

INTRODUCTION

- During pandemics, healthcare professionals are called to provide care.
- Much has been written about concerns of nurses, less about the concerns of physicians, and even less about the concerns of health professional students.
- In December 2019, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) emerged in Wuhan city and rapidly spread throughout China. Thereafter, it spread throughout the world.
- As local health systems prepared for the anticipated surge of patients, leaders at Wayne State University discussed how best to support students in the health professions in ways that provide for their safety and continued education.
- This discussion also created an opportunity to explore the concerns of medical and pharmacy students during an outbreak.

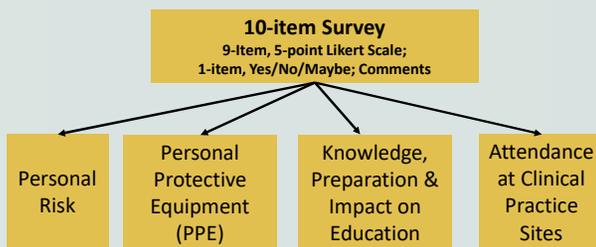
AIMS

Determine third-year medical and pharmacy students' perceived knowledge, attitudes, and concerns related to COVID-19 early during the pandemic in the U.S.

METHODS

- Convenience sample of 3rd year MD & Pharm.D. students attending an WSU Interprofessional Patient Safety Educational ½ Day Event

Figure: Areas of Perceived Knowledge, Attitudes and Concerns Addressed in Survey



- Survey was housed on the WSU Qualtrics platform.
- Students were emailed a link to the survey at the end of the program to complete voluntarily and no identifiers were collected.

RESULTS

- Of 65 completing the survey, 27 (35.4%) had some level of concern about COVID-19; 7.7% were strongly concerned. More than half (52.3%) responded would go to their clinical site.
- When asked about knowledge, 58.5% agreed that they were very or somewhat knowledgeable; 80% disagreed with a statement that their respective program prepared them for dealing with a COVID-19 epidemic.
- 84.6% wanted their school to provide education about coronavirus geared towards healthcare professionals; 73.9% responded that the school should provide PPE.
- 35.4% were concerned that a coronavirus epidemic will adversely affect their education.
- Four paired survey items were strongly correlated (PCC>0.5).
- Overall, students wanted to be educated, protected from COVID-19, and have their concerns considered.

Table: Number (Percent) of student responses to selected survey items stratified by perceived knowledge/Skills, attitudes and concerns regarding COVID-19, N=65.

Survey Questions	Max - Min Mean +/- (SD)	Strongly Agree N (%)	Somewhat Agree N (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree N (%)	Somewhat Disagree N (%)	Strong Disagree N (%)
Perceived Knowledge and Skills						
I am knowledgeable about coronavirus	1 - 5 2.54 (0.88)	4 (6.1)	34 (52.3)	16 (24.6)	10 (15.4)	1 (1.5)
My school has prepared me for dealing with coronavirus exposure	2 - 5 3.94 (0.99)	0 (0.0)	9 (13.9)	7 (10.8)	28 (43.1)	21 (32.3)
My school has prepared me for dealing with a coronavirus epidemic	3 - 7 5.49 (1.37)	0 (0.0)	7 (10.8)	6 (9.2)	26 (40.0)	26 (40.0)
Attitudes						
During an epidemic, I will not go to my clinical/practice site	1 - 5 3.49 (1.28)	5 (7.7)	11 (16.9)	15 (23.1)	15 (23.1)	19 (29.2)
I want my school to provide me with education about the coronavirus that is geared for health care professionals	1 - 5 1.68 (0.91)	35 (53.9)	20 (30.8)	8 (12.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (3.1)
Concerns						
I am concerned about acquiring coronavirus?	1 - 5 3.05 (1.25)	7 (10.7)	20 (30.7)	9 (13.9)	21 (32.3)	8 (12.3)
I am concerned that a coronavirus epidemic will adversely affect my education	1 - 5 3.25 (1.28)	5 (7.7)	18 (27.7)	12 (18.5)	16 (24.6)	14 (21.5)

DISCUSSION

- Previous studies of healthcare workers perceived knowledge, attitudes, and concerns during health emergencies, epidemics and pandemics focused on nurses and physicians concerns and willingness to work during an epidemic.
- Several Studies describe concerns public health and nursing students. Far fewer studies address the concerns of medical students; we could find none addressing the concerns of pharmacy students.
- Although we were only able to survey a small sample of students, we believe our findings reflect the general concerns of healthcare students more broadly.
- Despite personal concerns about their welfare, the majority of students responded they would not stay home during an epidemic.
- Some Students wanted information about their personal risk, as well as, what to do after an exposure and most expressed the need for personal protective equipment.
- A sizable number of students were concerned about the impact of an epidemic on their professional education.
- All in all, students wanted timely communication and information from their professional schools.

CONCLUSIONS

- Medical & Pharmacy educators should proactively address students' concerns about their personal welfare and education during an epidemic.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reemphasize the need to include such education into the professional curriculum.

REFERENCES

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