

PHARM CIRCLE

Connecting stories from Memorial's PharmD for Working Professionals Program

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Advance your practice,
Lead your profession

*Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)
for Working Professionals*

From the Dean's Desk

Dr. Shawn Bugden

This issue marks our 6th publication of the Pharm Circle newsletter. A lot has happened since the program began in 2018. We welcomed four cohorts, celebrated many graduates, and created more program flexibility. Like everyone else, we also trudged through the COVID-19 pandemic and are hopeful that an endemic stage is in sight.

In April, for the first time, the second clinical skills course (PHAR 6900) was offered onsite for students in year two of the program. Though students wore masks while on campus, it was still a wonderful opportunity for them to finally see each other face-to-face.

We also excitedly welcome our 5th cohort of students who will begin their PharmD journey in the fall. The 2022 cohort will have the opportunity to visit campus in September for their first clinical skills course when PHAR 4900 resumes its intended onsite mode of delivery.

Inside this issue, we proudly profile Noelle Patten who co-teaches the second applied learning course in year two of the program. We also highlight a unique course activity whereby students delivered a series of virtual presentations focusing on a relevant health promotion topic. In the student spotlight section, we feature four students who are following their dreams. And since our December issue, 23 students graduated in the February and Spring convocations and we celebrate them in the Happy Happenings section.

We hope you continue to enjoy learning about our pharmacy. We will see you again in December.



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

Instructor Spotlight

Ms. Noelle Patten



After Noelle graduated from Memorial University's School of Pharmacy in 2006, she spent eight years practicing at an independent community pharmacy. It was there that she furthered her learning and practice experience in a variety of clinical areas (including management of opioid use disorder and INR monitoring) and gained insight into the business side of pharmacy. During this time, she also practiced part-time as a clinical pharmacist at the Opioid Treatment Centre in St. John's.

In 2014, Noelle took an interest in learning more about professional self-regulation and started work as a practice advisor with the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board (NLPB). This sparked an interest in health policy and inspired her to complete a master program in Health Management at McMaster University in 2018 and a Certified Health Executive designation with the Canadian College of Health Leaders in 2019.

She is currently an Associate Registrar at NLPB. In this role, she is responsible for quality assurance programming and oversight of pharmacy licensing. She has visited almost all pharmacies in the province and enjoys meeting pharmacy colleagues and helping them with quality and safety improvements within their practice.

Since completing her pharmacy degree, Noelle continually seeks opportunities to give back to the School of Pharmacy and to the program that helped launch such a rewarding career. During her time in practice, she regularly served as a preceptor. She was also a guest presenter on regulatory and leadership topics in the Entry-to-Practice PharmD program. In 2018, she excitedly jumped at the opportunity to help develop one of the applied learning courses (PHAR 5920) in the Working Professionals Program. This course explores the principles of quality and safety as they relate to the health care system, and, more specifically, pharmacy practice – topics that are right up her alley. Since the course launched, Noelle co-teaches alongside Dr. Tiffany Lee.

She is extremely grateful for the opportunity to learn teaching practices from Dr. Lee. And she also enjoys learning from students when they share their practice experiences and their implementation of quality and safety initiatives in their workplace. She says, "It has been a privilege to be part of the PharmD for Working Professionals Program and to deliver education in an area that I am so passionate about. It has even allowed me to further explore the concepts of quality and safety with pharmacy colleagues who are enrolled in the program."

Noelle is a proud mom to one-year-old Alfie and a fur-mom to two pups (Bridey and Maggie). Becoming a mom is her greatest accomplishment and one that gives her the greatest joy. But she can certainly appreciate the challenges of balancing work, home, and studies. When teaching, this helps her relate to students who face similar challenges. Having such knowledgeable, dedicated, and empathetic instructors, like Noelle, helps create positive learning environments for the students.

In her spare time, Noelle enjoys spending time with family and friends. Cooking and hiking the East Coast Trails are her favourite go-to activities when she wants to relax and rejuvenate.

Health Promotion Takes Center Stage in Applied Learning Course

Promoting health is a collective goal of many health practitioners and one that became more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the PharmD for Working Professionals Program, health promotion, along with leadership and education, are core components of the first applied learning course (PHAR 4910). In an effort to pull these concepts together, students engage in a health promotion activity at the population level.

This past winter semester, students had the opportunity to engage in a health promotion education series, allowing them to discuss topics like Canada's opioid crisis, health care professional burnout, and point-of-care testing. Working in small groups, students had the option of presenting to pharmacists or members of the general public in Newfoundland and Labrador. With the help of the Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), the presentations were delivered virtually and offered over several evenings throughout March, which intentionally aligned with Pharmacy Appreciation Month (PAM). Audience members had the opportunity to engage with presenters and ask questions at the end of each session.

This novel method of delivery, of linking course activities to PAM and population health in a broader sense, gave students a way to meet course outcomes while engaging and educating community members and pharmacists in the province.

"It was also a great opportunity to highlight the types of knowledge and education pharmacists can provide and it showcased the amazing work of students in the program," said Dr. Stephen Coombs.

Depending on their topic, students presented in one of the following focused sessions: pharmacist education or public education.

Pharmacist Education Sessions: This series of sessions targeted other pharmacists interested in learning more about topics relevant to the profession. Presentation titles included:

- Managing health care worker burnout in the era of COVID-19
- Medicines and nutrition in pregnancy and lactation
- Point-of-care testing: The pharmacist's turn
- Pharmacists and harm reduction: A look at opioid agonist therapy
- The epidemic no one is talking about: A review of opioid maintenance therapy
- Pharmacist health: A bitter pill to swallow

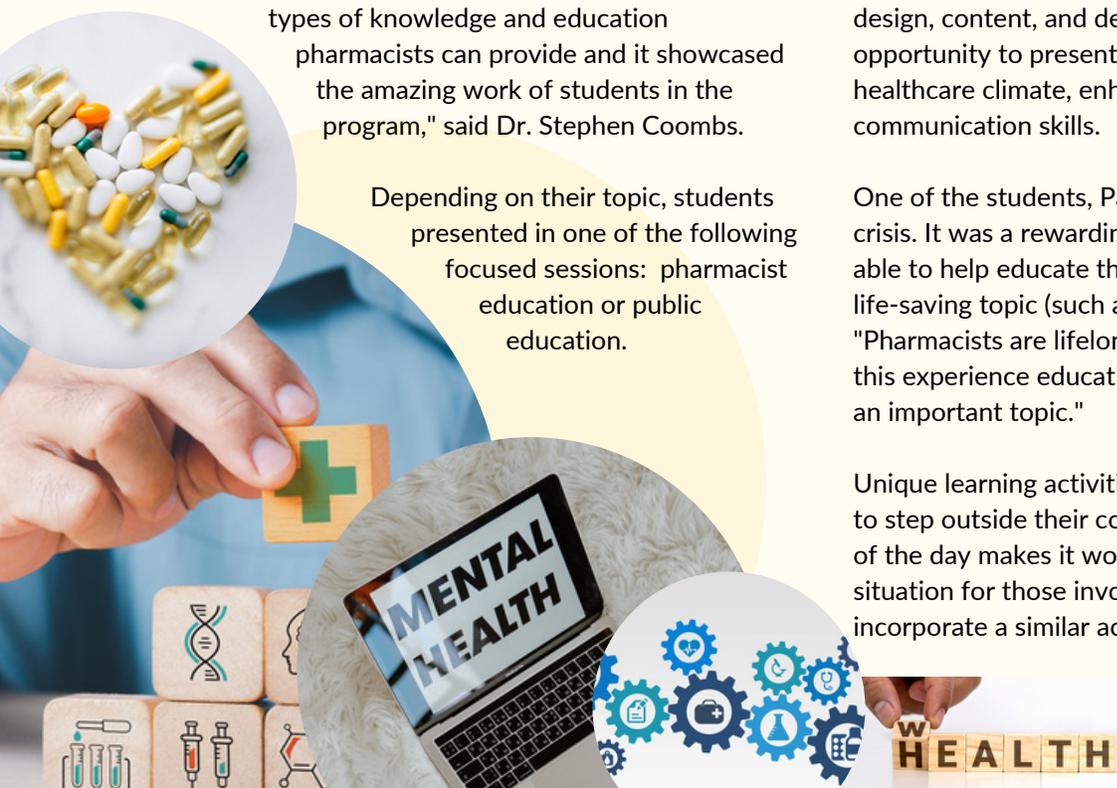
Public Education Sessions: This group of sessions focused more on health-related topics that appeal to a broad audience. Presentation titles included:

- Substance use: Canada's opioid crisis
- What is anxiety? And how is it affecting your sleep?
- Physical activity: Reasons to get off the couch
- The ripple effect of not sleeping right
- Which came first: the chickenpox or the shingles?

Students delivered insightful presentations that were peer reviewed by pharmacists at the School of Pharmacy's Medication Therapy Services Clinic and evaluated by instructors and other leaders in the profession based on design, content, and delivery. It provided them with an opportunity to present on a topic that was important in today's healthcare climate, enhancing their leadership, education and communication skills.

One of the students, Paige Ellis, presented on Canada's opioid crisis. It was a rewarding experience for her because she was able to help educate the public on an important and potentially life-saving topic (such as how to use Naloxone). She said, "Pharmacists are lifelong learners, and I was grateful to have this experience educating others and proud to present on such an important topic."

Unique learning activities such as this one may push students to step outside their comfort zone, but the reward at the end of the day makes it worth the effort. It really is a win-win situation for those involved and plans are underway to incorporate a similar activity next year.



Students in the Spotlight

We like to celebrate our students and let our readers know a little more about the people in our neighbourhood. We share student profiles in every issue.

2018 Cohort Dan Mallia

Dan Mallia grew up in Glace Bay on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia and moved to Halifax to complete his Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy at Dalhousie University. When he graduated in 2013, he began working as a community pharmacist and skills lab demonstrator at Dalhousie College of Pharmacy. So Halifax became his new (and now permanent) home-away-from-home.

After five years working as a community pharmacist, he decided to pursue further education to strengthen his knowledge base and learn new skills to help him provide optimal health care to his patients. At the same time, Memorial University was launching the PharmD for Working Professionals Program. Because of the program's part-time and flexible format, he felt it was the perfect choice for him. Continuing to work as a full-time pharmacist was important to Dan, and the program was one that allowed him to fit his education into his busy schedule.

Dan began the program in 2018 as a member of the very first cohort. He is now in the final stage of the program with one APPE rotation remaining before he graduates.



He notes that the faculty and staff at Memorial's School of Pharmacy are the most nurturing and caring people, and this created an amazing environment to foster learning and growth. He says, "It is very evident that the professors genuinely care about you and want you to succeed."

He also cherishes the bond with his classmates and is proud of the sense of community they established within the online setting. He has created lifelong friendships with peers in his class, and says that's something he was not anticipating due to the nature of an online program. But he is very grateful it happened!

Currently, Dan works as a pharmacist for Mednow Canada, where he provides virtual health care services to the public. He is a strong advocate for advancing pharmacy practice in Canada and educating the future of pharmacy. In 2018 he was the recipient of the "Preceptor of the Year" award from Dalhousie University College of Pharmacy. So after graduation, he plans to continue advocating for the profession and mentoring students and other pharmacists wishing to learn and practice at the top of their scope.

In his free time, Dan really enjoys traveling and experiencing the food and lifestyles of other cultures. His most recent trip was to Nice, France and Rome, Italy where he enjoyed his fair share of pasta, pizza and wine! He looks forward to completing the program soon and applying what he learned to his pharmacy practice. And he also looks forward to having more down time to travel and explore more of the world.



2019 Cohort *Connie Rose*

the opportunity to visit campus and meet my classmates and professors in person.”

After Connie graduated from the University of Toronto's College of Pharmacy in 1994, she worked as a clinical pharmacist at Humber River Regional Hospital. She then moved into a professional practice leadership role where she gained a tremendous amount of experience and participated on a number of health care teams - including Interdisciplinary Professional Practice Council, Pharmacy Nursing Committee, Steering Accreditation Team for Ambulatory Care, Health Records Committee, Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, and a Geriatrics Committee.

While Connie enjoyed her work in the hospital setting, she continually sought opportunities to develop her skillset. One of these opportunities led her on a path within the pharmaceutical industry where she explored various positions within Medical Affairs. This was more of a natural fit for her because she spent most of her career in a drug information role providing medical information to physicians, pharmacists, and patients.

Connie's commitment to lifelong learning and development eventually led her to Memorial University's PharmD for Working Professionals Program. She began her journey in September 2019 and, so far, is one of two cohorts who had the opportunity to visit Memorial University for the first clinical skills course before the Covid-19 pandemic hit. She says, "I feel lucky that I had

Enrolling in a PharmD program has re-energized Connie. She is developing her knowledge base and is excited to apply her learnings within pharmacy's expanded scope of practice. She enjoys collaborating and learning from her classmates and knows she will miss the stories and the group chats after she graduates. With only a few semesters remaining, Connie appreciates the support and flexibility of the program and cherishes the lifelong friendships she developed.

Aside from being a pharmacist and a student, Connie is also a wife and a mom to two daughters: Emily (who just finished her first year at the University of Waterloo) and Olivia (who just finished grade 11). It is a unique experience being a university student at the same time as one of her daughters. But she hopes her educational journey fuels their dedication and drive for continuous self-learning.

Always thinking ahead, Connie already has plans to explore different pathways and opportunities after graduation so that she can continue to help her patients. In addition to advocating for the pharmacy profession, she will continually follow a career pathway that is individualized to her needs and values.

She also plans to celebrate her upcoming graduation and hopes to do more travelling in her soon-to-be acquired down time. Europe is one of the first destinations on her travel bucket list.



For future applicants

Next application deadline:
February 1, 2023

For current students

PHAR 4900 Clinical Skills I
Onsite: September 9-11, 2022

PHAR 6900 Clinical Skills II
Anticipated onsite: end of April 2023

2020 Cohort

Michael Butler

After growing up in the small Newfoundland & Labrador town of Cottrell's Cove on the island's northeast coast, Michael Butler left his high school graduating class (of four people) to attend Memorial University in 2005. He still recalls feeling overwhelmed when he attended his first university chemistry course and realized the class was larger than the population in his hometown!

In 2011, he graduated with a BSc in Pharmacy and began a career in retail pharmacy. In July 2019, after eight years of community pharmacy, he accepted a position with Eastern Health and moved into the role of an outpatient hematology oncology pharmacist in 2021.

Helping patients navigate through hematologic malignancies – such as myeloma, leukemia, and lymphoma – has been the most rewarding time of Michael's pharmacy career to date. He admits that he still has a lot to learn about hematology and spends much of his free time reading new research in his clinical field.

Helping people when they are diagnosed with a disease as serious as cancer can be challenging but Michael is very proud of the relationships and care he provides to his patients.

He applied to the PharmD for Working Professionals Program in 2020 with a goal to improve his clinical pharmacy skills and become a better leader. His experience in the program so far has been positive. And the communication, leadership, and clinical skills taught in the program is helping him tremendously in his hospital career.

The program's flexibility and online courses factored into his decision to apply to Memorial University. And, while it may haunt him at times, the fact that he was once the school's cardboard cut-out (from 2008 until recently) may have played a small role in his decision to return to his alma mater.



Michael started the program in September 2020 and is a member of the third cohort of students admitted to the program.

But his class was the first group to be admitted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first clinical skills course was offered remotely that year so he never had the opportunity to meet his classmates in person during his first semester in the program. But he finally met them face-to-face (though while masked) in April 2022 when the second clinical skills course was finally offered on-campus and in-person.

When not working his full-time job with Eastern Health or doing relief shifts at Shoppers Drug Mart, Michael enjoys travelling to new countries and exploring different cultures. He is eager to travel again soon now that COVID-19 restrictions have lifted.

Michael currently lives in Paradise, NL, with his faithful sidekick - an English bulldog named Mimi who recently (and, as can be seen from her photo above, excitedly) celebrated her 11th birthday.



2021 Cohort

Jillian Crope



Jillian grew up on a small island in Bonavista Bay, NL, called St. Brendan's. Only a couple of hundred people lived in her community at the time and they did not have a pharmacy or pharmacist on the island. As a child, she remembers a pharmacist arriving by helicopter (alongside a family doctor) carrying a suitcase full of commonly prescribed medications that was used to prepare prescriptions for island residents as needed.

This memory unknowingly shaped a career path for Jillian. She eventually graduated with her BSc in Pharmacy from Memorial University in 2009. She then began working as a community pharmacist with Shoppers Drug Mart in the town of Conception Bay South, a town just 10 minutes outside of St. John's. She still happily works there and is now the Pharmacy Manager and Pharmacist-In-Charge at her place of work.

Dedicated to the pharmacy profession, she became a certified diabetes educator in 2011 and continues to hold this designation. And at her workplace, Jillian, along with her highly motivated coworkers, offers additional patient care services, including A1C testing, lipid testing, insulin training, and diabetic foot screening exam. She is extremely proud of her pharmacy team as they continually strive hard to practice to their full scope.

To build upon her interest in diabetes, Jillian learned about insulin pumps and now works as a certified product and pump trainer with Medtronic Canada and Omnipod (Insulet). She also became a per-course instructor in the School of Pharmacy at Memorial University - a role that allows her to share her knowledge of diabetes with pharmacy students.

For many years, Jillian toyed with the idea of completing her PharmD. When Memorial University launched the Working Professionals Program a few years ago, she

jumped at the opportunity. "I am still in the early stages of my pharmacy career, and I don't want to look back at a missed opportunity and feel regretful for not taking the leap," she said.

While Jillian enjoys her work as a community pharmacist, she also loves being an educator. When she completes her PharmD, she hopes to explore more teaching role opportunities.

Jillian just finished her second semester in the program and says it went by in a flash. Aside from being a full-time pharmacist and a part-time student, she is also busy raising a young family. That's why she enjoys the flexibility of the Working Professionals Program because it allows her to complete her course work at her own pace. She is also thankful to her husband and her mother who run the show at home when she is preoccupied being a student.

When Jillian reflects back on her childhood days and living on a small island awaiting the arrival of the pharmacist and doctor, she realizes how powerful that suitcase was to the health and wellness of her small community. And this is one of many reasons why she is passionate about her work and committed to advancing the pharmacy practice.



Happy Happenings



HATS OFF TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES!

The School of Pharmacy celebrates the newest graduates from the PharmD for Working Professionals Program. Twenty-three students recently graduated during February (in-absentia) and Spring Convocations.

FEBRUARY 2022

Rasha Ahmed
Hayley Freeman
Vivian Luo

Krista Mikail
Chelsea Power
Heesa Zainulabideen



SPRING 2022

Bradley Adams
Hubert Ajiboye
Janice Audeau
Vanessa Bennett
Ellen Boyd
Haley Brenna
Stephanie Dove
Ahmed Mahfouz
Lindsay Manning

Wilson Ngai
Raisa Palatnic
Deanne Patey
Brittany Shea
Christen Shenoda
Jonathan Smith
Mikaela Thorne
Ashley Waghmare



CONGRATULATIONS

Stephanie Dove, a student from the very first cohort who just completed her PharmD, accepted a new position as Associate-Owner of Shoppers Drug Mart in Stephenville, NL.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL OF PHARMACY COMMITTEES (2020-2022)

Academic Council
Jonathan Stevens

Professional Suitability
Jeremy MacDonald

Recruitment
TBD

Undergraduate Student Admissions
TBD

Undergraduate Studies
TBD

****NEW STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE ANNOUNCED SOON FOR 2022-2024****

