patient counseling between 3rd and 4th year SIUE students and Alumni*

Mental Health is a growing problem in the United States, According to a 2019 survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 1 in 5 or 42.5 million people in the United States suffer from some form of mental illness (1). With increased awareness there has been an increased number of patients on mood stabilizers, anxiolytics, anti-depressants, and anti-psychotics. There are many barriers that could prevent pharmacists from delivering proper counseling to patients. The barriers that are relevant to our study are: mental health stigma, lack of pharmacy education and training, and pharmacist-physician collaboration. Many pharmacy schools in the United States have reconstructed their curriculum to mitigate the impact of these foreseen barriers, with SIUE School of Pharmacy being one of them. The purpose of this study is to observe if there is a difference in comfortability between SIUE current students and alumni who have taken a mental health elective and ones who have not when counseling patients.