

Rotation Spotlight - Ames Medicap

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The Ames Medicap rotation is a community practice, ambulatory care, community pharmaceutical care, and faculty site for Drake University. Cheri Rockhold-Schmit is the primary preceptor and Dr. Angela Tice is the Drake faculty preceptor at this site. There are three technicians and another pharmacist, Alice, during the day, all of whom are willing to share time with the students, teaching and learning from each other. Medicap is a community setting in the center of Ames, a public college town, home of the Iowa State Cyclones. There is a great relationship with the City of Ames providing case management and cognitive services through Outcomes, which provides payment for pharmacy services. The atmosphere is conducive to student learning, due in part to Ames being a college town; most of the citizens are used to student involvement and willing to help students learn.

Cheri Rockhold-Schmit is a pharmacy preceptor at Medicap Pharmacy in Ames for the University of Iowa and Drake University. I was able to spend some time with Cheri to learn more about her and her site. Through our conversations I was able to see why Cheri has become a good preceptor. She is active in her profession as she is currently a member of the IPA Board of Trustees and Central Iowa Pharmacists Association. Cheri feels it is important and rewarding to give back to her community. She is a Sunday school teacher, accompanist at her Church, a volunteer with Mary Greeley Hospital Auxiliary, and a provider at health fairs. Cheri also participates in sharing health care information at area meetings and collaborates with other professionals in the area to improve the health of her community. One such group is Prime Time Alive a group of elderly citizens who meet monthly to discuss and learn about various health care topics. Along with volunteering in her community and her profession, Cheri has received certifications in diabetes management, lipid management, CPR, and immunizations. Cheri is a positive role model for her students.



When working with rotation students Cheri tries to show them opportunity for involvement in a community setting. It has been her experience that upon arrival the majority of rotation students do not wish to practice community pharmacy. Cheri's goal is to help students understand that community pharmacy "is what you make of it" and as a pharmacist you have the ability to make your pharmacy patient centered if you desire. She demonstrates this by caring for patients as if they were her family members. Students work on their patient counseling skills, communicating as a health care professional, problem solving and drug therapy decision-making skills. Student projects actually help the site provide services and build the community relations by designing new services, creating marketing brochures, and inviting other practitioners to participate in the service. For example one student created a diabetes support group and another student set up a blood pressure club, both programs are still running. Cheri feels "the most rewarding part of having rotation students is the challenge they give me to keep educated and open to different approaches." She is able to learn from her students as one may suggest an alternative way of

completing a task in a manner that she has not thought of previously. The first week with new students is always the most time consuming simply due to the orientation and familiarization time it takes for students to get used to the site.

Dr. Angela Tice is the Drake faculty preceptor for Medicap in Ames; she too shared some of her thoughts about this rotation. From her perspective this is a good rotation for a few reasons. First is obviously the preceptor, "Cheri is personally involved in the care provided to patients." The patients at this pharmacy are "well-informed" and aware of the kind of care they will receive at this pharmacy. Dr. Tice admits that opportunities vary throughout the year as workflow in a community practice site changes with the seasons; at times the student may need to be assertive to find a new idea for a project. The more self motivated the student is the more s/he will get from the experience, (true of all rotation sites). Dr. Tice sees students improve their communication, counseling, problem-solving skills along with learning to identify and resolve drug therapy problems, run a business, and implement pharmacy services. This is done through spending approximately a quarter of the student's time on projects and a quarter on filling prescriptions. The other half of the time is spent with patients, giving the student the opportunity for a wide variety of experiences.



I was able to gather some thoughts of a past rotation student at Medicap in Ames, Dana Hanson. She informed me that students on this rotation are given the opportunity for one on one patient contact. Dana was excited about "refining patient counseling skills, learning important information to share with patients, and showing patients that they can manage their own health state." She gave an OTC presentation to an elderly group (Prime Time Alive) that meets monthly. Sharing skills with the preceptors and site personnel was also a part of her rotation as she demonstrated how to use certain medical devices, (blood pressure

monitors, glucometers, and ovulation kits) for the staff. Dana felt that her time was divided between the two pharmacists, Cheri and Alice, and working on projects when there were few patients to counsel, and occasionally she helped fill prescriptions when the pharmacy got busy. However, the majority of the student's time was spent with patients, counseling, teaching and learning. This was the most rewarding part of the rotation, according to Dana. From Dana's experience, it is easy to see that Cheri and Alice are very involved in improving the skills that are needed to be a good pharmacist.