

Title: Pharmacy student willingness to seek an international rotation experience

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Abstract:

Background International outreach by colleges of pharmacy has been increasing in recent years. Students are participating in exchange programs and practice experiences with other institutions located in different countries, some with significantly different pharmacy practice settings. Methods Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 PharmD graduates who had undertaken at least one international rotation during their curriculum completed within the past five years. Transcripts were analyzed using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Results Five major themes emerged from the interviews including: factors that influenced the students to pursue an international rotation; rotation descriptions and information source; positive impact and experiences; rotation challenges; and recommendations and considerations for future students. Findings indicated that students pursued international rotations for the diversity of opportunity to learn, future career insight, interest in travel, and interest in the cultural aspects of healthcare in a new environment. Based on responses, a rotation description framework was developed. Conclusion A student's decision to pursue an international rotation may be influenced by multiple different factors but what remains important is to be fully transparent with the purpose, objectives, and expectations when advertising such a rotation.