**NVSHP PUBLICATIONS**

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Nevada Society of Health - System Pharmacists

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**A Pharmacist’s Perspective – Managing the Pediatric Patient**

**Member Spotlight**

**Jenny Nguyen, PharmD, BCPS**

A 2014 survey from the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education shows that despite most pharmacy programs offering pediatric advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs), only 20% of eligible students actually participate in a pediatric rotation.As a pediatric and neonatal pharmacist in Southern Nevada, I would like to share my insight in hopes that it would encourage you and other new pharmacy clinicians to explore opportunities to manage the pediatric and neonatal patient populations.

My first case happened when a pediatric order was sent to my adult queue by mistake. Feeling too nervous to complete the order by myself, I reached out to the pediatric pharmacist who walked me through processing a pediatric medication order. Afterwards, I found myself verifying more pediatric orders and one opportunity led to another. I was lucky enough to receive on the job training while continuing to ask questions and review unfamiliar topics. Now I’m a full-time pediatric pharmacist based in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

Dignity Health Siena Campus has a 26 – bed level III NICU which allows our department to care for those born before 32 weeks, weighing less than 1500g and/or with a critical illness. In addition to the clinical pharmacist, our NICU team consists of neonatologists, nurses, dieticians, respiratory therapists, physical therapists and speech pathologists. Each provides their share of expertise working collaboratively to help the newborn thrive.

Every day I start off with patient work ups in preparation for interdisciplinary rounds. Rounds are time consuming, but the best way to get an overall clinical picture of the patient. Specific information reviewed includes maternal history, gestational age, weight (gain/loss), medication therapies, immunization and nutritional status. After rounds, I finish off my day documenting interventions, completing order verification, answering drug information, and collaborating on pediatric and NICU policies and procedures by working with the staff in the unit and through organized committees. Tools I use to make my day run smoothly are my trusty calculator and my go-to references, NeoFax, UpToDate, and the Teddy Bear book.

Whether you are a student or practicing pharmacist, I believe that we will always maintain our status as ‘pharmacists in training’. Although pediatric pharmacy experiences may not be mandatory, eventually you will encounter a pediatric order or question. Therefore, I encourage you to keep an open mind and become comfortable with being uncomfortable.

*Jenny Nguyen is a NVSHP member and full - time pediatric and neonatal pharmacist at Dignity Health St. Rose Dominican Hospital - Siena Campus. She is also a preceptor for Roseman University College of Pharmacy students and first and second year post - graduate pharmacy residents.*