

Promoting Healthcare Literacy

Through Youth Education and Community Based Health Fairs

Western New England University
College of Pharmacy

Objective: The objective of our educational initiatives were to expand student pharmacists' engagement as healthcare professionals and educators, through educating elementary school students on the importance of avoiding tobacco use. Furthermore, we sought to promote interprofessional collaboration through educating the community about safe medication use and healthcare literacy.

Plan: Pharmacy students from Western New England University visited 10 elementary school classrooms over the course of one week. Our goal was to educate youth on the dangers of tobacco during the student's regularly scheduled class time through utilization of fake cigarettes, tar, magazine ads and a question and answer session. Our students also educated the general community about medication adherence, opiate abuse, immunizations and over the counter medications through a one day health fair. The fair was advertised to the community through flyers and various media outlets. Overall, we planned to use these various venues to promote pharmacists' as educators and awareness of accessibility to pharmacists.

Outcome: Our SSHP members were able to educate a total of 206 elementary school students on the dangers of tobacco use, and its impact on their overall health. Post surveys confirmed that the students were able to apply the education our student pharmacists had provided them with, and that they had a better understanding of the dangers of tobacco use following the event. Through our open forum health fair, we successfully reached out to more than 50 members of the community. We took several blood pressures, and provided our attendees with various handouts and resources. The community could then utilize this information in the future to promote their own health care literacy and become a more educated patient population.

What you Can Do:

- Build relationships with public schools and community centers
- Ensure proper advertising through building relationships with various media outlets
- Collaborate with a variety of SSHP members to create diverse and effective handouts and materials
- Direct educational materials in a way that promotes healthcare literacy and introduces the pharmacist as an accessible health care provider

Questions? Please contact our SSHP Treasurer at: Chelsea.Thompson@wne.edu