

PHARM CIRCLE

Connecting stories from Memorial's PharmD for Working Professionals program

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Program wins an Award of
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**Advance your practice,
Lead your profession**

*Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)
for Working Professionals*

Message from the Dean

We are proud to share the second issue of the Pharm Circle-- a newsletter dedicated to showcasing our Working Professional students and program. We are excited to welcome a new group of students to the program in September and equally excited for many of our students from the first cohort who are entering their final year of studies.

This academic year has been an anomalous one--from a flood in the hallways of the School of Pharmacy to 'Snowmageddon' to COVID-19. We are working hard to transition to predominantly remote learning for the spring and fall semesters. And students in the Working Professionals

program are working very hard on the front lines, delivering essential services and patient care during the COVID-19 crisis. We are proud of them and their commitment to patient safety and the profession. The pandemic has brought many challenges, but it is at this time that we see the importance of pharmacists practicing to full scope and commend them for advancing their practice and leading the profession.

And as we begin the third year of the program in Fall 2020, students can now follow one of three suggested completion maps. The increased flexibility will allow students to adjust their course workload to better align with their professional and personal responsibilities as they move through the program.

Inside this issue, we profile another important member of our pharmily, Dr. Stephen Coombs, who is heavily involved with course development, coordination, and delivery. We also share an engaging story about a group of students who have formed an unexpected bond. And we introduce two students in the Student Spotlight section who have found a way to juggle multiple life roles when they returned to academia.

Thank you for spending some time with us. We hope you continue to enjoy reading about our students and our program.



Dr. Shawn Bugden is the Dean of the School of Pharmacy at Memorial University

We have a diverse group of faculty, external content authors, and instructional designers who work together to make this program a success. We will be sharing their profiles in every issue. Keep an eye out to learn more about our growing pharmily!

Instructor Spotlight

Dr. Stephen Coombs



Dr. Stephen Coombs is a pharmacist and teaching assistant professor at Memorial University School of Pharmacy. He is also a clinical assistant professor with Memorial's Faculty of Medicine, in the Discipline of Family Medicine. In his (almost) three years at the School of Pharmacy, he has coordinated and instructed courses in pharmacy practice and skills, pharmacotherapy, patient care, and applied learning. He is a recipient of the school's Teaching Excellence Award, as well as the George Hurley Award in Family Medicine for excellence in teaching contributions to their residency training program.

Dr. Coombs developed a love for pharmacy in childhood. A family friend owned a community pharmacy where he would always "help out," allowing him to garner an interest in the profession. He was diagnosed with asthma at a young age, which also fostered an appreciation for the critical role that pharmacists have in helping patients to manage chronic diseases and achieve optimal outcomes. As a result, he knew before entering high school that he would pursue this career path.

He received his BSc in Pharmacy from Memorial University in 2012 and, upon graduation, began working as a relief pharmacist for Sobeys Pharmacy Group. This allowed him to work in a number of different communities on Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula. In 2014, Dr. Coombs accepted a consultant pharmacist position in long-term care at Lawtons Nursing Home Services. It was here that he developed a passion for geriatric pharmacy—particularly in dementia care. Moving into this role inspired him to pursue PharmD studies at the University of Colorado and to obtain the designation of Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacist. While at Nursing Home Services, he served as a preceptor for several pharmacy students and this led him to pursue his current academic appointment at Memorial.

Dr. Coombs began his career at the School of Pharmacy in August of 2017. Simultaneously, he also started his practice in ambulatory care at The Ross Family Medicine Centre. From the beginning, he was heavily involved in the PharmD for Working Professionals Program and has helped to develop, coordinate, and deliver many of the courses. Being a PharmD student himself, he was, and continues to be, committed to developing learning activities that are meaningful and practical. He knows first-hand about the challenges students face when working full-time and completing an online PharmD program. He always makes himself available to share advice and provide support. Dr. Coombs completed his PharmD degree in April of 2019 and is notoriously known for saying, "The feeling you get when it's finished makes all of the work worth it!"

In his spare time, Dr. Coombs loves to travel, binge-watch Netflix shows, and play tennis. He is also a bit of a foodie and enjoys trying new food at local restaurants. His online shopping has become a little out of control since COVID-19, but feels it's justified as his consumption of take-out has decreased dramatically. He continues to advocate for pharmacists to complete a PharmD program—irrespective of practice setting—as the professional, educational and personal benefits it offers are endless.

Students in the Spotlight

2018 Cohort

Maggie Cole



Maggie was born and raised in Newfoundland. She graduated from Memorial University in 2013 with her BSc in Pharmacy and began her career as a provincial relief pharmacist for Loblaws. She later transitioned to an independent community pharmacy that specializes in

compounded medication. It was in this new role that she completed additional training and education in compounding pharmacy and obtained a designation as a specialist in compounded hormone replacement therapy.

At her current practice site, Maggie offers women's health consultations to perimenopausal and menopausal women. She also started a humorous gift line named Menopause Margie in an attempt to start the conversation amongst women about the "change of life". 'Menopause Margie' is currently on a hiatus while Maggie completes her PharmD, but for now you can learn about her by visiting www.menopausemargie.ca.

Maggie holds the titles of pharmacist in charge and sterile compounding supervisor at her practice site which recently

We like to celebrate our students and let our readers know a little more about the people in our neighbourhood. We'll be sharing student profiles in every issue. We'd love to hear your story, so please keep in touch!

expanded its services to offer sterile compounding through the building of a National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) certified facility.

Maggie has always enjoyed growing her knowledge base and is a committed lifelong learner. She completed several certificates and designations before deciding to enroll in a PharmD program. She looked into multiple programs before Memorial University announced they would be offering a one; she then knew it was her time to apply.

Admitted to the very first cohort in Fall 2018, Maggie explained, "The program is flexible and the applied learning courses reduce the number of practice experience placements which means less time away from work." She was also very familiar with the excellent quality of teaching in the School of Pharmacy where she completed her bachelor's degree. "Returning to Memorial University for my PharmD was an easy decision," she said. And as she completes year two of the program, Maggie has already been able to apply many aspects of her learning directly to her practice site.

When she is not at work or doing courses, she plays in a seasonal volleyball league with a women's team that she's played with for over 12 years, visits her nephew (currently through social distancing), or tries to keep up with her book club--a club that consists of many friends, some of whom graduated pharmacy school with her! This just goes to show that learning new things not only helps build a rewarding career but helps create lasting friendships too.

Important
Dates

For future applicants

Next application deadline date
February 1, 2021

For current students

PHAR 4900 Clinical Skills I
Offered remotely: **September 12-30, 2020**

PHAR 6900 Clinical Skills II
Offered remotely: **August 22-September 4, 2020**

2019 Cohort

Keith Noseworthy



A native of Newfoundland & Labrador and a practicing pharmacist in New Brunswick, Keith graduated from Dalhousie University's College of Pharmacy in 1997. He started his career as a staff pharmacist at the Miramichi Regional Hospital. After three months in the position,

he had the opportunity to manage the department. "As a new grad, I was hesitant because I felt that I still had so much to learn about being a hospital pharmacist, but at the same time I was also interested in moving our department forward," he said. "In retrospect, it was one of the most rewarding experiences I could ever have envisioned both professionally and personally."

After obtaining his Master of Business Administration (MBA) in 2003, Keith left his position at the hospital to manage in community practice with Loblaws. While he enjoyed the challenge of growing a business, he loved the relationships he established with patients in the community. For eight years, his patients became a part of his life and, as a pharmacist, he became a part of theirs. "We shared life's experiences together," he said. "I even had patients who made quilts and mittens for my youngest son when he was born. These are things you never forget. And, for me, it also meant that as a pharmacist I must have done something right."

In 2010, Keith returned to hospital practice where he currently divides his time between general medicine and infectious disease (Antimicrobial Stewardship). In 2016, he started the local Antimicrobial Stewardship Committee (ASC) in response to widespread inappropriate antibiotic use within the hospital. He

states, "To date, we have implemented very successful Community Acquired Pneumonia and AECOPD interventions that have really highlighted the value of the hospital pharmacist in improving guideline concordant prescribing. Both health authorities in New Brunswick have really done an outstanding job collaborating to make antimicrobial stewardship a priority."

Keith is thrilled to be back at Memorial University after a 31-year absence. "At 54 years of age, I was somewhat apprehensive about taking on such a huge commitment at this stage of my life, but by nature, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are sort of a stubborn, resilient lot. It also helps that I have an incredibly supportive wife and family." He is the father of three children: Maggie (22), Jack (20), and Andrew (9) – and '9' is not a typo! When he is not working or studying, Keith enjoys gardening, socializing with family and friends, and kayaking with his wife, Jacqueline, on the beautiful Miramichi River.

"This is an exciting time to be a pharmacist as our role in health care continues to evolve ..."

Keith feels strongly that fundamental change is required to sustain Canada's health care system and that pharmacists are already leading this change through an expanded scope of practice. "This is an exciting time to be a pharmacist as our role in health care continues to evolve," he says, "I see Memorial's PharmD for Working Professionals program as an opportunity to not only enhance my own daily practice but to demonstrate pharmacists' value and advance the profession clinically within our organization." He adds, "Since classmates are licensed pharmacists, learning is enriched through the sharing of experiences and expertise. The quality of the program and faculty support certainly puts students in the best position to succeed."

Who says you can't go home (again)?

Making Connections:

A Pandemic-Proof Girl Gang

Returning to school can be a difficult decision for working professionals. Ashley Waghmare, Janice Audeau, Ellen Boyd, Vanessa Bennett, Haley Brennan, and Kaitlyn Touesnard all had their own individual concerns and doubts returning to school. Somehow, they formed meaningful friendships and an invaluable support system when they met in September 2019. And this connection is helping them on their PharmD journey.

Ashley, a graduate of MUN Pharmacy Class of 2015, was unsure how she would handle online learning. She said, "I was very interested in going back to Memorial to complete my PharmD, but I was apprehensive about returning to school while working full-time. I never did any online education, and I was nervous to do it alone." Luckily, Janice, a fellow graduate of the Class of 2015, agreed to apply and they planned to help each other get through what they predicted to be a difficult three years.

Kaitlyn, a mother of two boys and a clinical pharmacist practicing in hospital and primary care settings in New Glasgow, NS, anticipated completing the degree solo. Her experience has been very much the opposite. She said, "These girls have become friends that I speak to daily about schoolwork and life's ebbs and flows. The challenge of completing courses while practicing as front-line pharmacists during COVID-19 was ameliorated because of this group of amazing girls."

They can't seem to explain how their tight-knit group formed eight months ago. While vague interpersonal connections can be made, there is no definitive reason besides having similar personalities and "clicking" early on. Haley, however, believes it was because she sat next to Vanessa on orientation day. They all agree that orientation weekend was monumental to the start of this friendship and completely changed how they view a (predominantly) online program.

The self-named "girl gang" attributes the success of their friendship to understanding that school is just one part of their lives. Although it brought them together and is a large topic of conversation, they also support each other in their personal and work lives. Vanessa, who made the transition to hospital pharmacy just as she was starting the program, found having a network of like-minded friends helpful since many had experienced similar transitions. She explained, "School is a part of our lives but not the majority of our lives. We all share things about our personal lives, discuss work, and learn from each other in all ways, not just what we're covering in school."

Living in different provinces and working in different practice settings has been more beneficial than difficult. It helps them



get real world examples and different perspectives. "I find this helps me remember material and learn new ways I can apply to my practice", says Ellen. They bounce ideas off each other and provide practice-related examples of concepts that are difficult to grasp. In fact, they find discussing difficult concepts with peers who have access to the same notes, activities, and online resources has really helped them. They often share useful work-related resources too.

The "girl gang" knew the program was going to be a challenge. For Janice, knowing she had a solid group of friends became an important factor in semester two. The heavy course load, some health hiccups, owning a community pharmacy, being the president of the provincial association while facing COVID-19 at the same time became so daunting that she considered taking a leave. She said, "Knowing that I would be giving up the support system that carried me through the winter semester was the determining factor when it came time to decide whether to continue with the program. Without the support of these amazing pharmacists and friends, I would not have stayed on track to complete the program in three years."

Distance friendships, like distance learning, does pose challenges. But this group is making it work. They mostly keep in contact through an iMessage group chat where they ask pharmacy practice questions, remind each other of important deadlines, clarify questions or discussions brought up in courses, and support each other as needed. They particularly enjoy seeing pictures and videos of Kaitlyn's high-energy boys and connecting virtually to catch-up or celebrate milestones, like the end of a semester!

While forming a student support system is not a requirement of the program or in determining successful completion of courses, it is helping these students as they juggle multiple life roles. For them, forming a support group has enhanced their first year in the program. They are building unexpected friendships while earning their PharmD – both of which can have a positive impact long after they complete their degree.

Happy Happenings



CONGRATULATIONS!

The Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE) awarded the PharmD for Working Professionals Program the Award of Merit for Excellence in Instructional Design (2020) -- see *Infographic on the right, designed by the Centre for Innovation, Teaching and Learning (CITL)*



WELL DONE!

In February 2020, Heesa Zainulabideen (a student in Year 1) received his certification as a Compression Stockings Fitter through Venosan Canada. He now provides this service to his pharmacy clients in British Columbia.



HATS OFF!

Dr. Stephen Coombs, an instructor in the program, received the George Hurley Award in Family Medicine for excellence in teaching contributions in their residency training program

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL OF PHARMACY COMMITTEES (2018-2020)

Recruitment
Undergraduate Student Admissions
Academic Council
Undergraduate Studies

Maggie Cole
Josh Lane
Stephanie Dove
Stephanie Delaney

CNIE 2020 AWARD OF MERIT FOR EXCELLENCE IN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND AUTHENTIC CASE-BASED LEARNING USING AN INTEGRATED BACKWARD DESIGN FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT IN A DOCTOR OF PHARMACY FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS ONLINE PROGRAM
PHAR 5901: PHARMACEUTICAL CARE I

School of Pharmacy, Memorial

Tiffany Lee; Stephanie Young; Stephen Coombs; Travis Warner; Debbie Kelly; Kristi Parmiter; Karina Arnold

Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) Memorial

Lisa St. Croix; Cathy Wicks; Dallas Clairmont; John Bonnell; Paul Hayward

Instructional Design Method: Backward Design



Figure 1. A model of Integrated Course Design with backward principles. Creating Significant Learning Experiences by L. Dee Fink, 2003.

Plan learning goals (learning outcomes), feedback and assessment measures, and teaching and learning activities prior to content development and course facilitation.

Ensure **constructive alignment** of these primary components.

Why This Work is Important

The expanding role of the pharmacist and changes to educational outcomes demand that new course developments in the PharmD for Working Professionals program incorporate **multiple active student engagement opportunities** and **authentic case-based learning**.

The **intent** is to challenge graduates to acquire 21st century skills and to develop advanced clinical skills expertise for 21st century pharmacy practice.



Active Engagement Matters!

Students engage with the material, participate in the learning activities, and collaborate to demonstrate a process, analyze an argument, or apply a concept to a **real-world situation**.

Engagement strategies that promoting **active learning** include:

Learner-to-Learner Interaction	Learner-to-Instructor Interaction	Learner-to-Content Interaction

Authentic Case-Based Learning (CBL) Real World Experience Matters!

CBL incorporates a stimulating clinical case, a form of learner inquiry, effective presentation of information and relevant resources, facilitated discussion, and advanced preparation by students and faculty to successfully attain learning objectives and achieve positive patient outcomes.

The goal is to prepare students for the complexities of clinical practice through use of authentic real-world clinical cases that promote:

- development of 21st century skills
- relevant and meaningful learning for the adult learner
- linking theory to practice

