Fellowship Programs and Career Tracks

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Outline

• Definition of a fellowship
• Fellowship programs
  – Academic fellowship
  – Industry fellowship
• How to get started?
  – Which fellowship to pick from?
  – What are the barriers/obstacles?
• Career opportunities from fellowships
• Panel session of current fellows
Definition

- A fellowship is a “directed, highly individualized, postgraduate program developed to prepare the participant to become an independent researcher.”*

- However, there is a little bit more to add to this definition…

Definition – cont’d

• The previous definition is academically focused.

• The definition does not consider how a fellowship is viewed from an industry perspective.

• The previous definition needs to consider what types of careers/jobs will be available upon completion of a fellowship.
Fellowship Types - Academic Fellowship
Academic Fellowships

• Setting: College, University and/or hospital
  – (some fellowships can be divided; 1 year at an academic institution, another year in industry)

• Duration: 2 to 3 years

• Previous experience: Completion of residency is usually required (there are exceptions)

• Salary: varies ~$40K/yr
  – Bassett Healthcare from 2002-2004 ($28-30K/yr)
Academic Fellowships – cont’d

• Generally an split of your time b/t research-related and clinically-related functions.
  – Key point: The majority of time will be spent on research-related functions
  – This contrasts the amount of time spent for research-related functions for a residency
Industry Fellowships

• Setting: Pharmaceutical or Biotech company

• Duration: 1 to 2 years
  – Some fellowships can be divided; 1 year at an academic institution, another year in industry

• Previous experience: None (residency is not required)

• Salary: varies; $40-60K/year
Industry Fellowships

• Experiences gained in several areas or departments:
  – Medical Affairs
  – Medical Communications/Education
  – Global Marketing/Market Research
  – R & D Strategy and Analysis
  – Clinical Operations/Clinical Research
  – Clinical Pharmacology/Early Development
  – Regulatory Affairs
Which fellowship to pick from?
Fellowship Selection

The most important determinant to fellowship selection = Program reputation*

- Questions to ask
  - Are preceptors renown for their clinical, teaching, or research experience?
  - How long has the program been in existence?
  - How many fellows have completed the program?
  - What is the retention rate of fellows?
  - How are fellows treated (responsibilities)?

Fellowship Selection – cont’d

• Area of Pharmacy research
  – What are the research areas available? Program location? Working environment?

• Potential for career advancement
  – Current positions of past fellows? Will program completion improve employment opportunities or fulfill career objectives?

• Teaching opportunities?

• Benefits package
  – Paid sick, holiday, vacation leave? Reimbursement for professional expenses? Relocation reimbursement? Health insurance coverage?

• Miscellaneous
  – Recommendations from current/past fellows? Amount of salary/stipend? How many fellows are accepted
What are the barriers/obstacles?
Potential barriers/obstacles

- **Financial**
  - Reduced salary/stipend
  - Repayment of student loans

- **Options are available**
  - Postponement of federal educational loans (loan deferment)
  - Federal agencies (NIH) may be able to repay a significant portion of educational loans*

- **Program location**
  - Out of state? BUT relocation expenses may be covered

- **Fellowships that are not ACCP-approved**

- **Applicant selection process – academic success**
  - NOT the sole factor

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Career Opportunities from a fellowship
Career Opportunities

- Opportunities for the ‘non-traditional’ careers
- Depends on what area your focused on during fellowship
- For example, if fellowship had emphasis in clinical pharmacology/drug metabolism, fellows who completed the Bassett Healthcare fellowship were employed in
  - Biotech and/or pharmaceutical industry
  - Academia (Clinical vs. Basic Sciences faculty track)
  - Government (FDA CDER/CBER Office of Clinical Pharmacology)
  - Consulting for various biotech/pharma. companies
Panel Session

• Youngil Chang, PharmD, MS
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• Lisa Lam, PharmD
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• Jeff Penzner, PharmD
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• Sarwang Shah, PharmD
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