

**Submission Id:** 3079

**Title**

*Creating a unique Virtual Educational Experience for Medical Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic*

**Priority 1 (Research Category)**

Education and training

**Presenters**

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**Abstract**

Context: The COVID-19 pandemic created unique challenges for medical education, especially when providing clinical experiences for students in Accelerated Pathway Programs (APP). To accommodate these accelerated medical students, Penn State's Family Medicine Department used its experience with virtual rounds to create an authentic clinical experience (ACE), complete with interdisciplinary education with pharmacy students.

Objective: Provide a virtual ACE for APP students during a period of quarantine to better prepare them for return to in-person clinical encounters.

Study Design: Qualitative study with post-interview debriefings.

Setting: Inpatient Family Medicine Acute Care Unit (FAMCU).

Population: APP students on their Family Medicine clerkship.

Intervention: Virtual rounds using a secure HIPAA-compliant Zoom connection with pharmacy students were conducted on patients admitted to the FAMCU. The ACE included pre-rounding and chart review, patient interviews, post-interview debriefing, and completion of a brief recorded virtual handoff (transitional care note) for the patient's primary provider.

Outcome Measures: Competencies of Communication with the Care Team and Communication with Patients/Families. Students received immediate feedback on their interview and communication with the patient during the post-interview debriefing.

Results: Six accelerated students participated in this program. The APP students found virtual rounds to be a valuable experience to prepare them for future clinical encounters during a time when quarantine prevented in-person clinical encounters.

Conclusions: The post virtual round debriefings were conducted by either the unit Pharmacist or the Associate Medical Director of the FAMCU, and included the Pharmacy and APP students. During the debriefings both the Pharmacy and APP students reported an appreciation for remotely interviewing real patients versus completing a simulated exercise or case study, and they valued the ability to interact and learn from other disciplines. The virtual learning experiences that have been utilized to supplement medical education during the COVID-19 pandemic have proven their worth for enhancing student engagement and ensuring achievements of necessary competencies. While virtual clinical experiences cannot fully take the place of in-person clinical education, virtual activities can definitely add value to medical education and training.