Background

- The Covid-19 pandemic worsened a nationwide technician shortage with negative impacts on pharmacy workflow and patient care.
- Our hiring requirement for specialty pharmacy technicians (SPT) included one year of experience with advanced certification. With our growing business, the ability to hire SPT’s has been a challenge.
- Currently, Yale New Haven Health (YNHH) offers an ASHP/ACPE accredited Pharmacy Technician Training Program that prepares individuals for a pharmacy career in all practice settings, the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) exam, with the opportunity for practical experience in multiple practice settings, including specialty pharmacy. The twenty-three weeklong program is equivalent to one year of pharmacy experience for the purpose of hire within the organization. The YNHH health system specialty pharmacy (HSSP) collaborated with the YNHH Pharmacy Technician Training Program to create a specialty pharmacy focused rotation track. While our legacy programs experiential rotations focused on multiple practice settings our new program is largely focused on specialty pharmacy.

Objectives

- Creation and implementation of a specialty pharmacy focused pharmacy technician program to increase the available candidate pool.
- Recruit and increase enrollment into the Specialty pharmacy technician training program rotation track.
- Maintain a high percentage of hiring and retaining students from the program.
- Reassignment of current rotation for sterile compounding and IV admixtures to our Home Infusion Pharmacy.
- The Covid-19 pandemic worsened a nationwide technician shortage with negative impacts on pharmacy workflow and patient care.
- Our hiring requirement for specialty pharmacy technicians (SPT) included one year of experience with advanced certification. With our growing business, the ability to hire SPT’s has been a challenge.
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Methods

- October 6, 2021: Met with Coordinator of Specialty Pharmacy Staffing to establish timeline of criteria needed for the creation of a Specialty Pharmacy Technician Track.
- October 28, 2021: Submitted a proposal on the creation of the Specialty Pharmacy Technician Track to be approved by the Pharmacy Practice Committee.
- December 9, 2021: Identified specialty technician requirements to be incorporated into the competency checklist for their respective roles.
- March 1, 2022: Introduced Specialty Pharmacy Technician Training Track to Leadership team and received support for the Specialty Pharmacy Technician Track.
- March 23, 2022: Improved our established Specialty Pharmacy Technician Training Track to serve as an entry level, along with the requirements expected of the new program.
- March 28, 2022: First student began on our seven-week specialty portion of the Specialty Pharmacy Technician Training Track.

Results

- In total, the development of the specialty pharmacy focused track of the YNHH Pharmacy Technician Training Program took five months.
- Since 2016, one student was hired from the original YNHH Pharmacy Technician Training Program as SPT.
- The specialty pharmacy focused track was first available to students on March 28, 2022. To date, two students have enrolled and completed the specialty pharmacy focused track and are currently being retained as full time SPTs.
- The hiring rate into the health system of the new Specialty Pharmacy Technician Training Track program is 100% which contributes to the overall program hire rate of 87%.

Discussion

- A specialty focused pharmacy technician training program can be a novel strategy to address HSSP pharmacy technician staffing shortages.
- Recruiting Students for the Specialty track
- Scheduling training with other ancillary departments (MAP, PA, Med B, etc.)
- Scheduling training with call outs and scheduled PTO.
- Utilizing and building off an already established accredited training program.

Future Directions

- Recruit and increase enrollment into the Specialty focused pharmacy technician training program rotation track.
- Maintain a high percentage of hiring and retaining students from the program.
- Reassignment of current rotation for sterile compounding and IV admixtures to our Home Infusion Pharmacy.

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