

## Practice Spotlight

### Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center

Fort George G. Meade, Maryland

<http://kacc.nrmc.amedd.army.mil/sitepages/home.aspx>

### Stacey M. Giles, Pharm.D.

Clinical Pharmacist



#### **IN YOUR VIEW, HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE IDEAL PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE?**

A clinical pharmacist integrated within each primary care team on a daily basis allows for seamless communication, consistent collaboration and ultimately best patient care practices. Having a clinical pharmacist serve alongside a team of physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, dietitians, nurse case managers, and nurses alike unites and enables the team to reach for the common goal of improving patient outcomes.

Here at Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center (KACC), each of the four primary care patient-centered medical home (PCMH) teams has a clinical pharmacist integrated within the clinic on a near daily basis. With the support of clinical pharmacy technicians, clinical pharmacists are able to dedicate their time to direct-patient care activities and serve as the medication expert for the team.

KACC encompasses the ideal practice advancement initiative and thrives in each of the five pillars of ASHP's Practice Advancement Initiative (Care Team Integration, Leveraging Pharmacy Technicians, Pharmacist Credentialing & Training, Technology, and Leadership in Medication Use) as the profession of pharmacy continues to evolve and advance.

#### **HOW DO PHARMACISTS IN YOUR RE-DESIGNED PHARMACY PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE PROVIDE CARE TO PATIENTS AND ENSURE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE MEDICATION THERAPY?**

PCMH clinical pharmacists integrated within their team serve as an extension to primary care services. Recently updated credentials allow for clinical pharmacists to not only manage specific chronic disease states (e.g. diabetes, hyperlipidemia, and hypertension) but now allow clinical

pharmacists to manage medications across all aspects of primary care. Tobacco cessation services are a mainstay as a military treatment facility with the goal of readiness for our Soldiers. The anticoagulation clinic remains a dedicated clinical pharmacy service as well. Polypharmacy reports each month allow for close review by our clinical pharmacy technicians to schedule high risk patients for a face-to-face comprehensive medication review with our clinical pharmacists. With the privilege to initiate, adjust, and discontinue medications, order and review labs, and refer to specialty care when indicated pharmacists are able to make meaningful therapeutic interventions. Behavioral health collaboration, naloxone dispensing policy, HEDIS metrics, ADR Hotline, formulary management and pain management service are all unique specialty areas where clinical pharmacists have a defined role. A facility wide adverse drug reaction reporting tool is filtered to clinical pharmacy to review and compile for monthly Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee meetings. Having two clinical pharmacy technicians provide clinical and administrative support for the clinical pharmacists is essential in allowing the clinical pharmacists to practice at the top of their license dedicating the majority of time to direct patient care services. Patient care is the main focus of the clinical pharmacy service with daily face-to-face appointments offered.

### **WHAT SERVICES HAVE YOU DETERMINED TO BE ESSENTIAL TO SUPPORT YOUR PHARMACY PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE?**

In order to offer the aforementioned services, the wide expanse of services would not be possible without the addition of our two clinical pharmacy technicians. The highly-trained clinical pharmacy technicians work as part of the clinical pharmacy team to review referrals, contact patients to schedule appointments, and run the polypharmacy report which involves triaging patients based on risk to be seen by the clinical pharmacist or simply contacted by the clinical pharmacy technicians to reinforce education about high risk medications. With the dual purpose of performing clinical and administrative tasks, the clinical pharmacy technicians allow the pharmacists to take on an increased load of patients and have their main focus be direct patient care in order to improve patient outcomes.

### **WHAT TECHNOLOGIES HAVE YOU IMPLEMENTED WITHIN YOUR PRACTICE SITE TO FACILITATE YOUR PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE?**

Our electronic medication record is connected across the military health system to allow for efficient transitions of care no matter where the service member, retiree, or beneficiary is stationed. A collaborative tool with the Veterans Affairs health system enables records to be easily accessible for our Veteran population. A facility wide online patient safety reporting tool helps track adverse drug events and improves safe medication use. CoagClinic is a web-based system utilized by the anticoagulation clinic to monitor patients and provides easy tracking of quality assurance reports. A population health database provides patient registries for a multitude of different conditions from diabetes to opioid management which clinical pharmacists access on a daily basis to facilitate their patient care.

## **HOW WOULD YOU SHARE THE SUCCESSES OF YOUR PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE WITH OTHER PHARMACY DIRECTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS?**

A biannual clinical pharmacy course is offered to clinical pharmacists and clinical pharmacy technicians across the globe practicing within the military health system. This week-long training allows for clinical pharmacists and clinical pharmacy technicians from various practice sites to collaborate and share clinical pearls, policies and procedures, best practices, positive implementations, and lessons learned at their respective clinics with all in attendance in order to advance and standardize the clinical pharmacy service across the military health system.

## **WHAT ARE SOME KEY CONSIDERATIONS TO GAIN EMPLOYEE ACCEPTANCE AND BUY-IN TO IMPLEMENT A NEW PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE?**

Define the roles of clinical pharmacists in order to smoothly transition to a team player and serve as an asset to a team. Realize there will be unfamiliarity with clinical pharmacist and technician roles therefore, providing education to all team members is vital. Ensure that clinical pharmacist roles are clearly defined, but not limiting. As all the other team members bring their unique education, training, and experience to the team, clinical pharmacists are meant to bring their distinctive medication expertise to the table.

## **HOW DID YOU GAIN SUPPORT OF ADMINISTRATORS, PHYSICIANS, AND NURSING TO IMPLEMENT YOUR NEW PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE?**

Your worth is earned by simply playing your part on the team. Integrating with the team, developing professional relationships, attending daily morning huddles, being available to answer drug information questions, and being visible within the clinic for walk-ins are all examples of ways to play your part on the team. By being a team player, the team quickly sees how clinical pharmacy is a vital role of an effective health care team and appreciates all that you do.

## **WHAT ARE SOME LESSONS LEARNED WHILE IMPLEMENTING YOUR PRACTICE ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER PHARMACISTS?**

Have patience with the process of starting or expanding clinical pharmacy services. There will be bumps along the way, but making every piece a learning opportunity will contribute to an eventual efficient and effective clinical pharmacy service.

Our role is ever-evolving and always advancing so staying on top of continuing education opportunities, becoming board certified, achieving specialty certification, staying up to date with clinical practice guidelines, going out of your comfort zone at times, and always looking for learning opportunities is a must within our profession.