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Emerging frontiers of pharmacy education in Saudi Arabia: The metamorphosis in the last fifty years

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The trends in the quality of biomedical education in pharmacy schools have witnessed significant changes in the 21st century. With the advent of continuous revision and standardization processes of medical curricula throughout the world, the focus has been on imparting quality education. This pedagogic paradigm has shifted to pharmacy schools. In Saudi Arabia, the concept of "medical and pharmacy education" is relatively new as mainstream pharmacy curriculum and universities were established only half a century ago. This period has seen major changes in the dimension of "pharmacy education" to keep pace with the education systems in the United States and Europe. As our knowledge and perceptions about pharmaceuticals change with time, this motivates educators to search for better teaching alternatives to the ever increasing number of enthusiastic and budding pharmacists. Recently, the academic system in Saudi Arabian Pharmacy has adopted a more clinically-oriented Pharm.D. curriculum. This paper deals with the major changes from the inception of a small pharmacy faculty in 1959, the College of Pharmacy at the King Saud University, Riyadh, to the model of progress and a prototype of pharmacy colleges in Saudi Arabia. The fifty year chronological array can be regarded as an epitome of progress in pharmacy education in Saudi Arabia from its traditional curriculum to the modern day Pharm.D. curriculum with a high population growth and expanding health care sector, the demand for qualified pharmacists is growing and is projected to grow considerably in the future. The number of pharmacy graduates is increasing each year by many folds and to meet the needs the system lays stress upon a constant revising and updating of the current curriculum from a global perspective.

Biography

Yousif A Asiri is Dean for the College of pharmacy, and Professor of Clinical Pharmacy at Department of Clinical Pharmacy at the College of Pharmacy, King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It was at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill School of Pharmacy and The University of North Carolina Hospitals where he earned his Master in Hospital Pharmacy and completed a Residency in Hospital Pharmacy. His journey of education was ended at the University of the Pacific, School of Pharmacy at Stockton, California where he earned his PhD in Clinical Pharmacy. He is a pharmacist by choice, commitment and concern. He is also a member of several committees in the College of Pharmacy, the University, and outside of the University. He is involved in several health related governmental organizations. He is a referee for several pharmaceutical and medical journals nationally and internationally. He is a frequent speaker at pharmacy meetings and is considered a pharmacy futurist.

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