Psyched to Talk: Enhancing Student Communication in Psychiatric Pharmacy

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Presented by: AAPP Teaching Community

Disclosures

- Drs. Hopkins and Williams do not have financial or other relationship with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) or provider(s) of any commercial service(s) discussed in this CE activity.
- This presentation will not include discussion of off-label, experimental, and /or investigational use of drugs or devices.

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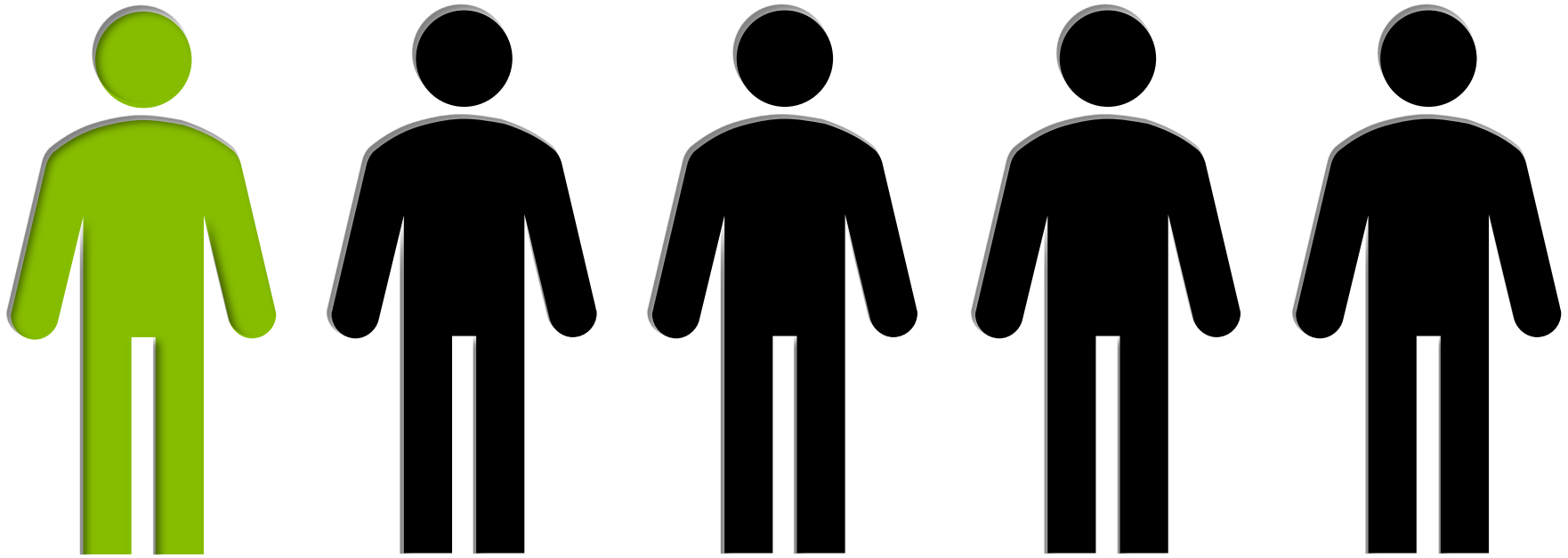
Learning Objectives

1. Develop awareness about the stigma associated with mental health conditions and how this impacts pharmacy student attitudes towards mental health
2. **Explore potential barriers students faced in communicating with patients with mental health concerns**
3. **Identify and utilize resources and strategies to strengthen student knowledge and confidence**
4. **Reflect and share experiences to help build student comfortability in engaging with psychiatric patients and providers**

Mental Illness in the United States

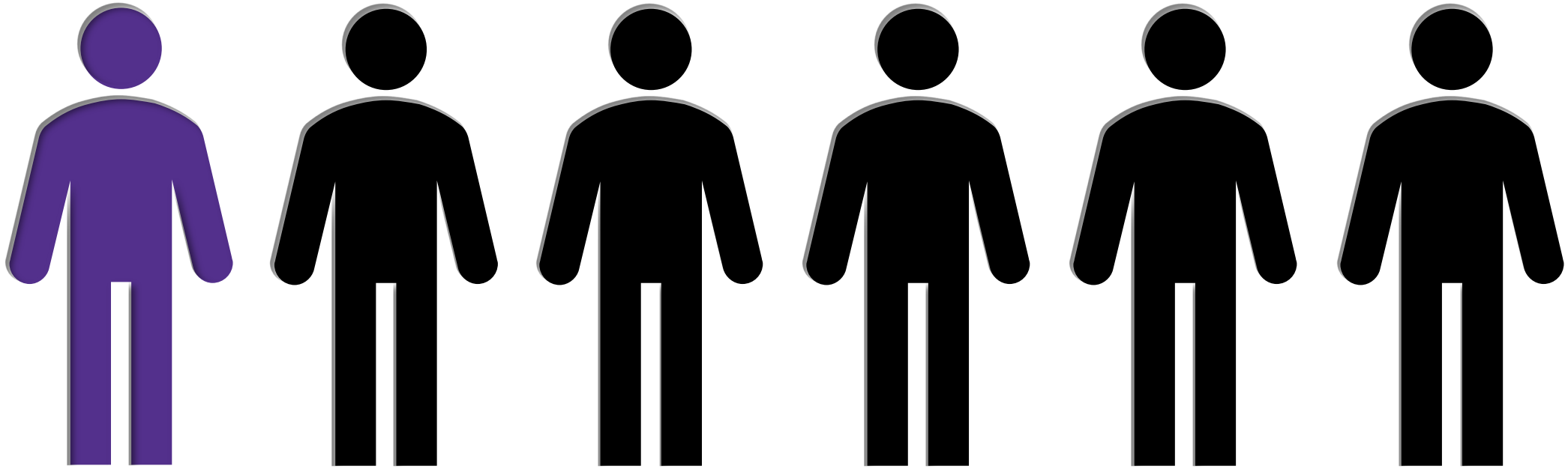
It is estimated that approximately 1 in 5 adults in the United States live with a mental illness



National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2023). [Mental Healthy by the Numbers]. https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/

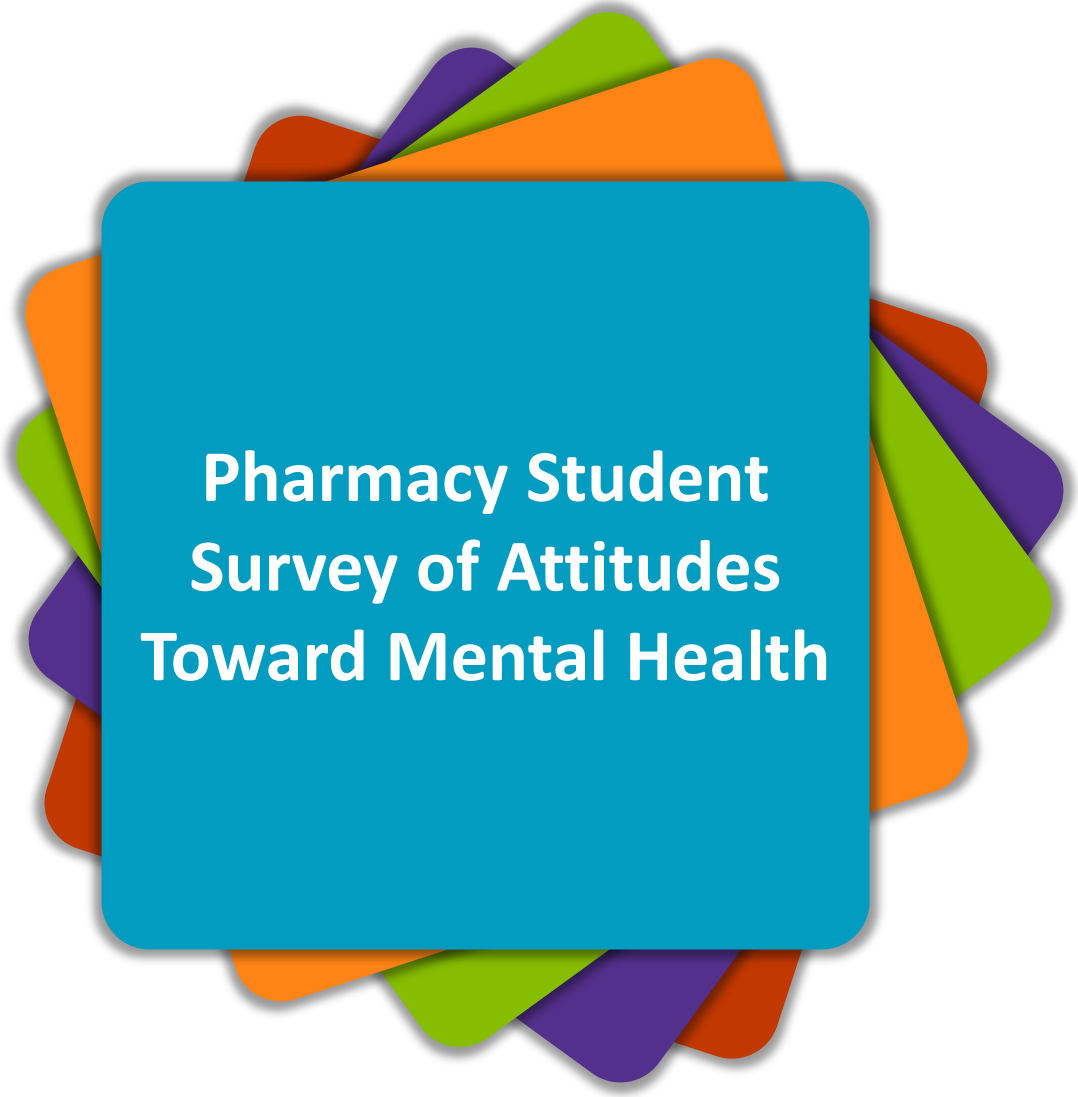
Mental Health Treatment in the United States

It is estimated that approximately 1 in 6 adults in the United States take a prescription medication for their mental health



Terlizzi EP, Norris T. 2020. *NCHS Data Brief*. 2021;(419):1-8

Pharmacy Student Attitudes



Keating D et al. *Int J Clin Pharm*. 2023;45(5):1231-1240.

Pharmacy Student Attitudes

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Pharmacy Student Attitudes

Keating D et al. *Int J Clin Pharm*. 2023;45(5):1231-1240.

Pharmacy Student Attitudes

< 50%

Expressed comfort and/or confidence in caring for patients with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder

Keating D et al. *Int J Clin Pharm*. 2023;45(5):1231-1240.

Pharmacy Student Attitudes

29%
Felt they would feel awkward asking someone about their antipsychotic medication

Keating D et al. *Int J Clin Pharm*. 2023;45(5):1231-1240.

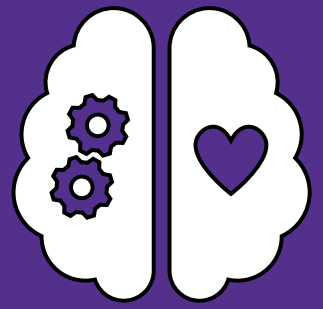
Discussion Point #1

What are some reasons you have heard about why people may be uncomfortable talking to mental health patients?

Potential Barriers for Communication

Potential Barriers for Communication

Mental Health Stigma



Mental Health Stigma

Public Stigma

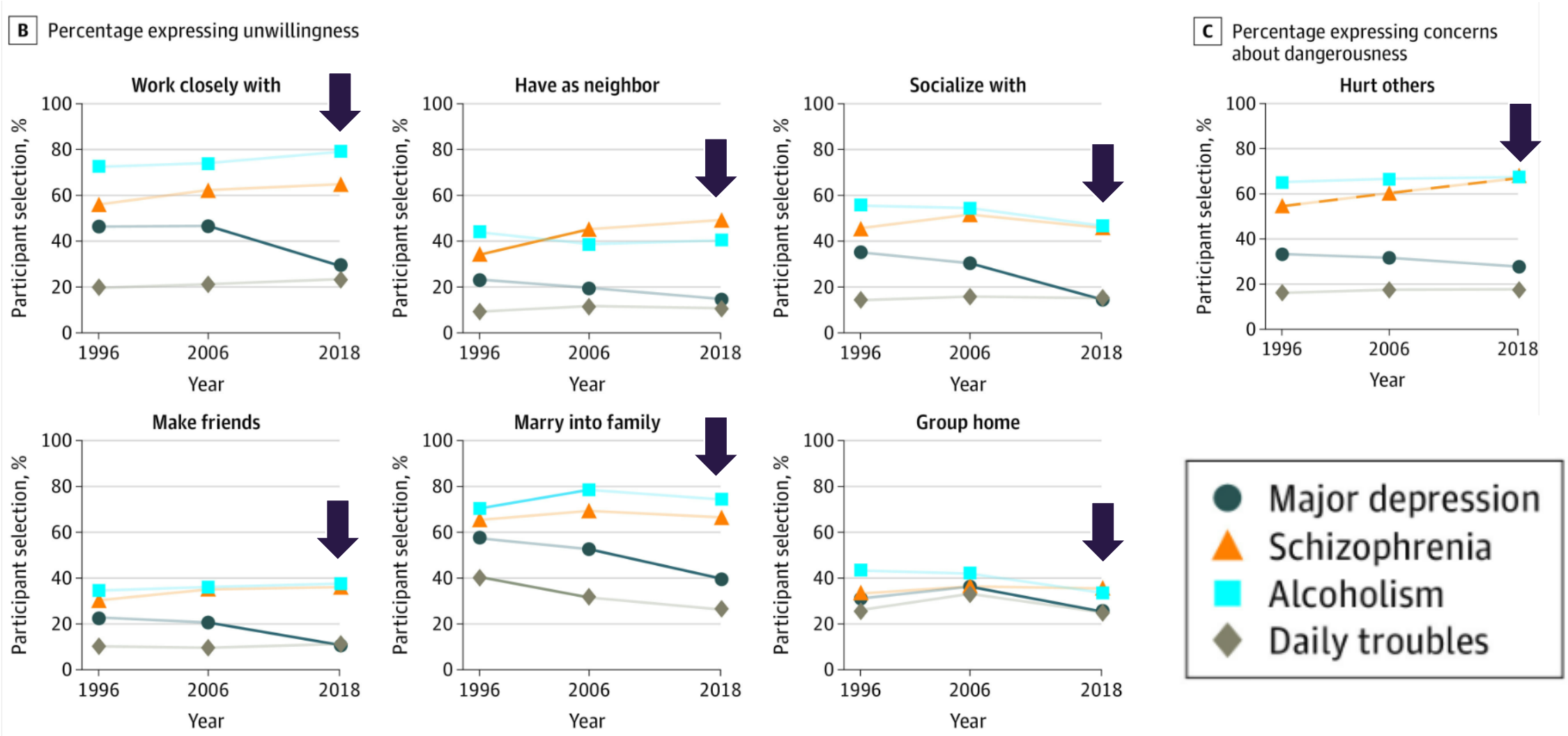
Pharmacy Student Stigma

Mental Health Stigma

Public Stigma

Pharmacy Student Stigma

Trends in Public Stigma of Mental Illness



Pescosolido BA et al. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2021;4(12):e2140202.

Mental Health Stigma

Public Stigma

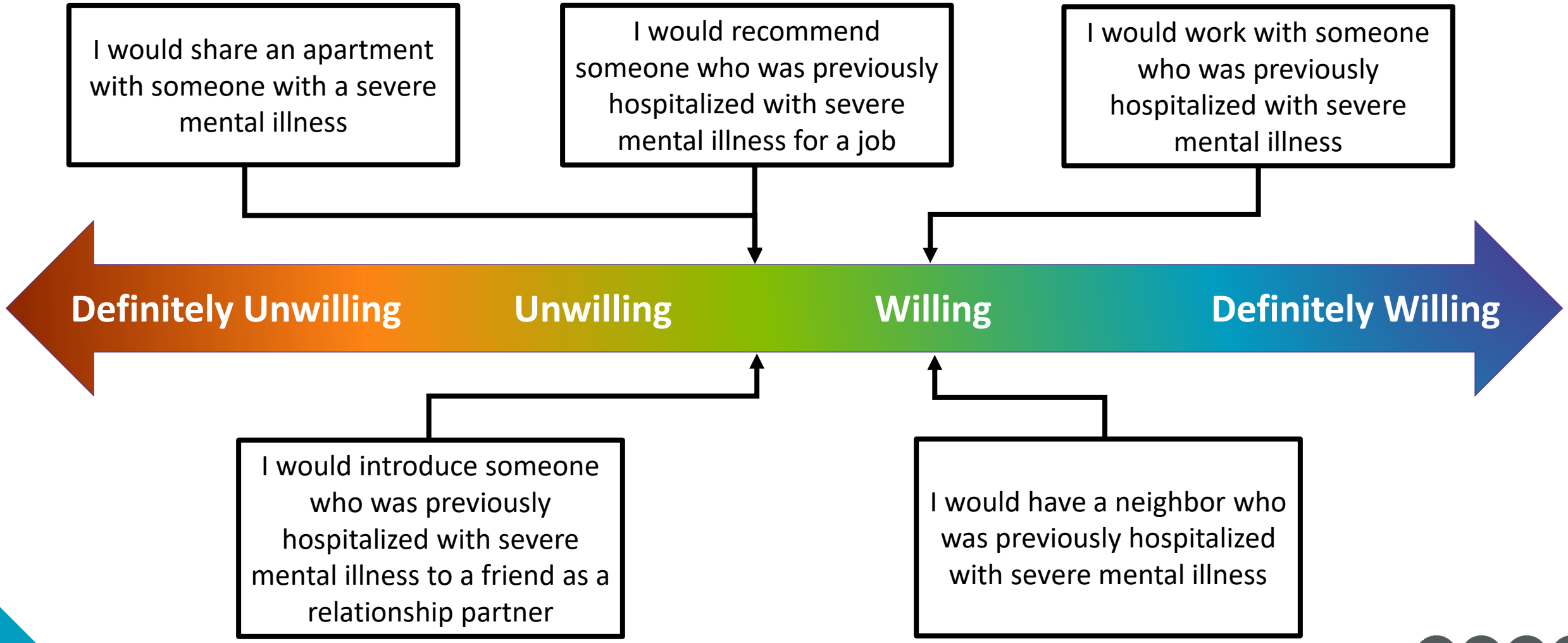
Pharmacy Student Stigma

Mental Health Stigma

Public Stigma

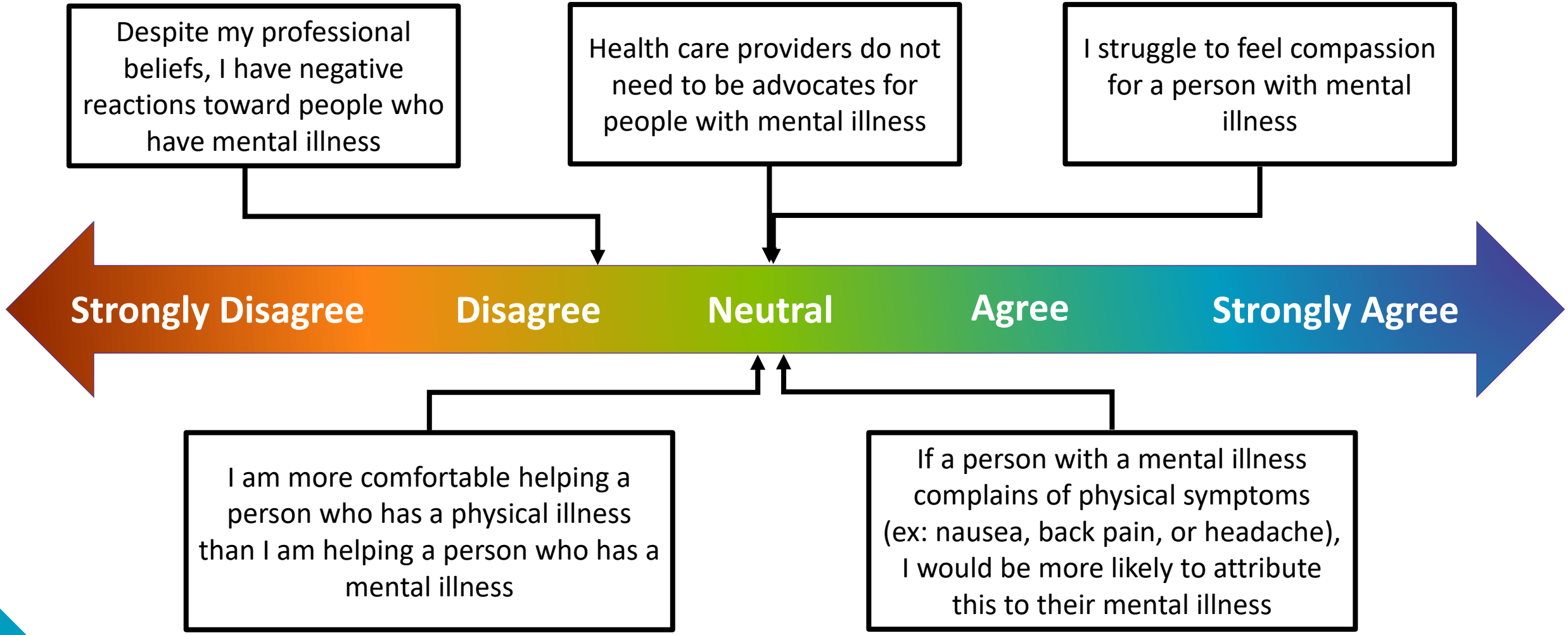
Pharmacy Student Stigma

Pharmacy Student Stigma: Social Distance Scale



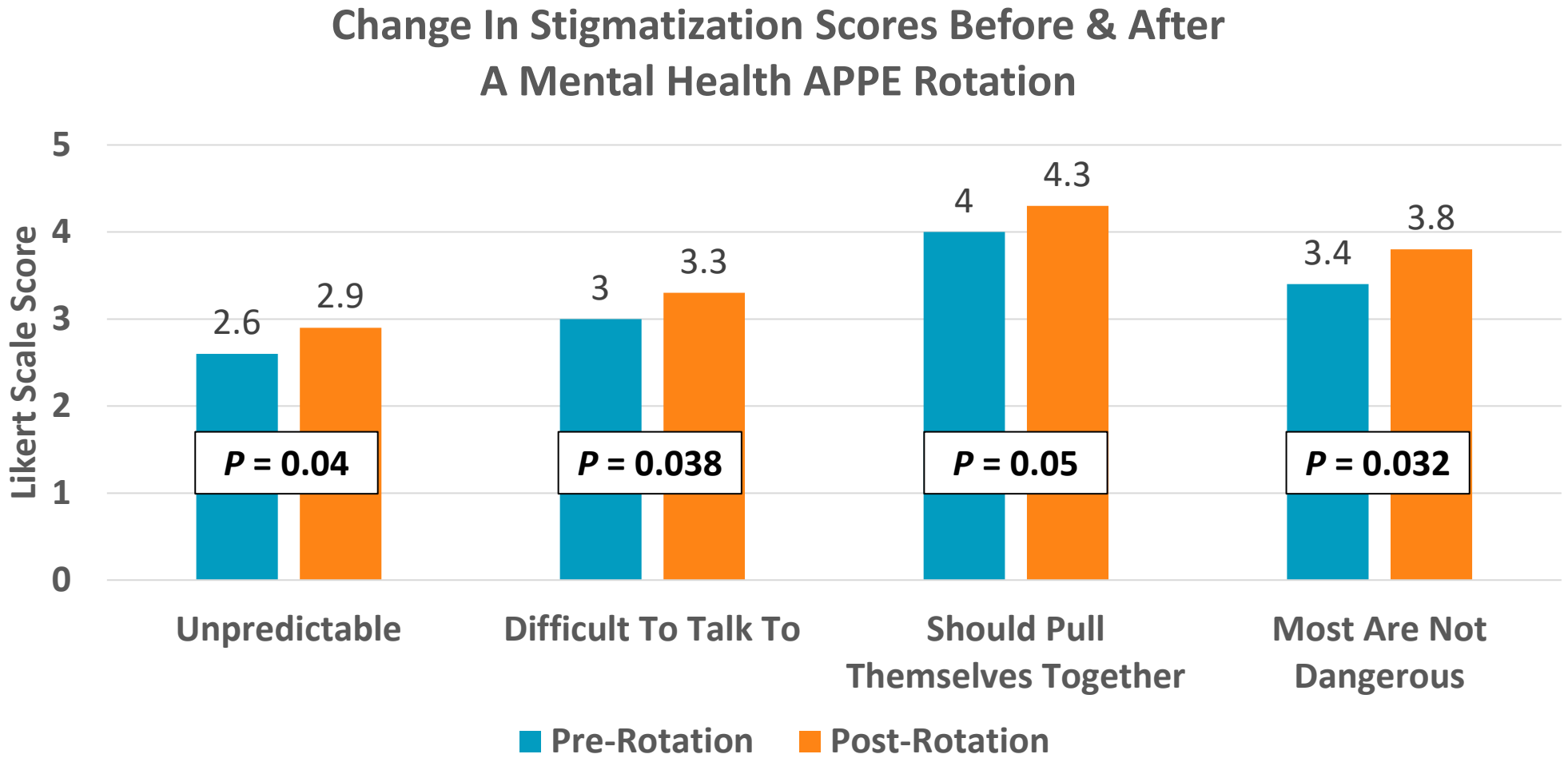
Harris et al. *Ment Health Clin*. 2018;7(5):187-193.

Pharmacy Student Stigma: Open Minds Scale



Harris et al. *Ment Health Clin*. 2018;7(5):187-193.

Our Thoughts: Offer An APPE Rotation!



5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)
Positive statements are reverse scored. Higher scores indicate more favorable

Cates ME, Woolley TW. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(5):194-200.

Our Thoughts: Get Them Involved!

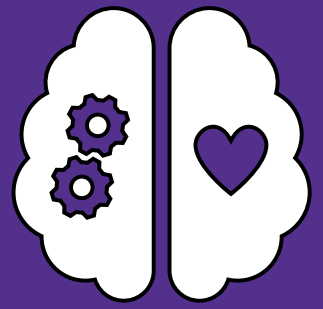
Our Thoughts: Let Them Have Fun!

Discussion Point #2

What are some methods you have used to help learners overcome stigma and help them become more comfortable with patient interactions?

Potential Barriers for Communication

Mental Health Stigma



Potential Barriers for Communication

What About Your Pharmacy Schools?

Didactics

Is mental health part of your didactic course work? If so, what year is it taught?

Rotations

Is mental health a required clinical rotation or just offered as an elective?

Prepared

Do you think students feel prepared to provide care to mental health patients?

Counseling

Do you think students feel comfortable counseling on mental health medications?

Goodman et al. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(2):69-73.

What About Your Pharmacy Schools?

Didactics

72.3% of students reported having mental health as part of their didactic course

Rotations

Prepared

Counseling

Goodman et al. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(2):69-73.

What About Your Pharmacy Schools?

Didactics

Rotations

4.3% of students reported their mental health rotation as required (21% as an elective)

Prepared

Counseling

Goodman et al. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(2):69-73.

What About Your Pharmacy Schools?

Didactics

Rotations

Prepared

58.2% of students reported feeling prepared to provide care to mental health patients

Counseling

Goodman et al. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(2):69-73.

What About Your Pharmacy Schools?

Didactics

Rotations

Prepared

Counseling

41.4% of students reported feeling less comfortable counseling on mental health medications

Goodman et al. Ment Health Clin. 2018;7(2):69-73.

Discussion Point #3

What resources do you use to help your students improve their baseline knowledge of mental health diagnoses and medications?

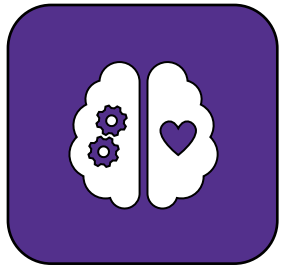
Example Resources

Compile a shared drive/folder or create a FAQ for students and residents to reference throughout rotation

- Clinical Practice Guidelines
- AAPP Education & Resource Documents
- NAMI Medication Education Sheets
- Antipsychotic Dose Conversion Calculator
- Helpful YouTube Channels

Potential Barriers for Communication

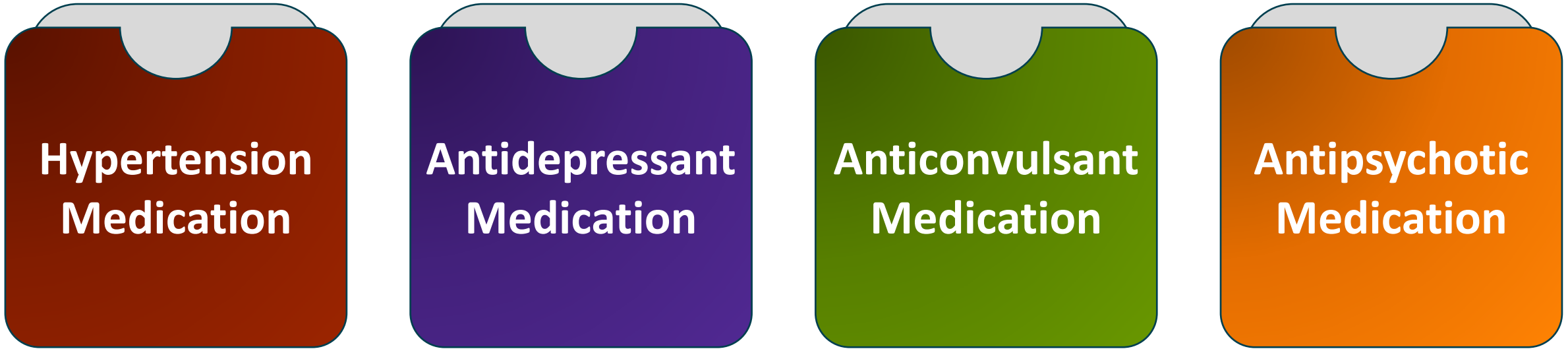
Potential Barriers for Communication



Minimal Inpatient Experience

Minimal Outpatient Experience

Pharmacy Student Counseling



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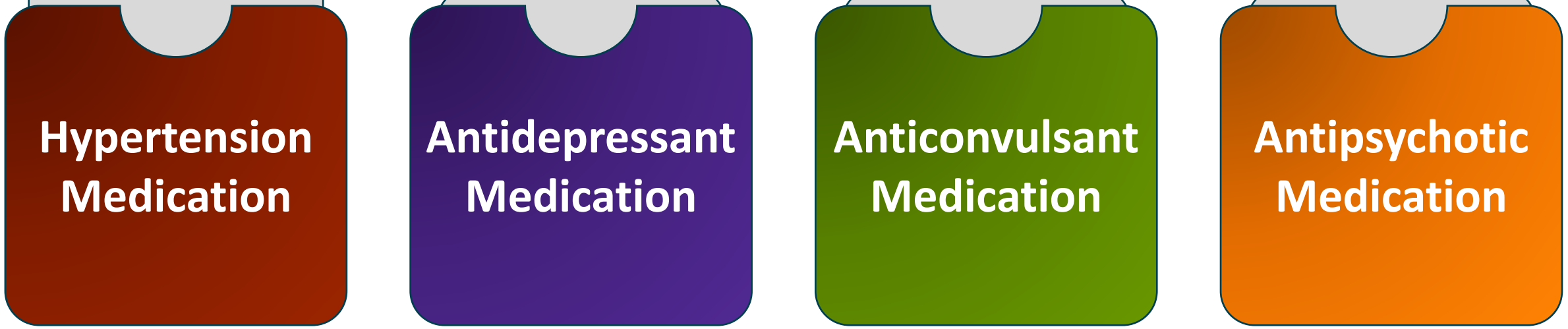
Pharmacy Student Counseling

87% of students have counseled on a hypertension medication



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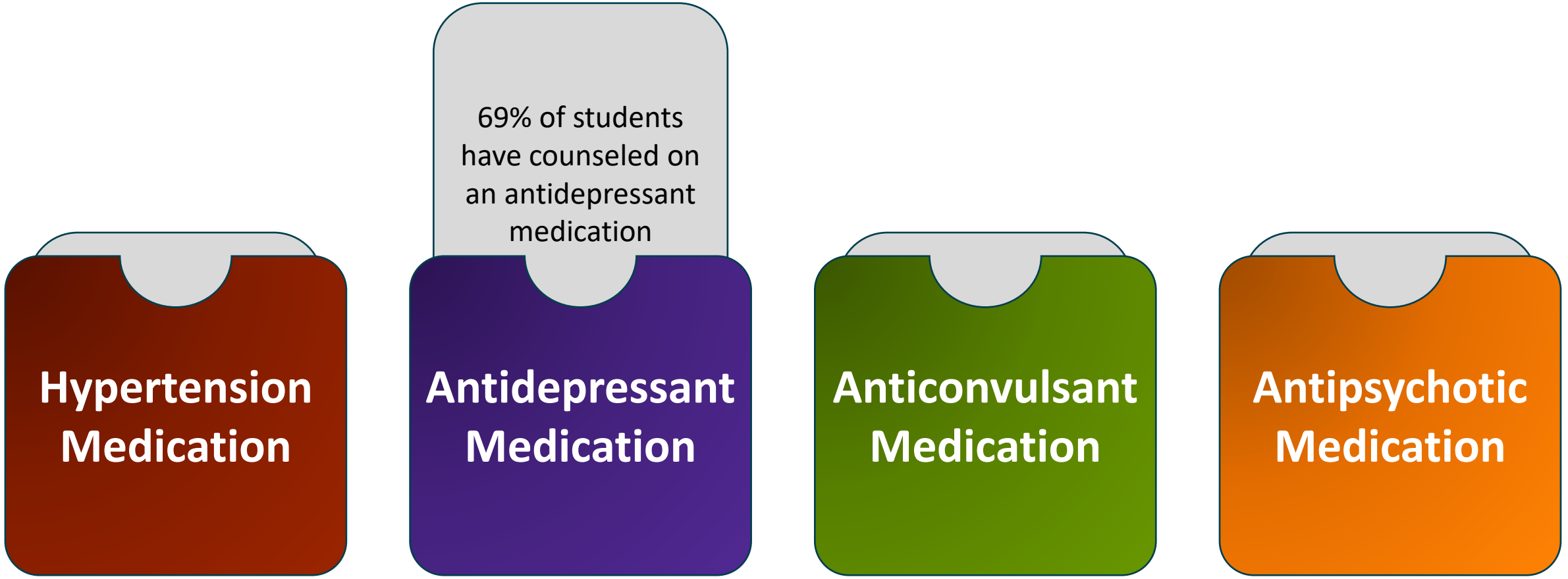
Pharmacy Student Counseling



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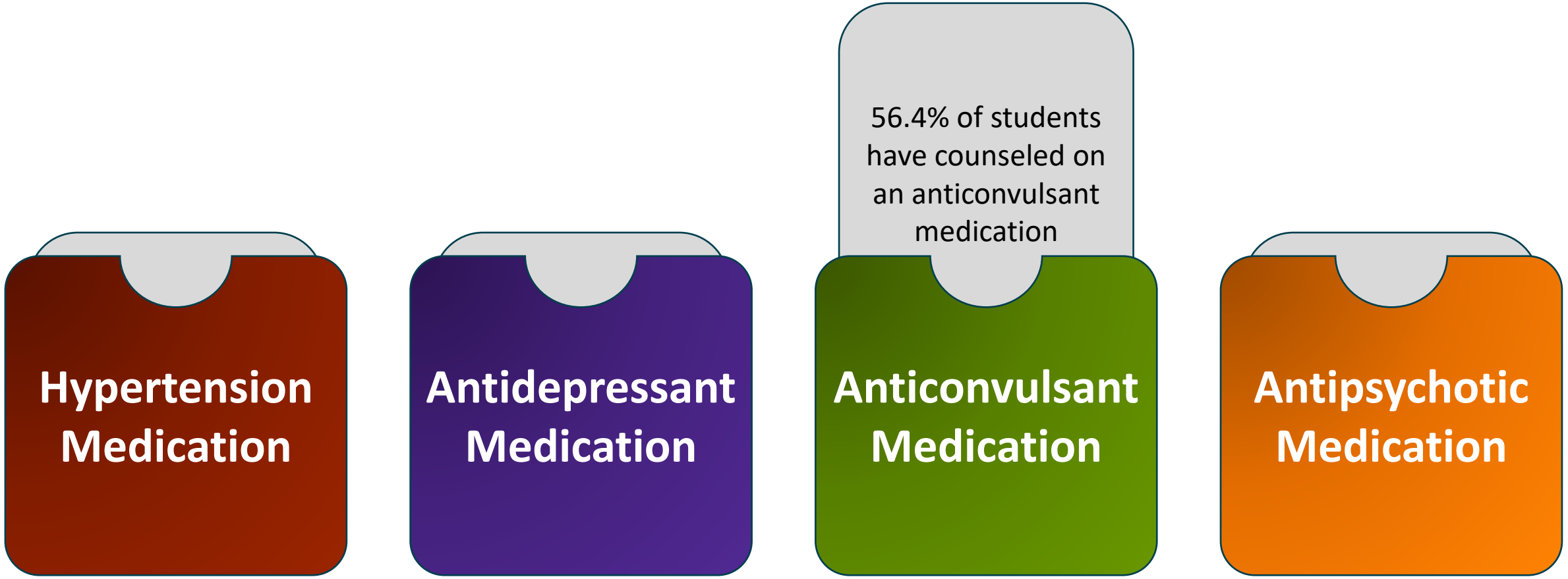
Pharmacy Student Counseling



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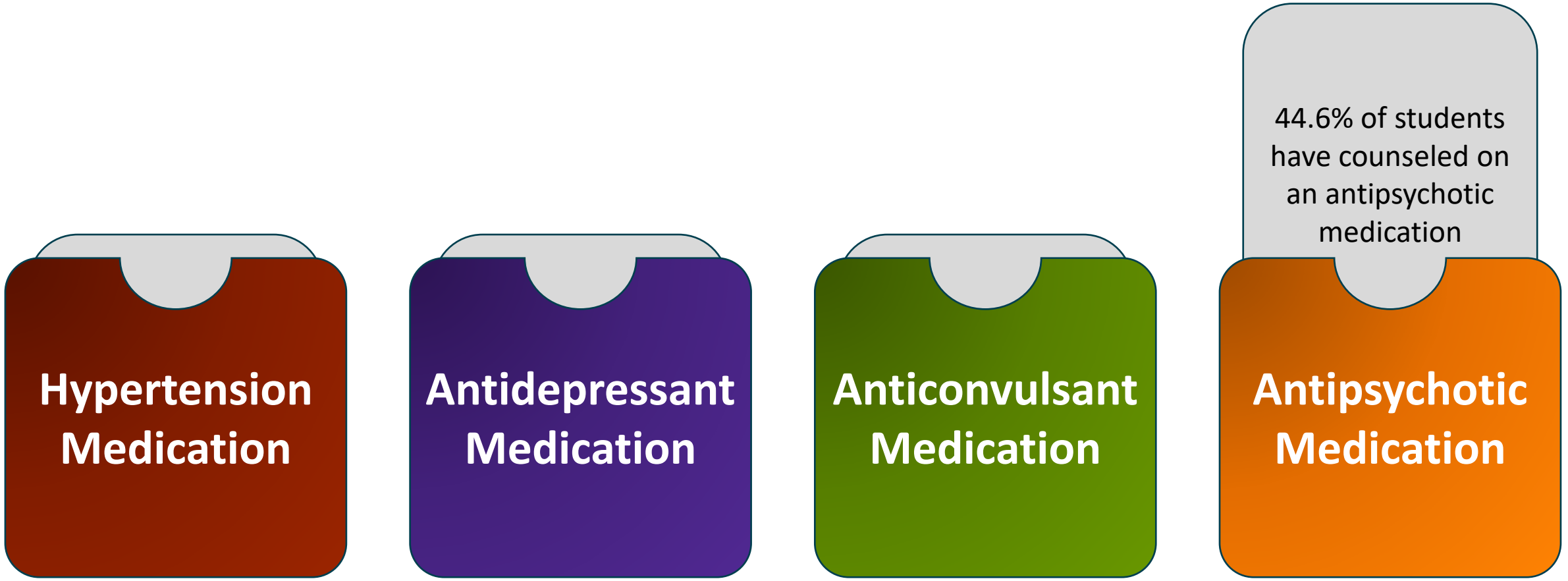
Pharmacy Student Counseling



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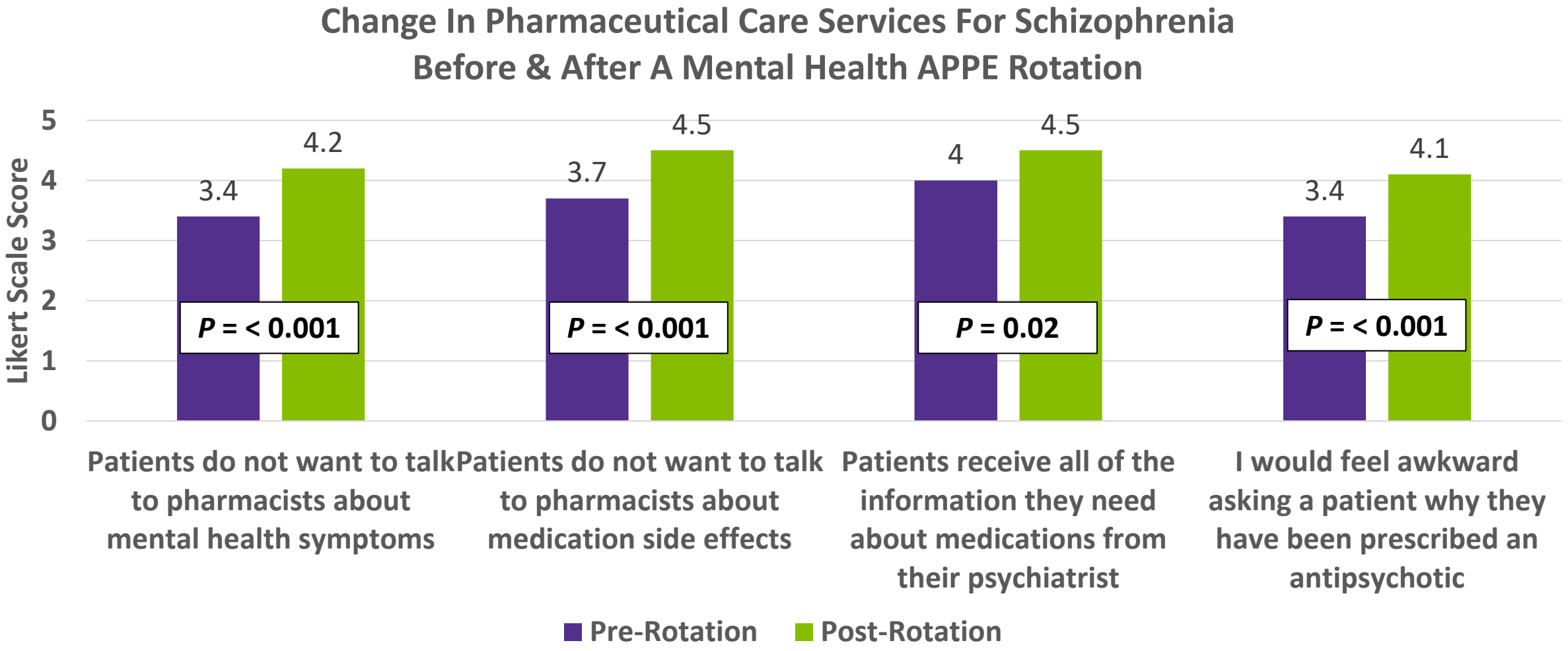
Impact of a Mental Health Rotation



5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)
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What Can I Do To Help?

Set The Stage

Communicate the workflow of the rotation site including the role of the pharmacist & pharmacy student

McDonough RP et al. Am J Pharm Educ. 2006;70(3):58

What Can I Do To Help?

Incorporate

Get the student involved with the treatment team or patient care activities as soon as possible

McDonough RP et al. Am J Pharm Educ. 2006;70(3):58

What Can I Do To Help?

Establish Relationships

Introduce the student at every encounter and emphasize they are a member of the team

McDonough RP et al. Am J Pharm Educ. 2006;70(3):58

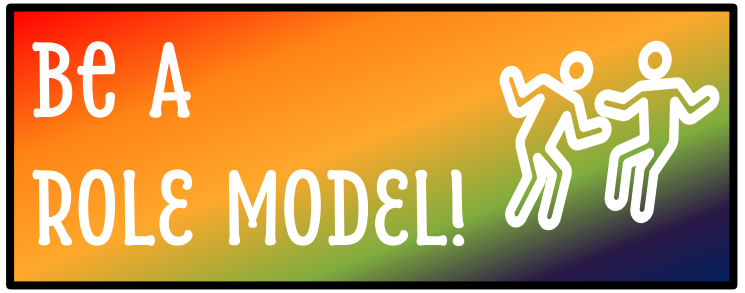
What Can I Do To Help?

4

3

2

1



What Can I Do To Help?

4

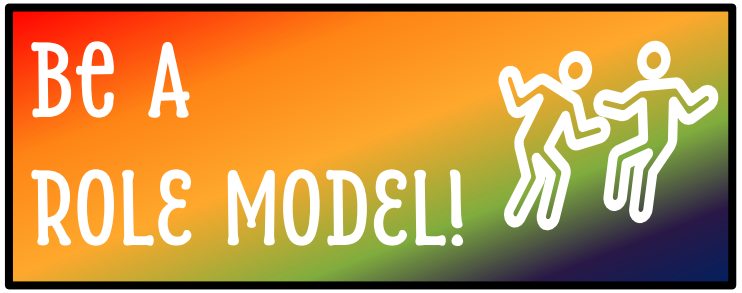
3

2

1

Assessments & Education

1. Set expectations for learner at the beginning of the rotation
2. Let student observe at least 2-3 examples (AIMS, counseling, etc.)
3. Teach student how to identify who would benefit and when to engage
4. Once comfortable, put student in charge of identifying and performing all assessments & education



What Can I Do To Help?

4

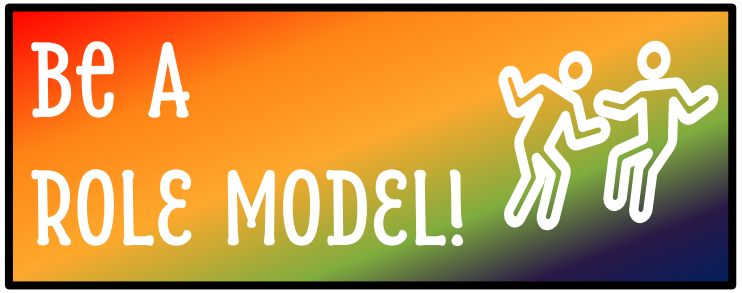
3

Patient Interviews

1. Set expectations for learner at the beginning of the rotation
2. Ensure patient knows the student is a participant of treatment planning
3. Teach students how to use recovery-language to avoid use of inappropriate language that may be triggering
4. Could lead a “mock interview” with student for practice

2

1



What Can I Do To Help?

4

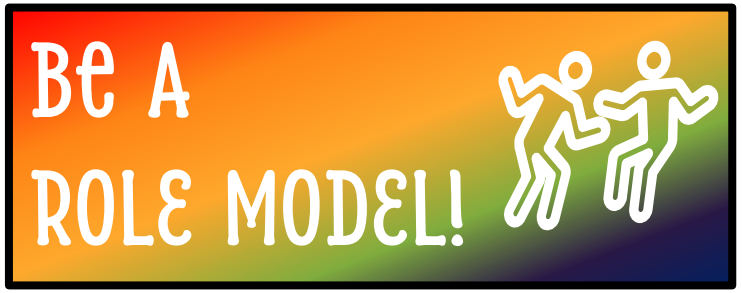
Medication Education Groups

1. This is a great way for students to interact with patients in a less formal setting
2. Let student observe 2-3 groups prior to attempting themselves
3. Get them involved by creating their own handouts or games
4. Teach them how to identify patients that may not be appropriate for group setting

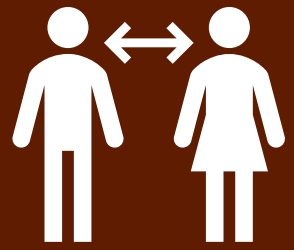
3

2

1



What Can I Do To Help?



Physician Interactions

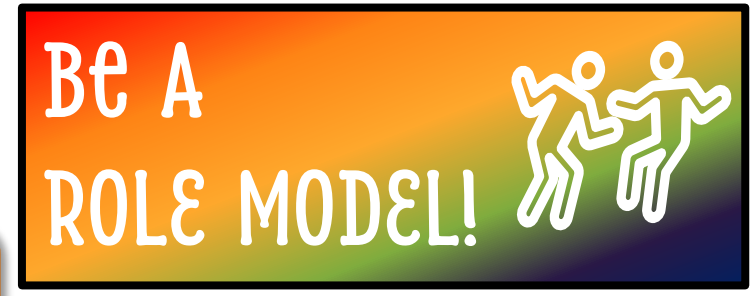
1. Have them attend treatment team rounds and meetings as much as possible
2. Encourage students to answer drug information questions early in rotation
3. If able, have students sit in treatment team room with psychiatry residents or medical students

4

3

2

1



Discussion Point #4

What experiences have you used to help students become more comfortable communicating with mental health patients and providers?

Questions?

Thank you for attending!

Appendix: Helpful Links

a. **Helpful YouTube Channels:**
    a. Memorable Psychiatry: https://www.youtube.com/@MemorablePsych
    b. Dirty Medicine: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5rTEahBdxV6VebHtDz5tI756eQFWTNsr
    c. Psychopharmacology Institute: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=psychopharmacology+institute
    d. NEI Psychopharm: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=nei+psychopharmacology
    e. Ninja Nerd: https://www.youtube.com/@NinjaNerdOfficial

b. Treatment Guidelines
    a. AAPP: https://aapp.org/guideline/external
    b. VA/DoD: https://www.healthquality.va.gov/

c. Medication Education Sheets
    a. NAMI: https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Treatments/Mental-Health-Medications/

d. Antipsychotic Dose Conversions
    a. https://psychopharmacopeia.com/antipsychotic_conversion.php