Thank you for picking up our second issue of *The Donut Hole*! This edition is packed with new updates and exciting stories that showcase the passion and innovation of current and previous Medicare Part D students.

In our first story, see how Medicare students continue to make a presence at national conferences. Be sure to check out the article on the AACP Annual Meeting and find out what research was presented this year.

Continue on and enjoy the fun “Question of the Day” to see the responses of former and current Medicare students. Explore our faculty spotlight to learn more about Dr. Sian Carr-Lopez and congratulate Medicare Class of 2012 student Lauren Epperson for her national recognition.

As we prepare for our 14 Medicare outreach events in 8 different cities this fall we share with you 2014 updates to the Part D benefit and review highlights of the impact of the Affordable Care Act in Medicare beneficiaries. In addition to the redesign of *The Donut Hole*, the Donations and Design committee is excited to introduce our new outreach identity and share the background of its creation.

Finally, we hope to brighten your day with the addition of our picture page: Flu-Shot Fun!

Please enjoy this issue and we thank you for all of your feedback and support. -Donations and Design Committee

Thank you for your feedback!

Please consider sending us your thoughts and feedback to the Donut Hole team at uopmedicare@gmail.com. We are continually striving to make a newsletter that suits the interests and needs of our readers. We hope to hear from you!
Excited to share their work with peers and educators from across the nation, students and faculty reflect on their experiences from their trip to Chicago, Illinois at the 2013 AACP Annual Meeting – Article by Joanna Rao.

In mid July, several of our faculty and students attended the AACP (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy) conference in Chicago, Illinois. AACP is the national organization representing pharmacy education in the United States. This conference gave six students and seven Pacific faculty members the chance to share their research and present their findings to colleagues and pharmacy school educators from around the nation.

Dr. Suzanne Galal, among the faculty that went to the conference, shares a memorable moment: “On the day we were scheduled to make our presentation, Dr. Patel made us arrive extremely early, so we got there while the vendors were still setting up, and no one else was there yet. Some of the students were so excited to be the first ones to grab the free pens and bags. I thought it was hilarious, but mostly embarrassing.”

Third year student Peter Lai noted, “At the poster presentations, we were excited to share our work in community outreach with other pharmacy school educators. Many were amazed at the number of lives we were able to impact in addition to expanding our students’ knowledge and leadership skills. It was also interesting to learn that there is research on, and evidence for, the methods of teaching that we are accustomed to. In this way, we better understood why our professors do what they do. This also gave us insight on how we can further our current research.”

Students were also able to get some tourist time as they explored what the city of Chicago had to offer. They went with Dr. Patel to the Field Museum, where they checked all the dinosaur fossil artifacts, and then were joined by Dr. Carr-Lopez at an Indian restaurant for dinner. In balancing professional responsibilities and tourist pastimes, the students made the most of their time in Chicago.

On behalf of the students who attended the conference, Chrissy Go thanks the Dean and Dr. DeGuire for helping sponsor their airfare, enabling the Medicare group to travel to Chicago and present their research. Chrissy noted, “As students, we never think about how much preparation goes into the classes we take every day; this conference gave us a newfound appreciation for the hard work that our faculty puts into educating us. It was great sharing our experience with teachers from other schools about the UOP curriculum and things we utilize, such as concept maps, to enhance student’s understanding.”

Students take full advantage of the opportunity to explore a new city and snap a picture with the Cloud Gate sculpture at Millennium Park in Chicago. Student Natalie Hajian explains:

“Overall, I would say we all had a great time balancing our professional responsibilities with our social adventures.”
Assessing Student Proficiency and Confidence in Providing Medicare Part D Assistance
This group researched how students’ knowledge, confidence, and proficiency improved over the course of two semesters. Students were evaluated with a survey taken at three time points - first day of class, last day of class, and after completion of outreach. Their findings showed that knowledge was maintained through outreach, while confidence and proficiency both improved when students applied their knowledge to help patients. This translates into practice by making student pharmacists more confident and proficient in providing Medicare Part D assistance and therefore more likely to help patients maximize their Part D benefit.

Closing The Loop: Evaluation of a Comprehensive Community Health Outreach Program
Natalie Hajian and Eilbra Younan presented two posters. The first focused on research of student-led health fairs. They found that there was a lack of feedback from the various stakeholders which led them to explore ways to “close the loop”. Surveys were created and feedback elicited from participating students, preceptors, host sites, and patients. Preceptors and host sites evaluated students, students evaluated their preceptors, and patients answered questions regarding their overall experience at the Part D outreach events and the different services that they took advantage of during the event. This is important information that students and faculty can utilize in the future to ensure that the services offered at health fairs meet or exceed the expectations of those for whom they are intended.

Student Leadership In Action: Organization and Delivery of Community Outreach Events
Natalie and Eilbra’s second poster analyzed the development of leadership skills through student involvement in planning and execution of health fairs. Students in the Medicare Part D program subcommittees, in collaboration with students volunteering through ASP, performed over 4,000 individual health screenings/services and completed over 6,300 IPPE hours during the 2012 Part D outreach events. At Pacific, a formal title is not necessary to be a leader or to exercise leadership skills. We have developed a sustainable system of cultivating students into future leaders in the profession.
Once again, thanks to everyone who responded to the survey! The answers to this edition’s question of the day were very tasty (and some, quite practical). Beware, reading through all the answers might make you extremely hungry! — Article by Brittney Kubota.

2009 Wonton soup all day...Everyday!! Although I feel like I do that now—Lyna Dao
Instant noodles since I've been eating that anyways...haha. Life of a starving pharmacist with a ton of debt—Jennifer Dang
Asian-style fried chicken (like Vietnamese fish-sauce flavored fried chicken wings, Korean honey glazed fried chicken, etc.)—Kim Diep

2010 Noodles, of any kind :)—Tracey Huey
Seafood... Or fried rice (that's probably a safer option) —Desiree Hsiou

2011 Crawfish (the whole shabang) from The Boiling Crab—Katie Nguyen
Fruit, because I can't pick a favorite: watermelon, oranges, kiwis, mangoes, avocados (there's seeds, it's a fruit!), peaches, nectarines... stop me now!—Niki Saqueton
My girlfriend says, ‘Garlic bread. Because even on my death bed I'll ask for it.’ (Or so she thinks) —Jon Schmidt
Kurobota porkchop from The House in San Francisco—Caitlin Mizoshiri
Sweet Basil Noodles #55 from Siamese Street —Binita Patel

2007 Pasta — Nick D. Baker
Pizza combination with Sushi toppings!—Vahe A. Guerbidjian

2008 Carbon-based—Amanda Wight
Vietnamese vermicelli bowls with fish sauce, beef, and veggies. All you need rom the food pyramid in one bowl—Pamela Tien

2009 Pasta — Nick D. Baker
Pizza combination with Sushi toppings!—Vahe A. Guerbidjian

2012 That would be avocados.—Eilbra G. Younan
Angela Alfonzo's mom's Filipino food—Liz van Zyl
Cheesy bean and rice burrito from Taco Bell with fire sauce (10 packets per burrito)—Urvish Italia
Bleh! That sounds horrible. I guess I'd live out my childhood dream and go for CANDY! GUMMY CANDY! SOUR CANDY! CANDY CANDY CANDY! —Caroline Hogg

2013 Granola! I know, it's a weird obsession—Marian Awad
I would choose human milk because it contains all the nutrients I need to survive—Stefan Ta Duc
Bun Ga Nuong (Chicken with Vermicelli and veggies) It has all the food groups and is delicious!—Nhuang Le
Juicy Pork Dumplings with vinegar soy sauce (otherwise known as Xiao Long Bao in Chinese)—Stephanie Zhao
It would definitely have to be sashimi. I love how it just melts in your mouth, and there are so many different kinds. There is just never enough—Melanie Jee
Cupcakes —Sandee Dosanjh
As students prepare to meet with patients in different cities during our outreach activities, we also connect with people a little closer to home. Dr. Sian Carr-Lopez sat down with student interviewer Yvi Le to share treasured memories and valuable advice with the readers of The Donut Hole.

What can you tell us about your family?
I am married with two sons. Both of my sons attend the University of the Pacific. Anthony (24) is a history major and Christopher (21) is majoring in biology. I live in the country with my husband, Anthony, and my parents. I am also very passionate about animals, which is why we have so many pets. We also take care of strays. I just love where we live and our family is very close-knit. We do a lot of things together such as trying restaurants, hiking and visiting beaches. We also recently received our scuba diving certification in Hawaii.

Your last-name is unique. Could you explain the meaning behind it?
My father’s last name is Carr, which is a common Irish name. However, I am one of four daughters, and so our family had no son to carry on Carr. My parents invested so much in each of their daughters’ futures through private school and college. Therefore, I wanted to continue to honor my family name while still taking my husband’s as well.

What made you decide to go into pharmacy?
When I was thinking about college, I was especially interested in the healthcare field. My mother was a nurse who worked in the pharmacy department, and it was she who introduced me to Dr. Epperson. He was a hospital pharmacy director that showed me the neat clinical aspects of the profession. After pharmacy school, I completed a residency at the VA in Northern California where I later worked as a clinical pharmacist and practiced in geriatrics and internal medicine. Later, I became the regional coordinator for UOP at Davis Grant USAF Medical Center at Travis Air Force Base. I was the residency program coordinator and also the preceptor for internal medicine.
What was your favorite memory during your time here as a student at UOP?
Pacific definitely invested in developing my leadership skills. Katherine Knapp was one of the Associate Deans, and she selected me as 1 of 2 students to attend a conference for leadership training. That training fueled my desire and interest in being a leader because I am naturally really shy and introverted. I learned that sometimes in order to serve or lead, you need to move out of your own comfort zone. I eventually became Class Representative and president of my fraternity, Lambda Kappa Sigma.

What was it like working at the Air Force compared to other pharmacy settings?
At Travis, the facility was the referral center for all of the Pacific Rim. There were plenty of interesting patients and the physicians, nurses, and other pharmacists were so incredibly well-trained. They were such good clinicians and all were active military who chose to serve our country. The staff was an overall phenomenal group of people to work with.

Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?
I hope I am still working with students and I hope that Pacific’s curriculum will allow us to do even more with experiential learning. Currently, we are focused on community outreach within the adult population, but I definitely want to see that expand to Stockton youth. My vision is to use our expertise as health care professionals to promote healthy lifestyles and set an example of how students can enter the healthcare field.

What made you interested in being a part of the Medicare Part D faculty? Were you especially interested in working with the geriatric population?
When I left Travis, I gave up my research program to do more teaching and administrative work. When I became a part of the Medicare Part D faculty, I was able to reconnect with research. I have been interested in the geriatric population since I was young. When I was 11 years old, I volunteered with the Red Cross to feed patients with Parkinson’s Disease at nursing homes. It seemed that the patients felt abandoned, so I knew at an early age that I wanted to work with the elderly because they deserve good care.

What are you looking forward to this year in the class and the upcoming health fairs?
This year we are going to implement new processes to use Access based data collection, which is one of our innovations and quality improvements. We are also planning to offer immunizations while they receive their Part D Plan review and MTM and that should improve our service. I am also extremely excited about collecting data for our new research initiatives.

If you could give advice to current Pacific pharmacy students, what would it be?

I would tell our pharmacy students to learn the material as if you had to take care of a patient that day. If not a semester from now, or a year or two from now, how would you focus on your learning if you knew you were responsible for taking care of a patient today? I would also remind them that this is one of the most fun times of their lives where they will create life-long friendships. Through adversity, you need to learn how to laugh and keep things in perspective. Even though this is a crazy stressful time, you can either see it as torturous, or you can enjoy the ride. This is also the time where you grow the most since you are learning so much. Most people are going to look back and feel like being at Pacific was an amazing time in their life. All you have to do is find your niche here.
RESPy stands for Respect, Excellence, and Service in Pharmacy. It is an award bestowed by *Pharmacy Times* in conjunction with Wal-Mart to honor outstanding pharmacy students who display exemplary behavior and great potential as community pharmacy candidates. Eight RESPy award winners are chosen each year from pharmacy schools across the country and featured in *Pharmacy Times*. In addition, students also receive a cash award and are offered a summer internship with Wal-Mart.

To be chosen for this award, nominations are submitted by deans of pharmacy schools nationwide and are reviewed by an exclusive panel. Nominations are judged by the following criteria:

- Demonstration of voluntary public service activities
- Demonstration of a high level of professional/public health-related activities outside the classroom
- Demonstration of a high level of effort to advance the profession of pharmacy in the public arena

To be chosen for this award reflects great character and dedication to the profession. In the following interview, Lauren shares her thoughts and experiences that got her to where she is today.

**Where do you take your inspiration from?**

I remember during Dr. DeGuire’s class 1st semester she talked about how she still gave back to the community by helping out at a clinic every once in a while. She was so busy, yet she found the time to give back. Dr. DeGuire taught us that as health care professionals, pharmacists possess knowledge and expertise that can be of great assistance to people who may not be able to afford to seek the advice of any other healthcare professional. She inspired me to be that kind of pharmacy student, and in the future, that kind of pharmacist.

**Did the Medicare Class have any part in preparing you or motivating you to become more involved in public service?**

When the outreach event schedule was finalized I started to think, “What did I get myself into?” However, once I attended my first health fair, I knew that was exactly what I wanted to be doing. The Medicare Outreach Events were so rewarding because the patients we assisted were so appreciative and thankful for the time my colleagues and I took to save them money and make sure that their drug therapy was optimal. Those kinds of patients are the ones that motivate me to keep volunteering.

Of course, one cannot talk about Medicare without talking about Dr. Patel. Dr. Patel devotes so much time and energy into these outreach events and definitely leads by example. After working with him during the health fairs, I only became more motivated to be involved in public service.

**Do you have any words of encouragement or advice for students who may want to take a similar path as you?**

Every time I go to study, even now on rotations, it is never about doing well on a test for me. It has always been about studying to positively impact the lives of the patients I serve. If you approach pharmacy school with that mindset, it is only natural that you will succeed.
**2014 Updates to the Part D Benefit**

With a new year comes new updates to the Part D Benefit, but how might the Affordable Care Act affect the beneficiaries? Read on to find out what will be new in the upcoming year...

**The 2014 Medicare Part D Benefit:**

- The maximum allowable deductible for a Part D plan is **$310**.
- Total (beneficiary + plan) drug costs between **$2,850** and **$6,455** describe the coverage gap (‘donut hole’).
- Beneficiaries will receive a **52.5%** point-of-sale discount on formulary covered **brand-name** medications while in the coverage gap.
- Beneficiaries will receive a **28%** point-of-sale discount on formulary covered **generic** medications while in the coverage gap.
- Beneficiaries pay whichever is higher, 5% of the covered drug cost once total (plan + patient) drug costs exceed $6,455 (‘catastrophic coverage’), or
  - **$2.55** for formulary generic drugs or
  - **$6.35** for formulary brand drugs

**FULL-BENEFIT, DUAL-ELIGIBLE BENEFITS**

- Until reaching catastrophic coverage, full-benefit dual-eligible (Medicare and Medi-Cal) beneficiaries will pay:
  - **$1.20** for formulary generic drugs or
  - **$3.60** for formulary brand drugs
- Full-benefit dual-eligible beneficiaries pay nothing (**$0**) for ALL formulary covered medications once reaching catastrophic coverage.

**The Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicare**

- Medicare Coverage is protected!
  - Medicare is NOT part of the Health Insurance Marketplace established by the ACA, so beneficiaries don’t have to replace their Medicare coverage with Marketplace coverage.
  - No matter how beneficiaries get Medicare, whether through Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan, they will still have the same benefits and security they currently have.
  - **Bottom Line:** Beneficiaries do NOT need to do anything with the Marketplace during Open Enrollment.
- Beneficiaries get more preventive services, for less.
  - Medicare now covers certain preventive services, like mammograms and colonoscopies, without charging beneficiaries a Part B coinsurance or deductible.
  - Beneficiaries can get a free yearly "Wellness" visit.
  - **Bottom Line:** Many preventative screenings and services will cost beneficiaries $0.
- Beneficiaries can save money on their prescription drug costs.
  - If they are in the donut hole, they will get a discount when buying Part D-covered prescription drugs.
  - The discount is applied automatically (point-of-sale) at the pharmacy—beneficiaries don’t have to do anything to get it!
  - **Bottom Line:** Beneficiaries will get a 52.5% discount on brand-name drugs and a 28% discount of generic drugs if on the plan formulary and filled during the donut hole in 2014.
**The Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicare (continued)**

- A beneficiary’s doctor(s) gets more support.
  - With new initiatives to support care coordination, their doctor may get additional resources to make sure that the treatments are consistent.

  ⇒ **Bottom Line:** The goal of coordinated care is to make sure that patients, especially the chronically ill, get the right care at the right time, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of services and preventing medical errors.

- The ACA ensures the protection of Medicare for years to come.
  - The life of the Medicare Trust fund will be extended to at least 2029—a 12-year extension due to reductions in waste, fraud and abuse, and Medicare costs.
  - This will provide beneficiaries with future savings on their premiums and coinsurance.

  ⇒ **Bottom Line:** The financial viability of Medicare is much improved.

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**Our Outreach Identity**

Creating a design to promote Pacific’s community outreach was no small feat for the Donations and Design Committee. After extensive brainstorming, and great artistic talent from our very own Joanna Rao, we are excited to introduce our unifying design—Article by Megan Shimada.

For weeks, the Donations and Design committee worked with faculty and members of the school’s Marketing Department to create a new outreach identity. Students had the opportunity to submit slogans, and the final one was selected to universally represent Pacific’s outreach efforts. Dr. Carr-Lopez explains the intent of this collaborative project:

“We hope that this symbol will become well recognized in the community and associated with excellent health services and compassionate care that respects the dignity and individual needs of all members of the community we serve.”

Illustrator Joanna Rao explains her hidden message:

“I wanted to create a symbol (found on the right of this page) that would pay homage to Medicare and still be appropriate for any pharmacy outreach that we do. To come up with the idea, I re-sketched the letter “M”, for Medicare, in different ways to try and see what image I could hide within the letter. I noticed that when people hold hands, their bodies form an M shape. My aim was to make the logo look professional enough to be used on advertisements, while still being relatable to the patients.”

This Fall launches a new beginning in “branding” Pacific's special outreach programs. We are all very excited to see it come to maturity, and we are grateful to our Marketing Department for their collaboration!

With help from graphic design agency Emspace Group, direction from Drs. Carr-Lopez and Patel, and feedback from Sarah Higgins, Dua Moua and Jen Flora the design truly represents the unity of outreach efforts at Pacific.

“Students will see the new logo on the bags that will be given to attendees at our upcoming Medicare events. We are very excited to have this mechanism to remind attendees of our commitment to community health - long after the events.”

-Dr. Carr-Lopez
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

As open enrollment approaches, The Donut Hole is counting down the days to our Medicare events of 2013. Please use the following calendar for your convenience. A [GOOGLE CALENDAR](linked) has also been updated with these events. We hope to see many of you at these events!

October 2013

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The Medicare Part D Class of 2013 brushed up on their immunization skills before immunizing each other with the flu shot so that we can protect ourselves and our patients in preparation for this year’s Medicare events. Take a peek at some of the best vaccination snap-shots. Special feature: Dr. Woelfel!

Above: Joanna Rao prepares to give a vaccination...and looks like she is up to trouble!

Dr. Woelfel’s reaction to receiving a flu shot...Priceless.

Some classmates had memorable reactions to receiving their vaccine. You have a favorite?
HAPPY CORNER

Good news is better shared. Please consider sending your happy news to us at uopmedicare@gmail.com

Congratulations again, to 2012 Medicare student Lauren Epperson for her RESPy award. Please check out her story when it is published in this month’s issue of Pharmacy Times.

We can’t wait to hear about your happy news, send us pictures, stories or announcements. Email us today!

Did you know... There is an orchid that looks like a monkey face? It’s called Dracula Simia. Creepy, or cute? [Source](#).

Quote of the Day...

“**HAPPY PEOPLE GET A LOT OF JOY FROM RECEIVING BENEFITS FROM OTHERS WHILE PEOPLE LEADING MEANINGFUL LIVES GET A LOT OF JOY FROM GIVING TO OTHERS...IN OTHER WORDS, MEANING TRANSCENDS THE SELF WHILE HAPPINESS IS ALL ABOUT GIVING THE SELF WHAT IT WANTS.**”

- Kathleen Vohs

[There’s More to Life Than Being Happy](#)

COMING UP IN OUR NEXT ISSUE...

- An interview with Mr. Ken Gardner of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- A special feature on the Ed Roberts Campus
- More interesting Medicare Part D Class poll results
- And a whole lot more! Stay tuned and thanks for reading!