Pharmacist and student pharmacist perceptions of career pathways to enter the biopharmaceutical industry
Nikole Shpilfogel, Bernard Tyrrell, MBA, and James Alexander, PharmD

Objectives
Identify and evaluate the perceptions among pharmacists and student pharmacists with a known interest in the biopharmaceutical industry about career pathways as well why they are interested. The survey was designed to determine the gaps in education and experience that are potential barriers to entering industry.

Methods
Two IRB-approved surveys were emailed to members and affiliates of IPhO, MCPHSU Fellows, and MCPHSU alumni who graduated with their PharmD degree within the last 5 years. The data collected is primary data. Analytical tools on Survey Monkey were used to collect and analyze data from the surveys.

Results
Nearly 50% of student pharmacist and more than 60% of pharmacist respondents indicated that the reason they are interested in the pharmaceutical industry is to discover areas of pharmacy other than the conventional community or hospital settings. Over 50% of student pharmacists and 46% of pharmacists surveyed are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the amount of information provided by their pharmacy school about career opportunities for pharmacists in the biopharmaceutical industry.

More than 80% of students and more than 60% of pharmacists in this population reported that they are interested in learning more about how to enter industry without an Industry Fellowship.

According to data on file at IPhO, just 1 in 5 pharmacists working in the biopharmaceutical industry have completed a fellowship. Yet about ⅔ of respondents believed the percentage to be much higher than that.

Both pharmacists and student pharmacists in the population surveyed who have an interest in industry believe that Industry Fellowships are the best entry point into industry. Over 80% of both student pharmacist and pharmacist respondents think that it is difficult to very difficult to acquire a position in the biopharmaceutical industry without completing a fellowship.

Conclusion
The population surveyed identified gaps in pharmacy education related to industry. There is a misperception that most industry pharmacists completed an Industry Fellowship. In fact, more than 75% of current industry pharmacists did not complete a Fellowship. There is a need for more information about career opportunities leading to industry that do not include completing a fellowship.

Disclosures
Authors of this presentation have the following to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation:
Nikole Shpilfogel (MCPHS): Nothing to disclose
Bernard Tyrrell (MCPHS): Nothing to disclose
Dr. James Alexander (IPhO): Nothing to disclose

Q11: Of the estimated 8,000 pharmacists currently working in the pharmaceutical industry, what percentage do you believe completed an Industry Fellowship as their initial entry point to industry?
Student Pharmacists n=193

Pharmacists n=92