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**TITLE: PSYCHIATRIC PHARMACY IN A UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEALTH SYSTEM**

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**Abstract Type: Innovative Practices**

**BACKGROUND:** The importance of mental health in university students has received much attention over the past few years. College students are at risk for developing psychiatric illness, being on complex psychotropic medication regimens, substance abuse, and medication non-adherence. Additionally, many universities have difficulty recruiting and retaining experienced psychiatry providers. Opportunities exist for psychiatric pharmacists to provide consultation and education services in this setting.

**DESCRIPTION OF INNOVATIVE SERVICE:** This pilot program took place in the Counseling and Mental Health Services (CMHS) department of Student Health Services (SHS) on the main campus of the University of Connecticut. Up to eight hours/week was allotted for consultation during the 2007 spring and fall semesters. The consultant was a faculty member in the School of Pharmacy and a board certified psychiatric pharmacist with over 15 years of clinical experience. Consulting services provided included: patient interview and assessment, medical record review, drug information, and in-service education. Consultation referrals and education requests have been primarily generated by psychiatric nurse practitioners.

**IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE:** During the 2007 spring and fall semesters, the psychiatric pharmacist provided both consultation and educational services for CMHS staff. To date, the consultant has provided: clinical consultation for 20 patients, four in-service presentations, and 20 one-hour clinical education meetings with psychiatric nurse practitioners. Patients receiving consultation were: undergraduate and graduate students, 18–42 years old, and predominantly female (75%). Depression and/or anxiety have been the most common presenting illnesses (80%). All 20 patients consulted received a medical record review and 13 (65%) were also interviewed. Recommendations were implemented 85% of the time and no adverse outcomes related to these recommendations have occurred. SHS staff have been uniformly positive about psychiatric pharmacy involvement in the mental health care of university students.

**CONCLUSION:** University student health systems are encountering many patients with mental health care needs and are challenged with the recruitment and retention of experienced psychiatry providers. The provision of clinical consultation and education services in a state university student health system has a high potential for success and represents a new practice setting for the psychiatric pharmacy specialty.