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Title: *Assessment of empathy among pharmacy students through a polypharmacy medication regimen simulation.*

Objective: To assess empathy change among first year pharmacy students through a polypharmacy simulation.

Methods: First year pharmacy students enrolled in Personal and Professional Development I were recruited to participate in a volunteer, pilot polypharmacy simulation. A mock medication regimen consisting of eight prescriptions taken for seven days was distributed. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained. Baseline characteristics, personal insight, and empathy [Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale (KCES)] were assessed in pre- and post-surveys. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to determine statistical significance.

Results: Eighty-two students were eligible for recruitment. Matched data from thirty-nine student participants was included. There was not a statistically significant change in the total mean empathy score between pre and post KCES (83 vs 82, $p=1.0$). Of the 15 questions on the KCES, one question, "I will not allow myself to be influenced by someone's feeling when determining the best treatment," produced a significant change in mean score (4.77 vs 4.10, $p = 0.02$). The average percentage of late and missed doses, as self-reported by students, was 5.63% and 5.04%, respectively. Qualitative responses indicated forgetfulness as the primary cause of non-adherence. When asked how this experience will impact patient counseling on multiple medications, a common theme included: a better understanding of the difficulty of medication self-management.

Implications: Limited statistically significant findings could be contributed to high empathy scores at baseline in this population. Based on qualitative data, this simulation should be considered for incorporation into future curriculum plans.