

Evolution of a Specialty Pharmacy Communities of Practice (CoP) Program, Enhancing Disease State Knowledge and Outcomes Across Divergent Disease States

Kuwan Blake, BA, CPhT
Dawn DiPasquale, CPhT, CTDP



SCAN ME

BACKGROUND

- Shields Health Solutions (Shields) is a national specialty pharmacy accelerator for health systems. The organizational growth of Shields has created a variety of cross-functional roles in geographical spatial regions.
- The specialty pharmacy industry undergoes continuous change and advancement, including newly approved medications, additional specialty disease states, updated national guidelines, insurance policies, and pharmaceutical industry resources.
- The Shields care model includes Specialty Pharmacy Liaisons (SPL), and Patient Support Advocates (PSA); pharmacy technicians trained in specific specialty health conditions and treatments to handle all pharmacy needs for patients, including submission of prior authorizations (PAs), investigation of financial assistance (FA) options, and coordination of timely medication refills.
- The Communities of Practice (CoP) program developed at Shields, is a continuous educational program that has proven to be successful and has received substantial enhancements within a year. The purpose of this initiative is to review the evolution of the structure and functionality of the CoP program and to demonstrate its impact on specialty operational metrics. While outlining the continuous success of the CoP program expanded to various divergent disease states.

METHODS

- A Communities of Practice (CoP) is established for specific disease states that our specialty pharmacy program services. Within each community, there are four individuals appointed in stretch assignment roles to comprise a leadership team.
- To measure the success of the Communities of Practice there are annual surveys distributed to CoP members. In addition to pre-questions and post-questions during the monthly meetings and quarterly webinars. The responses are collected and utilized to calculate the knowledge gained by the attendees.



RESULTS

- Since its implementation in 2020, the CoP program has implemented seven communities (covering 12 disease states): autoimmune/biologics, neurology/multiple sclerosis, diabetes, oncology, transplant, pulmonology, and infectious diseases. With an average of 215 attendees across all meetings from January to March 2023 (average attendance across all has increased by 52% in two years), each community has a robust membership: 685 members in the oncology community, 800 in the autoimmune/biologics community, and 514 in the transplant community. In 2022, the average medication prior authorization (PA) approval rate was higher (**Figure 1**), and the average medication copay was lower in all the targeted CoP program disease states after the program launched than prior to the program launch.
- The continuous expansion of the CoP program led to more knowledge-gained opportunities for our employees. A subsequent, advanced review of the knowledge gained data from each specific CoP activity from 2022 Q4 and 2022 Q2, demonstrated a 92% average in knowledge gained (**Figure 2**), and positive feedback from the CoP members and guests (**Figure 3**).

Figure 1: Prior Authorization Approval Rate

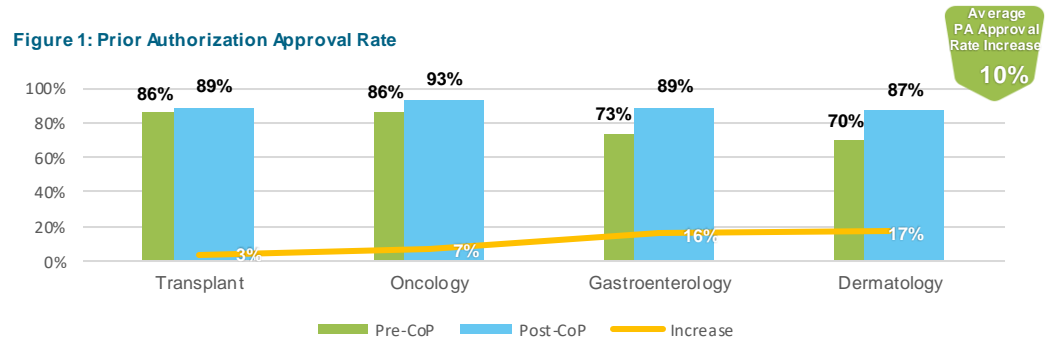


Figure 2: Communities of Practice Activities Metrics

Communities of Practice Meetings & Webinars	Knowledge Gained %	Attendees (N)	Trend in Metrics
CoP Transplant Webinar "Understanding Solid Organ Transplant Rejection"	88%	210	Positive Trend
CoP Oncology Webinar "Biomarker Testing – The Key to Precision Medicine in Cancer Treatment"	85%	180	Positive Trend
CoP Diabetes Call "Diabetes Guideline updates 2023"	92%	145	Positive Trend
CoP Oncology Call "Approaching Off-Label Diagnosis"	88%	230	Positive Trend

Figure 3: Communities Of Practice Testimonials

"I wanted to say that I continue to enjoy the webinars! I found the neurology webinar especially helpful before taking the CSP exam review earlier this month. It was a well-organized review of MS therapies."

- Shields Clinical Pharmacist



"The Oncology CoP engagement on our recent In-Service guest presentation was one of the most interactive sessions we facilitated yet."

- Pharmaceutical Director, Field Medical



CONCLUSION

- The CoP program serves as a platform to enhance employees' disease state knowledge for roles across the organization by promoting continuing education opportunities and ultimately improving our patient outcomes.
- As the program expands, the evolution and innovation of the CoP program ensure our employees' ability to gain knowledge within their disease states while promoting professional development, leadership opportunities, and optimum patient outcomes.

DISCLOSURES

- The authors of this presentation have nothing to disclose concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.