Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Health Administration Washington, DC 20420 VHA HANDBOOK 1108.09 Transmittal Sheet June 9, 2009

PHARMACY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- **1. REASON FOR ISSUE.** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides policy and guidance for the management of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Pharmacy Education and Training Program.
- **2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES.** This new VHA Handbook incorporates aspects of the Pharmacy practice previously found in VHA Manual, M-2, Part VII, Chapters 7 and 8. The most significant change from the former policies is the reformatting into a single Handbook with expanded guidance on: Residency Program accreditation, professional advancement, and webbased and electronic literature.
- **3. RELATED DOCUMENTS.** VHA Handbooks 1108.1, 1108.2, 1108.04, 1108.05, 1108.06, 1108.07, and 1108.08.
- **4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE.** The Office of Patient Care Services' Pharmacy Benefits Management Service (119) is responsible for the contents of this Handbook. Questions may be addressed to the Chief Consultant at (202) 461-7326.
- **5. RESCISSIONS.** VHA Manual M-2, Part VII, Chapter 7, "Education and Training," and VHA Manual M-2, Part VII, Chapter 8, "Professional and Scientific Literature," are rescinded.
- **6. RECERTIFICATION.** This VHA Handbook is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working day of June 2014.

Gerald M. Cross, MD, FAAFP Acting Under Secretary for Health

DISTRIBUTION: E-mailed to VHA Publications Distribution List 6/11/2009

CONTENTS

PHARMACY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PARAGRAPH	PAGE
1. Purpose	1
2. Definitions	1
3. Scope	3
4. Responsibility of the Healthcare Retention and Recruitment Office (HRRO)	3
5. Responsibility of the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA)	3
6. Responsibility of the Facility Designated Learning Officer (DLO)	3
7. Responsibility of the Facility Director	4
8. Responsibility of the Facility Chief of Pharmacy Services	4
9. Planning and Implementation.	5
10. Education and Training Programs	5
11. Funding	6
12. Professional and Scientific Literature	6
13. Active Drug Information Dissemination	10
14. Drug Information Services	10
15. References	10

PHARMACY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures, responsibilities, and guidance related to Pharmacy Service education and training.

2. DEFINITIONS

a. <u>Continuing Professional Development.</u> Continuing professional development is a lifelong process of active participation in learning activities that assists individuals in developing and maintaining continuing competence, enhances their professional practice, and supports achievement of their career goals.

b. Postgraduate Pharmacy Training

- (1) **Pharmacy Resident.** A pharmacy resident is a graduate of a School or College of Pharmacy accredited by Accreditation Council on Pharmacy Education (ACPE) and appointed to a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Pharmacy Residency Program accredited by American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP).
- (a) A resident may be in a First Graduate Year (PGY1) or Second Graduate Year (PGY2) Pharmacy Residency Program that requires successfully completing the goals and objectives and 2000 hours of training to receive a certificate of completion. In certain circumstances, a pharmacy resident can be concurrently enrolled in an academic program (e.g., Master of Science in Pharmacy Administration and PGY2 in Pharmacy Administration).
- (b) A resident position is specifically designated as a training position and cannot be utilized to supplement staffing vacancies or shortages.
- (2) **Pharmacy Fellow.** A Pharmacy Fellow is one who enters a fellowship, which is defined as a postgraduate research focused program having 75 percent of the time allocated to the didactic or practical aspects of research with the intent of becoming an independent researcher after graduation. A fellowship is typically a 2-year program.
- (a) The Pharmacy Fellow is a licensed pharmacist, or a graduate eligible for licensure, receiving postgraduate training at the facility, with the primary objective of doing research, which may or may not be part of an advanced academic degree program.
- (b) A fellow position is specifically-designated as a training position and cannot be utilized to supplement staffing vacancies or shortages.
- c. <u>Professional Staff.</u> Professional staff is comprised of Pharmacists and Certified Pharmacy Technicians.

d. Student Training

- (1) **Clerkship.** A pharmacy clerkship is required training for professional or graduate pharmacy students. These individuals are supervised by faculty of the affiliated school, or a college of pharmacy, or VA pharmacists with academic appointments at the school or college of pharmacy.
- (2) **Intern.** An intern is a pharmacy student who is obtaining practical experience for purposes of licensure. These individuals are supervised primarily by VA pharmacists, but could be supervised by faculty from an affiliated school or college of pharmacy.
- (3) **Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP).** Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 213.3202, gives agencies the authority to use Title 5 excepted appointment authority for students who are enrolled, or accepted for enrollment, as degree seeking students taking at least a half-time academic, technical, or vocational course load in an accredited high school, technical, vocational, 2 or 4 year college, university, graduate, or professional school. VA facilities participating in this program will normally use available facility funds and ceiling. However, VHA has annually announced that VHA facilities may submit requests for headquarters-level support through appropriate channels if funds are not available locally, for the establishment of a program or the continuation or expansion of an existing program, which is clearly in the interest of VA. Pharmacy offices interested in these student employment authorities need to contact their local Human Resources Offices for additional information.
- (a) <u>Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)</u>. STEP provides the authority to hire students to work at VA as temporary employees. The nature of duties does not have to be related to the student's academic or career goals, but if the student meets the eligibility, they can be converted to the SCEP authority.
- (b) <u>Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)</u>. SCEP provides the authority to hire students whose work experience must be related to their academic or career goals. Students must be currently enrolled at least half time in an ACPE-accredited school or college of pharmacy to be eligible for a SCEP appointment in a medical and health student trainee position in pharmacy. These individuals are supervised primarily by VA Pharmacists, but could be supervised by faculty from an affiliated school or college of pharmacy. Students in SCEP may be appointed by VHA following completion of their academic program and work experience requirements
- (5) VA Learning Opportunities Residency (VALOR). VALOR is a pharmacy honors program for outstanding students who must have a 3.0 or higher Grade Point Average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale. Students recruited for the program must have completed the second professional year (or 4 completed semester hours equivalent in a year round program) of education at an ACPE-accredited School or College of Pharmacy.
- (a) Students may be appointed on a full or part-time basis during the summer months and may continue during their final academic year on a part-time basis. Students are assigned preceptors who are expected to precept the student throughout the entire experience.

- (b) The aggregate hours that a student may be funded by HRRO in the program are 400 hours per year that is renewable one time (for a total of 800 hours). Any additional hours above the 800 hours must be funded by the facility.
- (c) Former VALOR students, who receive their Pharm.D. Degree may be hired at a salary rate above the minimum, based on superior qualifications such as documented outstanding performance in the VALOR program and/or number of hours completed as a VALOR participant (e.g., unlicensed Baccalaureate or Pharm.D. graduates at the GS-9 Grade, licensed Baccalaureate or Pharm.D. graduates at the GS-11 Grade).
- e. <u>Support Staff.</u> Support staff is a group of employees comprised of administrative officers, non-certified pharmacy technicians, program assistants, and secretarial staff who support the mission of Pharmacy Service.
- f. <u>Technician Trainee.</u> A technician trainee is a student receiving practical and/or didactic training at the facility in order to meet certain minimum standards provided as a guide by State regulations or as required by VA. This training can be completed through affiliation with a technician training program (e.g., vocational school, community college, professional organization) or locally developed. The trainee must always be under the supervision of a qualified technician or pharmacist preceptor.

3. SCOPE

Continuous professional development is a responsibility that is expected of every pharmacist and certified pharmacy technician. Pharmacy personnel, that are either in staff or trainee positions, are required to maintain professional and functional competence. VHA endorses continuous professional development; in pharmacy, the education and training activities strive toward:

- a. Motivating the individual to serve the best interest of the patient;
- b. Assisting in the education and training of pharmacists with direct patient care by scheduling educational opportunities supporting the individual to remain professionally competent;
- c. Encouraging pharmacy practitioners to participate in continuous education and staff development programs to advance their professional knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- d. Reinforcing and ensuring the expectation that the VA pharmacy personnel achieve and maintain a high level of professional competence; and
- e. Providing opportunities for pharmacy practitioners to interface with the public and other health care professions in an environment of mutual learning.

4. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEALTHCARE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT OFFICE (HRRO)

The Healthcare Retention and Recruitment Office (HRRO) is responsible for centralized program management for the SEEP and VALOR programs and for forwarding program announcements to the Director, Pharmacy Recruitment and Retention Office (PRRO), and Pharmacy Benefits Management Service (PBM).

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS (OAA)

The OAA is responsible for appointment of all centrally-funded pharmacy residency and fellowship programs.

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FACILITY DESIGNATED LEARNING OFFICER (DLO)

The Facility DLO is responsible for ensuring:

- a. Coordinating educational activities at the local level, as well as linking local activities with Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) and VA Central Office efforts.
 - b. Serving as a conduit to educational resources available for employee and trainees.
- c. Collaborating and assisting in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of pharmacy learning activities in a joint effort with the facility Chief of Pharmacy or Pharmacy Program Director.

7. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FACILITY DIRECTOR

The Facility Director is responsible for ensuring:

- a. The Chief or Manager, Library Service, or comparable position, maintains sufficient resources to complete the patient care, education, and research missions of the Pharmacy Service.
- b. Staffing, space, and time allotment for any educational activity is sufficient to ensure achievement of the stated pharmacy educational and training objectives.
- c. Provisions are made for pharmacy employees to have time available to devote to necessary educational activities on an ongoing basis.
- d. Provisions are made for VA pharmacy personnel to participate in the identification of their continuous educational needs and in the plans for meeting competency requirements.

8. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FACILITY CHIEF OF PHARMACY SERVICES

The Facility Chief of Pharmacy Services, or designee, is responsible for:

- a. Developing and implementing educational programs using a multidisciplinary approach for both professional and support staff.
 - b. Supervising all pharmacy trainees.
- c. Establishing local medical center policy for pharmacy training and continuous professional development for pharmacy staff.
- d. Ensuring that all pharmacy staff have an Educational Needs Assessment performed annually, at a minimum.
- e. Collaborating with the Library Chief or Manager to maintain sufficient resources to complete the patient care, education, and research missions of the Pharmacy Service.
- f. Ensuring all pharmacy staff are evaluated prior to staffing area of assignment to ensure competency.
- g. Appointing a Residency Program Director (RPD) who meets ASHP Standards for each accredited residency. *NOTE:* In order to successfully implement and maintain an accredited pharmacy residency program, a minimum of 10 percent of the RPD's time must be allocated for program administration.
 - h. Ensuring the quality of educational drug information.
 - i. Documenting the provision of drug information as part of the quality assurance activities.

9. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- a. The continuous professional development must be consistent with the overall goals and objectives of VHA OAA (14) and the PBM Service. *NOTE:* An interdisciplinary approach to sponsoring, planning, and implementing educational activities is encouraged, and efforts to coordinate with Employee Education System (EES), VISN and facility DLOs, VA medical center staff, or professional organization resources need to be made to support education programs, whenever feasible and appropriate.
- b. Facilities approved for use of tuition support program funds such as Employee Incentive Scholarship Programs (EISP) may use these funds to support pharmacist and technician continuing education needs. *NOTE:* Pharmacists who are recognized by the Chief of Pharmacy Services as in a management track for career advancement are eligible for post graduate degree funding (e.g., Masters in Public Health, Masters in Business Administration, etc.) through EISP.

10. EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

a. All trainees are under the supervision of the Chief, Pharmacy Service, or designee and all post-graduate trainees must be United States citizens.

- b. Pharmacy affiliations strongly support a broad policy of cooperation and professional interchange with academic institutions. Affiliated educational programs for the associated health professions assist in:
- (1) Attracting students into student training programs (e.g., STEP, SCEP, and VALOR) and retaining them after graduation to provide quality health care to Veterans;
 - (2) Attracting students into pharmacy post graduate residency and fellowship programs;
- (3) Attracting students, residents, and fellows into professional pharmacy positions and retaining them within the VA system;
- (4) Enhancing the professional development of VA pharmacy personnel as a result of the student-teacher relationship;
- (5) Utilizing VHA professional resources and clinical facilities to provide an adequate supply of pharmacy personnel for the profession; and
 - (6) Establishing affiliated education programs for Pharmacy Service providing VA policies.
- c. The types of students eligible for pharmacy academic affiliations are Doctors of Pharmacy, Masters in a related field, Baccalaureate degree Pharmacists, pharmacy residents and fellows, and pharmacy technicians.
- d. The Residency Program Directors (RPD) and residency preceptors must have at least 1-year's experience in their area of practice or teaching responsibility. *NOTE:* The ASHP Commission on Credentialing must vote to approve the RPD, who must meet ASHP criteria.
- e. All Pharmacy RPDs must have administrative time allocated to ensure that program development, preceptor development, and accreditation processes are fully met.
- f. Administrative training classes and programs are available from VA, other government agencies, and private institutions and organizations to ensure competency as staff move up the organizational ladder. *NOTE:* Every effort should be made to identify staff educational needs and provide appropriate training.
- g. The Employee Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP) helps VHA meet its needs for qualified health care staff in occupations for which recruitment or retention is difficult. Under this authority, VA may award scholarships to employees pursuing degrees or training in health care disciplines for which recruitment and retention of qualified personnel is difficult, and also to pay their reasonable expenses, such as registration, fees, books, materials and supplies. Though the scope of the authority contained in EISP is substantial, it does have limitations. Individuals interested in participating in EISP may seek additional program guidance from their facility education office or EISP coordinator.

11. FUNDING

- a. Approved VA-accredited Pharmacy Residency and Fellowship Programs are provided funding support by OAA.
- b. VA facilities approved for SCEP and VALOR students are provided funding through HRRO.
 - c. All other pharmacy student trainees are appointed on a without compensation basis.

12. PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Information is central to the practice of modern pharmacy. Pharmacy has become a consultative profession where pharmacists apply clinical drug information that directly impacts patient care. Pharmacy is evolving into a clinical knowledge-based profession where the pharmacist interprets and uses drug data aimed at the optimal utilization of drugs in patients. Pharmacy Service gathers and maintains current information on drug products, pharmaceutical techniques, clinical drug therapeutics, adverse events, and other developments in the use of drugs.

- a. <u>Professional References.</u> As much as possible, electronic databases, textbooks, and primary literature need to be available to all pharmacy personnel. Along with the Library Manager, the Chief of Pharmacy Services must maintain sufficient resources to complete the patient care, education, and research missions of the Pharmacy Service. The following recognized electronic Web-based references are available through the VA Library Network (VALNET), or if contracted locally, by the local medical center or VISN.
- (1) **VALNET.** VALNET is a health sciences library network made up of member libraries that support VA at: http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/VALNET/. *NOTE:* This is an internal website and not available to the public. In addition to other references, VALNET provides access to:
 - (a) The New England Journal of Medicine at: http://content.nejm.org/.
- (b) ACP PIER Plus from STAT!Ref at: http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/VALNET/ACP_Pier.asp. NOTE: This is an internal website and not available to the public.
- (c) The Joint Commission Information, including manuals, perspectives and resources at: http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/VALNET/JCAHO.asp. *NOTE:* This is an internal website and not available to the public.
 - (d) Knowledge Based Information, such as:
 - 1. Outlines in Clinical Medicine at: http://vaww1.va.gov/ocm/what.cfm.
- **NOTE:** This is an internal Website and not available to the public.
 - 2. The IMPROVE Knowledge Portal at: http://vaww.va.gov/vatap/improve.htm.

NOTE: This is an internal website and not available to the public.

- (2) Locally available resources may include:
- (a) Approved Drug Products with Therapeutic Equivalence Evaluations "The Orange Book" accessible at: http://www.fda.gov/cder/ob/.
 - (b) Micromedex Healthcare Series at: http://www.micromedex.dk/.
 - (c) Up-To-Date Incorporated at: http://www.uptodate.com/home/index.html .
 - (d) American Hospital Formulary Service at: http://www.ahfsdruginformation.com/. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists 7272 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814 www.ashp.org
 - (e) Facts and Comparisons online at: http://www.factsandcomparisons.com/]
 Wolters Kluwer
 77 Westport Plaza, Suite 450
 St. Louis, MO 63146
- (f) ACPE accredited programs for continuing education are available through the VA LMS at www.lms.va.gov or through the VA Learning Catalog at http://vaww.sites.lrn.va.gov/vacatalog/
- (g) The VA Office of Quality and Performance provides resources related to accreditation education by The Joint Commission on their Website at: http://vaww.oqp.med.va.gov/oqp_services/accreditation/accreditation.asp
- b. <u>Professional Journals.</u> At the discretion of the Chief, Pharmacy Service, the following journals need to be maintained on station as daily working references:
 - (1) <u>American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy</u>
 American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
 4630 Montgomery Avenue
 Bethesda, MD 20814
 http://www.ajhp.org/
 - (2) Journal of the American Pharmacists Association American Pharmacists Association 2215 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20037

http://www.pharmacist.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Publications2&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=92&ContentID=11358

(3) Hospital Pharmacy

Wolters Kluwer 77 Westport Plaza, Suite 450 St. Louis, MO 63146 http://www.factsandcomparisons.com/hospitalpharm/

(4) The Medical Letter on Drugs and Therapeutics

The Medical Letter, Inc.
56 Harrison Street
New Rochelle, NY 10801
http://www.medicalletter.org/

(5) Clin-Alert Online

Sage Publications http://cla.sagepub.com/

(6) Pharmindex

Skyline Publishers, Inc.
P.O. Box 1029
Portland, OR 97207
http://www.pharmindex.com/

(7) Annals of Pharmacotherapy

Harvey Whitney Books P.O. Box 42696 Cincinnati, OH 45242 http://www.theannals.com/

- c. <u>Professional Drug Literature Databases.</u> Pharmacy Service must maintain an organized drug information system to ensure accessibility. A broad-based drug information system may be used as the organized system that may include:
 - International Pharmaceutical Abstracts American Society of Hospital Pharmacists 4630 Montgomery Avenue Bethesda, MD 20814
 - (2) Iowa Drug Information System Westlawn, Box 330 The University of Iowa Iowa City, IA 52242
 - (3) Drugdex Information System Micromedex, Inc.660 Bannock St. -Suite 300 Denver, CO 80204

- d. <u>Drug Information Access.</u> Pharmacy Service must have the means to access electronic databases for rapid retrieval of primary source drug information (e.g., National Library of Medicine accessible at http://www.pubmed.gov). In addition, Pharmacy Service must have the services of a Drug Information Center readily available for consultation and the telephone number for such a center must be prominently located. Pharmacists are advised to use the service to obtain information as necessary.
 - e. **Textbooks.** Required textbooks that are to be held within Pharmacy Service are:
 - (1) The Extra Pharmacopeia, W Martindale;
 - (2) <u>Clinical Toxicology of Commercial Products</u>, R E. Gosselin;
 - (3) A textbook of therapeutics, i.e., one of the following:
 - (a) Applied Therapeutics: The Clinical Use of Drugs. Ed. M A Koda-Kimble et al;
 - (b) Pharmacotherapy: A Pathophysiologic. Ed. J DiPiro, et al.; or
 - (c) Pharmacotherapy Principles and Practices. Ed. M Chisholm-Burns et al;
- (4) Goodman and Gilman, <u>The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics</u> Ed. L Brunton, J Lazo and K Parker;
 - (5) Handbook of Clinical Drug Data, Ed. P Anderson, J Knoben and W Troutman;
 - (6) Handbook of Nonprescription Drugs, American Pharmacists Association;
 - (7) Facts and Comparisons, Wolters Kluwer Health;
 - (8) A textbook on intravenous admixture compatibility, i.e., one of the following:
 - (a) Handbook on Injectable Drugs, 15th Edition, by L A. Trissel;
 - (b) Guide to Parenteral Admixtures, King Guide Publications, Inc.;
 - (9) American Hospital Formulary Service, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists;
 - (10) Handbook of Federal Drug Law by J R Nielsen;
- (11) Title 28 CFR, Food and Drugs, [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/21cfr/cfr/index.html] Department of Health and Human Services; or
- (12) <u>The United States Pharmacopeia</u>, USP 32 NF 27, Rockville, MD; United States Pharmacopeia Convention.

13. ACTIVE DRUG INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

- a. Pharmacy Service endeavors to actively disseminate information to physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and other health care providers. This may be accomplished through the use of an institutional newsletter distributed to health care providers. Information may consist of pharmacy prescribing regulations, warnings on new or unusual adverse drug reactions, drug side effects, new drug reviews, current literature reviews, cost comparisons, and other information that will enhance or improve prescribing practices.
- b. In addition to newsletters, accepted methods for active drug information dissemination include in-service training and education, conferences, and formal lectures.

14. DRUG INFORMATION SERVICES

- a. Pharmacy Service is responsible for the provision of drug information to health care professionals at the facility. Drug information can be provided with the use of the resources described in the preceding sections.
- b. Pharmacy Service must document the provision of drug information as part of the quality assurance activities.
- c. Pharmacy Service must provide drug information to patients. This information is intended to increase patient understanding of the importance of their drug therapy and to increase patient adherence to drug therapy.

15. REFERENCES

ASHP Guidelines: Minimum Standard for Pharmacies in Hospitals, can be found at: http://www.ashp.org/s_ashp/cat1c.asp?CID=514&DID=556.