

MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT



James Rinehart, R.Ph., M.S.

Director of Pharmacy

Member Since: August 1981

Focus: Pharmacy Practice Model

His Story

James Rinehart earned his Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. He was a clinical pharmacist at University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics. He then went on to complete a Master of Science in Pharmacy degree from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, and a two year pharmacy practice residency with an administrative emphasis at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics. Since 1991, Jim has been the Director of Pharmacy at BryanLGH Medical Center, where he is responsible for the management of the operational, clinical, retail, and financial services of the pharmacy department. In this role, he is responsible for approximately 650 licensed beds on two hospital campuses, a retail pharmacy and medical clinics, along with managing affiliated pharmacy school academic programs. He is responsible for 76 FTEs in the pharmacy department, both inpatient and outpatient, including a retail pharmacy.

Overview of the Facility and Region

BryanLGH Medical Center, located in Lincoln, NE, is a community based tertiary care regional referral medical center. Lincoln has a population base of approximately 250,000 and is the major Nebraska metropolitan area, combined with Omaha and Lincoln. BryanLGH has two acute-care campuses, several outpatient clinics, licensed for approximately 650 beds, and has 76 FTEs in the pharmacy department, including a Drug Information/Quality Assessment Improvement pharmacist. Additionally, the pharmacy department provides services to the operating room and clinic areas.

Role of the Pharmacy Department

The role of the pharmacy department is one of instilling a university/academic practice model within the community hospital setting. They have a decentralized practice model with pharmacy students on both campuses. For a number of years, the Medical Center has provided hospital pharmacy rotations for Creighton University, the University of Nebraska, Drake University, with the University of Montana hospital rotation just starting this year. Within the pharmacy department there is an onsite Creighton faculty member that provides an elective cardiology clerkship for Creighton students.

Staying the Course

“In an era of competing for resources and professional agendas, within the organization as a whole, what we are doing is maintaining the vision of a progressive patient focused pharmacy practice model. We are keeping the vision so that we can continue the progressive development of pharmaceutical care,” said Rinehart. In terms of management and leadership, you have to have a committed vision of what you want your practice model to be. Furthermore, you have to be committed to the values of patient safety, regulatory and standards compliance. This is the foundation from where you work.

The Role of the Pharmacy Director

The pharmacy director has to be continually aware of medical center operations and planning in addition to the ongoing activities of the pharmacy department. “It’s a challenge. You can’t be focused on a single topic given the broad influence of pharmacy practice and medication use. You can be hit with almost any medication related topic and you have to work with your management group, staff and other people within your organization to find the best solution to the situation,” said Rinehart. Prioritization is key for success. Much work is done to facilitate communication between the various types of clinical practitioners and administrators within the organization.

Challenges

Continually demonstrating and promoting the value of pharmacy services (drug therapy

management), within the patient care model, to people external to the pharmacy and to other health care professionals in the organization is a challenge. We need to promote our profession more, both externally and internally. The goal is to integrate the university/academic practice model within the community based setting and to promote the progressive practice models. Additionally, continuously supporting and providing the resources to pharmacy staff, so they can be effective in drug therapy management is challenging. You want to publicize the vision of the pharmacy practice model, but you also have to develop the staff and provide them resources so they can achieve that vision.

One of the biggest challenges, as we work on enhancing the professional practice model, is to have all parties involved, not only pharmacy staff but people external to pharmacy. They must understand the expanding professional role and the value pharmacy provides to patient care versus an array of fixed and variable costs within the medical center. Jim is vice chair of the Section Advisory Group on Workload & Productivity Monitoring and believes that ASHP will be helpful in these endeavors. "It is a challenge to quantify the financial value pharmacists provide in the health care setting. We as a profession can see the value, but how do we quantify it and promote it to administrators and other health professionals? We have to look at the motivating factors of our constituencies outside of pharmacy. Basically it is similar to selling a product, where in our case the products being promoted are the clinical, logistical and financial components of drug therapy management," said Rinehart.

Pharmacy Practice Model

The evolution of the practice model can be a slow process. Trying to make changes to achieve the model can take significant time and effort. You have to be very strategic with the timing of the changes within the pharmacy department and the organization to fulfill the vision of the practice model. Sometimes opportunities may occur slower than you would like to happen and sometimes you may have an immediate opportunity and you have to respond quickly and be opportunistic. It's essential to be networked with other departments and know what is going on organizationally in order to make things happen. Another major issue is how to expand services with limited resources and find better ways to optimize the clinical involvement of the pharmacists via opportunities such as process redesign and/or implementation of automation support. "Right now we are working with automated dispensing cabinets and automated compounding systems and exploring some additional opportunities with automation," said Rinehart.

Next Steps

Some of the next steps are to optimize the use of automation to free up distribution time with the pharmacists in order to increase the clinical involvement in the patient care areas. "We need to see what we can automate while also maintaining the vision. We need to demonstrate that the pharmacist is a direct care giver in the forefront of patient care versus in the background," stated Rinehart.

The Rewards

Jim finds his job very rewarding in that he can see outcomes of programmatic development. Positive feedback from the physicians, other care givers, and administrators in what they see as the value of pharmacist's involvement in patient care are some of the rewards.

Tools

"The most valuable tool is networking with peers. We need to have pharmacy staff members attend the ASHP Summer meeting and the Midyear meeting and network with peers, other professional entities, and with industry representatives. Networking is the key," said Rinehart.

Advice

Jim advises that you keep your professional vision and value system, that's crucial. Networking with your colleagues and keeping those contacts are essential.

The Value of ASHP Membership

Jim believes that ASHP is the overall professional group for health-system pharmacists. "It's our community; the membership and the people within the organization are my peer group. I

can pick up the phone and call people that I went to school with, worked with, and have been colleagues with. The organization reflects health-system pharmacists in a very broad sense and it provides a forum to interact with and get information from. If I ever have a question, I have an entity I can call upon. ASHP is a great organization for networking and exchanging ideas. It provides a vehicle for professional survival. Through ASHP, you can have input and make changes in pharmacy practice," said Rinehart.

For more information contact James Rinehart at james.rinehart@bryanlgh.org.