Pharmacy – A Borderless Profession: A Swedish Integration Project for Syrian Refugees

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Many Arabic-speaking pharmacists have arrived as refugees in Sweden during the past 2 years. The integration process is complicated, with large practical and theoretical difficulties facing Syrian pharmacists obtaining Swedish pharmacist licensure. At the same time, the lack of pharmacists in Swedish pharmacies is increasing. The Swedish Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences has long offered continuing professional development for pharmacists and is now beginning to translate its e-learnings in pharmacotherapy into Arabic. The project was launched in collaboration with Sveriges Farmaceuter, the Swedish Pharmacists Association; Svensk Handel; and Apoteksföretagen Almega, the employers’ association for the Swedish pharmacy sector.

The purpose of the Swedish integration project is to translate and offer e-learning courses to Arabic-speaking pharmacists entering Sweden as refugees and to facilitate their attainment of Swedish pharmacist licensure. Equipped with knowledge about Swedish pharmacy and the ways in which pharmacists work in Sweden, these refugee pharmacists will find it easier to receive practical placement. Moreover, the project will help them reiterate their knowledge and better prepare for the university examinations they must complete. The way to Swedish licensure consists of:

1. Validated pharmacist examination
2. General knowledge test or supplementary courses
3. Swedish test
4. Legislation test
5. Practical placement

A large 2013 study showed that the best way for professionals to be successful when coming into Sweden as refugees is to start practicing within their profession as soon as possible. Swedish e-learning courses in pharmacotherapy in Arabic offer refugee pharmacists knowledge in their native language. This in turn will enable Arabic-speaking pharmacists to be in faster conformity with Swedish pharmacotherapy traditions, patient counseling, relationships with physicians, and so forth. The translated topics are as follows:

- Swedish traditions of therapy
- Legislation
- Drugs of natural origin
- Good pharmacy practice (GPP) in Sweden
- Cases with meetings and collaborations with pharmacy customers
- Swedish clinical guidelines
- Physician-pharmacist relationships
- Demarcation pharmacy/health care
- Self-care
- Scientific references
- Pharmacy – Swedish dictionary

Table of Contents

Pharmacy – A Borderless Profession: A Swedish Integration Project for Syrian Refugees ........................................ 1-3
ACCP Tackles Global Antimicrobial Resistance in International Programming ........................................ 4
Reflecting on ACCP’s Scientific Poster Presentations: An International Perspective ............................ 4
Book Highlights ................................................................................................................................. 5
Mark Your Calendar .......................................................................................................................... 5
A Message from the Editor ............................................................................................................... 6
Pharmacy – A Borderless Profession: A Swedish Integration Project for Syrian Refugees (continued from page 1)

A screenshot of an example of the courses offered is depicted in Figure 1.

The e-learning courses became accessible in January 2016. As of June 1, 816 unique users had been registered (Figure 2). This conforms with the group of pharmacists who are taking part in the government’s establishment program. These pharmacists are now living over most of the country and need not depend on, for example, living in large cities to take part in the courses (Figure 3). Almost all of the participants are from Syria and have their degrees from Damascus University. Moreover, almost all have been in practice for several years, and some were pharmacy owners in Syria.

The effort gives Arabic-speaking pharmacists entering Sweden as refugees a unique chance to start their journey to a new professional life, before they have completed their studies in the Swedish language. Bridges across linguistic and professional gaps are created, fostering pharmacy as a borderless profession. With Arabic-speaking pharmacists, Swedish pharmacies can be part of the effort to achieve good public health across cultures and languages.


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Pharmacy – A Borderless Profession: A Swedish Integration Project for Syrian Refugees (continued from page 2)

Figure 2. Number of unique users of the e-learning courses.

Figure 3. Domiciles in Sweden for refugee pharmacists from Syria.
ACCP Tackles Global Antimicrobial Resistance in International Programming

For the third consecutive year, ACCP held an international symposium in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. In keeping with previous years’ symposia, the 2016 program titled “Antimicrobial Stewardship: Focus on Lower Respiratory Tract Infections and the Role of the Pharmacist” focused on the global challenge of antimicrobial resistance and the important role pharmacists can play in optimizing rational antimicrobial therapy for patients with lower respiratory tract infections.

The symposium, held on October 30, 2016, in conjunction with the 3rd Annual GCC Pharmacy Congress, was very well received. The topics covered helped attendees achieve objectives to identify common pathogens associated with lower respiratory tract infections; discuss mechanisms of antimicrobial resistance; select evidence-based antimicrobial therapy for patients with lower respiratory tract infections; and identify pharmacist-led antimicrobial stewardship strategies to improve antimicrobial use. Attended by international pharmacists from the region, the symposium featured Dr. Michael B. Kays, associate professor of pharmacy at Purdue University College of Pharmacy, who engaged the participants in activities that helped them apply the knowledge gained to practice scenarios and patient cases.

In addition to holding the Antimicrobial Stewardship symposium, ACCP’s director of international programs, Dr. Wafa Y. Dahdal, shared with attendees of the GCC Pharmacy Congress updates on global initiatives and advances in pharmacist patient care services. She discussed the need for, benefits from, and barriers to collaboration between academia and practice to advance pharmacy education, practice, and research toward advancing patient care.

Reflecting on ACCP’s Scientific Poster Presentations: An International Perspective

International pharmacists shared their experiences on presenting their research during one of the Scientific Poster Presentation sessions that took place at the 2016 ACCP Annual Meeting held October 23–26 in Hollywood, Florida.

Ms. May Yu and Ms. Kitty Chu, two pharmacists from Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Hong Kong, presented their research on “Implementation of Pharmacist-Managed Medication Review and Reconciliation Service in Orthopaedic Wards in Queen Elizabeth Hospital” and “Implementation of Ward-Based Pharmacist Medication Review Service in High Risk Geriatric Patients. Observational Study of Drug-Related Problems,” respectively.

Presenting their posters at the ACCP Annual Meeting was the first time for Ms. Yu and Ms. Chu to take part in such professional activities at an international level. Reflecting on this experience, they shared the following statements about their observations on the poster session and ACCP’s Annual Meeting:

“ACCP session site was large, allowing posters to be separated at a good distance and room for better discussion between poster presenters and poster viewers.”

“It was great to see the many posters on scientific research projects. In Hong Kong, most of the posters are service related.”

“We appreciate that our abstract will be published soon. This is a great recognition indeed.”

“It was great to see the many different sessions for clinical pharmacy specialties in ACCP. Attendees could enjoy and gain from the lectures related to their field.”
Updates in Therapeutics®: Pediatric Pharmacy Preparatory Review and Recertification Course

Designed for the pediatric practitioner seeking board certification in pediatric pharmacy, the 2016 edition of the Updates in Therapeutics®: Pediatric Pharmacy Preparatory Review and Recertification Course offers pharmacists caring for pediatric patients the most up-to-date, comprehensive resource on the conditions, diseases, and practice-related issues of relevance and importance to everyday practice.

The two-volume resource includes chapters that cover the following topics:

- Biostatistics
- Cardiology
- Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders
- Fluids, Electrolytes, and Nutrition
- Gastroenterology/Hepatology
- Hematology/Oncology
- Immunology
- Infectious Diseases
- Neonatology
- Neurology/Psychiatry
- Pediatric Nephrology
- Pediatric Transplantation
- Pharmacokinetics/Pharmacodynamics/Pharmacogenomics
- PICU I
- PICU II
- Practice Management
- Pulmonary
- Study Design: Fundamentals, Interpretation, and Research Topics
- Toxicology

The above chapters are assembled into six modules offering 22.0 continuing pharmacy education (CPE) credits. Moreover, this comprehensive resource provides additional content on the following practice-related topics:

- Communicating with Children, Adolescents, and Their Caregivers
- Drug Formulations
- Introduction to Pediatrics
- Medication Safety
- Pediatric Public Health and Patient Advocacy

The Updates in Therapeutics®: Pediatric Pharmacy Preparatory Review and Recertification Course is the go-to resource for all pharmacists caring for pediatric patients and seeking certification as Board Certified Pediatric Pharmacy Specialists (BCPPS). The resource is available in various formats, including print workbooks, downloadable PDF files, streaming audio/slide-synchronized presentations, downloadable MP3 audio files, downloadable MP4 video files, downloadable PDF files of presentation slides, and online posttests for CPE credit.


Mark Your Calendar

ACCP Updates in Therapeutics® 2017
February 17–19, 2017
Jacksonville, Florida

2017 ACCP Annual Meeting
October 7–10, 2017
Phoenix, Arizona
A Message from the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

The articles featured in this issue of ACCP International Clinical Pharmacist highlight that sharing best practices and expertise across geographic and professional borders helps advance pharmacists and the pharmacy profession globally.

The article titled “Pharmacy – A Borderless Profession: A Swedish Integration Project for Syrian Refugees” shares one country’s approach to addressing local needs and improving professional capacity by training pharmacists facing unique challenges because of political matters.

The article titled “ACCP Tackles Global Antimicrobial Resistance in International Programming” features yet another initiative that reinforces ACCP’s commitment to advancing pharmacists’ competencies and contributions to the betterment of global health care. The benefits of sharing experiences across borders are evident in the feedback received from international delegates attending the 2016 ACCP Annual Meeting, as described in the article titled “Reflecting on ACCP’s Scientific Poster Presentations: An International Perspective.”

In addition to being a great study for pharmacists seeking board certification as pediatric pharmacy specialists (BCPPSs), the title featured in this issue’s Book Highlights department is a must-have resource for all pharmacists caring for the pediatric patient.

Sincerely,

Wafa Y. Dahdal, Pharm.D., BCPS