SUGDIS 2009 DRUG INFORMATION QUESTION QUALITY ASSURANCE SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

This issue of Pharmacy Précis presents the results of the Samford University Global Drug Information Service (SUGDIS) Quality Assurance Survey that is utilized to ensure the SUGDIS objectives are being achieved, as well as, fulfilling the needs and expectations of our clients.

SUGDIS is a fee-for-service operation located in the McWhorter School of Pharmacy, Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. The center focuses on three core activities: education, service, and research. Comprehensive drug information services are provided to over 120 pharmacies including hospitals and long-term care centers.

The SUGDIS primary objectives are to:

- Teach pharmacy students, drug information residents, pharmacists, and other health care providers the skill of efficiently searching the literature, critically analyzing the information, and accurately communicating (both verbally and in writing) the response.
- Serve as an information resource center for faculty, students, and health care professionals.
- Provide comprehensive, objective, and unbiased information to health care professionals for decision-making and problem-solving activities.
- Provide drug information services to health care institutions for delivery of quality patient care.
- Conduct research for the advancement of drug information and pharmacy practice.

Description of SUGDIS

SUGDIS, an academic and service unit of the McWhorter School of Pharmacy, completes projects that include pharmacy practice and medication use evaluations. SUGDIS is committed to assisting pharmacists who are engaged in patient care activities and is actively pursuing relationships with organizations representing them.
The overall services provided include, but are not limited to:

- Drug information consults
- Committee support (Pharmacy and Therapeutics [P&T], Institutional Review Board [IRB], Infection Control)
- Formulary management
- Policy and procedure development
- Drug therapy practice guidelines generation
- Drug formulary list generation
- Antibiotic Management Program
- Drug Usage Evaluation (DUE) and Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR) programs
- Long-term care consulting

Teaching programs include didactic courses in Drug Information Systems and Drug Literature Evaluation and the experiential-based learning experiences for Pharm.D. students completing the Drug Information Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (i.e., clerkship rotation). Information services are provided to health care professionals of subscribing institutions and Samford faculty by a staff of three drug information specialists, drug information resident, pharmacy librarian, and clerical support. SUGDIS has extensive electronic drug information databases and resources. Furthermore, an extended collection of other resources (textbooks, journals, databases, etc.) is available within either the center or the Samford University Davis Library. Access to pharmacy faculty who specialize in various types of pharmacy practice and medical experts as consultants to SUGDIS expand the expertise available to answer questions and resolve problems for the center’s subscribers.

SUGDIS personnel are active consultants for many different hospitals and other health care entities in addition to participating in national organizations. Responding to drug information requests consumes approximately 35 percent of daily activities while a portion of the remaining time is involved at the drug policy level with P&T, IRB, and Infection Control Committee support. Formulary evaluation is another crucial responsibility for SUGDIS as is continuing education for medical, pharmacy, and nursing personnel.

**Question Requests during 2009**

During the year 2009, SUGDIS received over 520 questions from the health care community. Most of the questions received by SUGDIS were from pharmacists practicing in a hospital setting, long-term care facility, or community pharmacy/ambulatory care setting. Questions concerning drug therapy use, dosing, adverse drug reactions, drug administration, formulary issues, compatibility/stability, route of administration, and drug of choice comprised over 75 percent of the questions received by SUGDIS. The remaining 25 percent consisted of over 30 different topics that include monograph information, disease management, cost/economic studies, IV compatibility/stability, alternative medicine, pharmacy law, drug approvals, toxicity/poison, foreign drug ID, unlabeled drug use, investigational drugs use, pregnancy/lactation, and literature evaluation. Questions varied in intensity (e.g., from drug identification to providing therapeutic recommendations) and time required to complete the request (from 15 minutes to greater than 12 hours). Over 70% of the questions answered during 2009 were from clients. The majority of the remaining questions came from the Samford community or Samford alumni.

As part of the center’s educational responsibilities, Pharm.D. advanced pharmacy practice experience students participate in center activities by answering questions under the guidance of a Pharm.D. faculty member. Upon receiving a call, the student asks a series of questions to obtain the information needed to thoroughly research and respond to each request. By participating in the question answering activity, the Pharm.D. student learns to answer drug information questions using an efficient search process, enhances/refines written and verbal communication, completes a thorough literature search, improves problem-solving, decision-making, and literature analysis skills.
**Question Quality Assurance Survey 2009**

To ensure the SUGDIS question processing procedures, resources, and staff are meeting the needs of clients, a questionnaire is sent to clients to obtain feedback pertaining to the drug information question service provided by SUGDIS. In January of 2009, an on-line quality assurance survey was implemented. Each month, the SUGDIS Coordinator randomly selects at least 17 health care providers who have requested information from SUGDIS. An email is sent requesting completion of the survey. Once a health care caller has been surveyed, this individual is not eligible to be surveyed again for six months. The six-month lag time was chosen so that frequent callers would not be continually surveyed.

The on-line drug information question survey is divided into four sections.

- The first section of the survey is designed to gather the following data:
  - What is your role in the health profession (i.e., pharmacist, physician, nurse)?
  - What is your primary practice site?
  - Are you a SUGDIS subscriber?
- The main section of the survey contains questions concerning the drug information request(s) and response(s).
  - Was your question patient specific?
  - What impact did the recommendation offered by SUGDIS have at our institution/practice site?
  - Was your question handled in a professional manner?
  - Was your question answered with pertinent information?
  - Was your question answered within a reasonable time period?
- The next section of the survey contains questions to obtain your feedback on ways to improve your future interactions with SUGDIS.
  - Rate your overall experience with SUGDIS.
  - If there were one thing SUGDIS could do to improve our service, what would it be?
  - What additional services would you like to see SUGDIS offer?
- The final section of the survey provides space for your comments. If your experience with SUGDIS is positive, SUGDIS would like to know that our service is sufficient to meet your needs. If you see a problem with the service, please comment so problems can be identified and corrected.

During the 2009 calendar year, a total of 162 requests were emailed to SUGDIS clients with a link to the on-line survey. The response rate of completed surveys was 20 percent, down 10 percent compared to last year. However, this decrease may be the result of lag time in implementing the on-line survey. After reviewing the survey process, changes have been implemented and the response rate for 2010 to date appears to show an increase in responses. The information obtained from the survey is vital to the structure and process of SUGDIS activities in terms of quality improvement. The following pie charts display the survey results for the year 2009. Survey results for previous years have been published in prior *Pharmacy Précis* issues (available upon request).
Profession
- Pharmacist: 94%
- Physician: 3%
- Nurse: 3%

Primary Practice Site
- Hospital: 46%
- Long-Term Care: 42%
- Community Pharm.: 3%
- Ambulatory Care: 3%
- MSOP: 6%
- Faculty: 6%

The response(s) answered the intended question(s)
- Strongly Agree: 62%
- Agree: 35%
- Strongly Disagree: 3%

Information was sufficient to apply in my practice setting
- Strongly Agree: 65%
- Agree: 32%
- Strongly Disagree: 3%

Response was provided within requested time period
- Strongly Agree: 56%
- Agree: 35%
- Neutral: 6%

Written and/or verbal response(s) were handled professionally
- Strongly Agree: 68%
- Agree: 18%
- Neutral: 3%
- Not Applicable: 11%
What is your most frequent method of communication with SUGDIS?

- Telephone: 32%
- E-Mail: 68%

How would you rate your overall experience with SUGDIS?

- Extremely Dissatisfied: 3%
- Satisfied: 23%
- Extremely Satisfied: 74%

Below are bar charts that compare the quality assurance survey results of the past five years.

**Profession**

**Primary Practice Site**
The response(s) answered the intended question(s)

Information was sufficient to apply in my practice setting

Response was provided within requested time period
The majority (94%) of individuals who responded to the survey were pharmacists. The remaining 6 percent consisted of physicians and nurses. Calls received by SUGDIS totaled over 520. The current year responses and the comparison of the past four years indicate that 97 percent of the survey responders felt the information supplied by SUGDIS sufficiently answered the question presented and responses were handled professionally. This was a slight increase from the year 2008 (95%). Survey responses that selected disagree (3%) indicate a response was supplied, but SUGDIS was not able to provide a definitive answer to the question based upon research.

An area that SUGDIS is constantly striving to improve is providing the response to a question within the requested time period and to complete the task thoroughly by following an efficient search process. The SUGDIS goal is to meet the subscriber’s need in a professional manner. Of the respondents, 97 percent felt the response answered the intended question while 91 percent felt the response was provided within a reasonable time period. The response being provided within a reasonable time period increased from the year 2008 (88%). Over 5 percent indicated neutral when asked about the response being provided within a reasonable time period. When a call is taken, one of the initial questions asked by the student is the time frame in which the client needs the requested information. If problems are encountered while researching a question, the requestor is called and provided an update on information located and the progress being made. The drug information center faculty/staff request that the caller inform the student when the question concerns an urgent matter. In this event, the drug information center faculty is immediately notified and the response is formulated and provided to the caller. Afterwards, the question answering process is reviewed with the student (for the learning experience).

SUGDIS wishes to remind subscribers that each question is used as a learning experience. After the student obtains the question information, a drug information center faculty member discusses with the student a process to search and analyze the literature to locate and formulate a response. Also, the faculty member and the student discuss advantages and disadvantages of the references/resources that may be used to develop a response. After the student conducts the research and prepares an answer, the response is reviewed by the faculty member. If the information supplied in response to a question is incomplete or more information is needed, please advise the student and preceptor of this situation. If an update or answer to your question is not supplied within the time period requested, please contact SUGDIS immediately.

SUGDIS has utilized the survey process for several years. The survey responses identify areas for improvement in the SUGDIS process. The comments and suggestions from the survey provide SUGDIS with information to improve services offered to the subscriber for use in his/her daily practice. Individuals surveyed are encouraged to utilize the comment section to expand on the particular topic(s) marked as disagree or strongly disagree.
A large percentage (69%) of the individuals that responded to the survey indicated the most frequent method of contacting SUGDIS is by email. Questions can be emailed to sugdis@samford.edu. If the question requires an immediate response, please call the Drug Information Line (205-726-2659). This telephone number is programmed to forward calls to the SUGDIS Coordinator’s office and then to the circulation desk to ensure that your call is answered and assistance provided promptly. Only in the event that all three lines are busy is the call answered by voice mail during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST). For urgent situations after normal business hours, the message provides instructions for the procedure to contact a drug information specialist (205-994-1762).

In an effort to improve efficiency and go green, SUGDIS has implemented an on-line drug information question survey for clients. If you are selected to be surveyed, an email will be sent from the email address sugdis@samford.edu with the subject of SUGDIS Question Response Survey. The email will contain a link to the survey website. Survey responses are anonymous unless you choose to add your name to the survey. Watch your email for the opportunity to evaluate the service received when SUGDIS completes your next question request. The SUGDIS staff appreciates you completing and returning the survey information. Feedback from the survey is essential to the process of improving SUGDIS activities. Please provide suggestions or comments to SUGDIS by telephone (205-726-2659), e-mail (sugdis@samford.edu), or FAX (205-726-4012).

**SUGDIS Personnel**

On a daily basis the SUGDIS faculty, drug information resident, staff, and advanced pharmacy practice experience Pharm.D. students handle client questions and needs. Six to eight drug information advanced pharmacy practice students are in the center ten months of the year to research and answer questions, complete weekly publications, and assist with projects. The students complete the learning experience under the guidance of four faculty members:

Maisha Kelly Freeman, Pharm.D., BCPS, Director of SUGDIS.
Dr. Freeman joined SUGDIS in 2003. She is a 2002 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Upon graduation, she completed an American Society of Health-System Pharmacy (ASHP)-accredited drug information specialty residency at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, MD. She has been recognized as a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist since 2004. She is currently a member of AMWA, ASHP, ACCP, ISPOR, Phi Lambda Sigma and Rho Chi. She is a reviewer for the *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacists* and *Annals of Pharmacotherapy*. Dr. Freeman has authored almost a dozen publications in the *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacists*, *Annals of Pharmacotherapy*, *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *Drug Information Journal*, *US Pharmacist*, and *Drug Information: A Guide for Pharmacists*. Her areas of interest include drug information education, cultural competency, pharmacoeconomics/outcomes research, and geriatrics.

Terri M. Wensel, Pharm.D., BCPS, Assistant Director of SUGDIS.
Dr. Wensel joined SUGDIS in October of 2008. She is a 2005 graduate of Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy. After graduation, she completed an ASHP-accredited drug information specialty residency at DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Prior to joining Samford, Dr. Wensel was a faculty member at Wingate University School of Pharmacy in Wingate, North Carolina. She has been recognized as a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist since 2009. Dr. Wensel is also the director of the Drug Information Residency Program at Samford University Global Drug Information Service. She is currently a member of ASHP, AACP, ACCP, and Phi Lambda Sigma. She also has published in *Annals of Pharmacotherapy*, *US Pharmacist*, *Journal of Family Practice*, and *American Family Physician*. Dr. Wensel also serves as a reviewer for *Annals of Pharmacotherapy* and *US Pharmacist*. Her areas of interest include instructional design and assessment, pediatrics, pregnancy-related issues, and theories of adult education.
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Peter J. Hughes, Pharm.D., Drug Information Specialist.
Dr. Hughes joined SUGDIS in July of 2009. He is a 2007 graduate of the Samford University McWhorter School of Pharmacy. Upon graduation, Dr. Hughes completed a Drug Information Residency with SUGDIS. Prior to returning to SUGDIS in July 2009, he practiced at Riverview Regional Medical Center in Gadsden, Alabama. He is currently a member of AACP, ACCP, ASHP, and APhA. He is also involved with local and regional pharmacy organizations. Dr. Hughes serves as a reviewer for Annals of Pharmacotherapy.

Dr. Schrimsher joined SUGDIS in September of 1997. He graduated from the University of Alabama School of Library & Information Studies with a Master’s degree in Library Information Science in 1996 and earned a doctorate from The Catholic University of America with a concentration in Education Administration in 1982. Dr. Schrimsher is currently a member of the Medical Library Association (MLA) and Southern Chapter MLA. He also served as past Chair, Pharmacy & Drug Information Section (MLA), Executive Council, Alabama Association for College & Research Libraries (Webmaster), and Vice President-President Elect. He has extensive experience as an editor board member for the Drug Information Journal and the Journal of the Medical Library Association. He was prior editor of The International Journal of Pharmacy Education and Practice. Dr. Schrimsher has also presented and/or authored over two dozen articles in the areas of library science, drug information, technology, effective scientific writing and other areas, including one MLA BibKit book.

SUGDIS is pleased to announce that Dr. Julie Bosler has accepted the 2010-2011 Drug Information Resident position. Dr. Bosler graduated from Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy in May 2010 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Dr. Bosler was a four year member of the Auburn University Women’s Volleyball team. She was named to the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Academic Honor Roll for five years straight, was a two year member of the National College Athlete Honor Society, and was selected as a member of the SEC Good Works Team and ESPN the Magazine All District Team her senior year. Dr. Bosler is a member of APhA, ASHP, AISHP, and ACCP. Her areas of professional interest include new drug products/novel dosage forms, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacodynamics. She is assisting the Residency Director and the SUGDIS staff with the activities of SUGDIS as well as completing an independent research project.

Sandra Boyken serves as the SUGDIS Coordinator. Mrs. Boyken joined SUGDIS in August 1997. In December 2007, she completed her Bachelor of General Studies in Administrative Services with a Paralegal Certificate by attending Samford University Metro Program evening classes. Prior to this, she had obtained an Associate Degree in Secretarial Administration from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky. Mrs. Boyken is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Alpha Sigma Lambda.

Contacting SUGDIS
If you have a drug information request, please call (205) 726-2659. For your convenience, this number is the direct line that allows you to speak with the individual responsible for drug information requests. If you need to contact SUGDIS via fax, please dial (205) 726-4012. Also, SUGDIS can be contacted by e-mail at sugdis@samford.edu.

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