



Advancing Excellence in Pharmacy

KeePosted

Official Newsjournal of the Illinois
Council of Health-System Pharmacists

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University of Illinois at Chicago-Rockford Journal Clubs - Learning to Criticize and Improve Clinical Practice

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College Connection

by [PhuongDung Luong \(P3\)](#), ICHP Treasurer, University of Illinois at Chicago (Rockford)

During the fall of 2016, I was fortunate to be part of the first class enrolled in the new curriculum at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Pharmacy. Compared to the old curriculum, students would have the opportunity to experience various pharmacy settings from the start of the pharmacy program. In my first introductory pharmacy practice experience (IPPE) I was assigned to the critical care unit of a local hospital. I spent my entire week in the unit getting an overview of a pharmacist's daily duties. One of the activities was the presentation of a newly published study during a Journal Club meeting. The goal was to evaluate whether the new results could be applied to current practice in the hospital. The article was confusing and I did not understand fully what was discussed. It sparked my interest in learning more about Journal Clubs, eventually leading me to attend the UIC ICHP student chapter Journal Club meetings. The meetings are regular events that provide students with the opportunity to practice reading, critiquing, and presenting a published scientific article in front of their colleagues. However, I only participated in the events by listening to the presentations and the discussions among the leading faculty and my student colleagues.

During my second year of didactic courses, I learned how to search for disease guidelines, how clinical trials are set up, and how to read randomized clinical trials/meta-analyses. At the same time, I accumulated a good amount of knowledge about various disease states. Strengthening my pharmaceutical knowledge and critical thinking skills made me more excited for each Journal Club meeting. Before each Journal Club, I searched for guidelines and reviewed the article. It helped me to review the disease and evidence-based treatments. I was able to compare new information, the limitations of the study, as well as the clinical application of the results. During meetings, I was able to participate in the discussion with the presenter, the leading faculty, and fellow students in discussing findings and application to current evidence-based practice. It is a wonderful environment in which to learn and practice without the stress of being graded. Not only does it prepare students for advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs), but it also contributes to the training of highly-qualified future pharmacists.

**Regularly Scheduled
Network Meetings**

Chicago Area Pharmacy
Directors Network Dinner
3rd Thursday of Odd Months
5:30pm

**Regularly Scheduled
Division and
Committee Calls**

Executive Committee
Second Tuesday of each month
at 7:00 p.m.

Educational Affairs
Third Tuesday of each month at
11:00 a.m.

Government Affairs
Third Monday of each month at
5:00 p.m.

Marketing Affairs
Third Tuesday of each month at
8:00 a.m.

Organizational Affairs
Fourth Thursday of each month
at 12:00 p.m.

Professional Affairs
Fourth Thursday of each month
at 2:00 p.m.

New Practitioner Network
Second Thursday of each month
at 5:30 p.m.

Technology Committee
Second Friday of each month at
8:00 a.m.

Chicago Area Pharmacy
Directors Network Dinner
Bi-monthly in odd numbered
months with dates to be
determined. Invitation only.

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Journal Club meetings help me to learn that healthcare is constantly changing. To become a pharmacist, I need to take the initiative to keep myself up-to-date. Fully understanding the purpose and the importance of Journal Club, I am more appreciative about the opportunities that the UIC ICHP student chapter provides students such as early hands-on experiences while still in school. I really enjoyed participating in Journal Club meetings.

During my last didactic year in pharmacy school I plan to present articles in ICHP Journal Club meetings to improve my presentation skills as well as to help the underclassmen understand the importance of learning. I hope to preserve the inspirational spirit of ICHP in training future pharmacists.

