



PHARM CIRCLE

Connecting stories from Memorial's PharmD for Working Professionals Program

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From the Dean's Desk Dr. Shawn Bugden



The Pharm Circle began in December of 2019 as a way to connect our students and celebrate our program. Five years later we bring you our 10th issue as we continue to proudly celebrate our Working Professionals Program (WPP) **pharmily**. This September we will welcome a new cohort of students to the program. They will be onsite for their first clinical skills course in September.

In 2025, we are planning to welcome the final cohort in the program so this will be the last chance to join the Memorial WPP pharmily. Memorial is fully committed to supporting all of its students through the program and have been proud to celebrate our graduates as they go on to do great things in the pharmacy world.

In our 10th issue, we profile faculty member Ms. Karina Arnold who teaches in the entry-to-practice program and coordinates several pharmaceutical care courses in the working professionals program. We also catch up with Dr. Bradley Adams, a program alumnus from the 2019 cohort. Earning his Doctor of Pharmacy degree opened doors for him both professionally and personally. We also proudly profile four students who, while at various stages of the program, are enjoying the learning experience and connecting with pharmacists from across the country. And during February and Spring convocations this year, we bid adieu to 14 students who crossed the ceremonial stage to receive their degree parchment.

Thank you for taking the time to read about our program. Enjoy the summer - it is always too short.

We have a diverse group of faculty, external content authors, and instructional designers who work together to make this program a success. We will share their profiles in every issue. Keep an eye out to learn more about our growing phamily!

Instructor Spotlight

Karina Arnold



Karina Arnold is a pharmacist and a teaching assistant professor in the School of Pharmacy and holds a clinical assistant professor role within the Discipline of Family Medicine. She completed her pharmacy degree at Memorial University and has over 20 years of pharmacy experience.

In the early days of her pharmacy career, she was practicing as a community pharmacist when she had the opportunity to assist in the pharmacy practice lab of one of her former classmates (Dr. Amy Clarke). This experience reignited her interest in teaching—an interest that started in her childhood and was influenced by her father, a junior high teacher. For Karina, he modelled the type of teacher she aspired to become as he created learning environments using kindness, relatability, and humour.

Two years later, she returned to the School of Pharmacy on a one-year teaching replacement. By then, she was a mom of two young boys and worked full-time as a community pharmacist. Adding a teaching assignment to her already full slate was challenging, but she embraced (and excelled at) the opportunity. Her hard work and perseverance led to a full-time position in the School of Pharmacy in 2014, first as a pharmacy skills instructor and later as a teaching assistant professor. Following in her father's footsteps, Karina is passionate about motivating students to become the best versions of themselves. Her commitment to teaching the next generation of pharmacists was recently recognized by the students who presented her with the Teaching Excellence Award for 2023.

As a mentor to final-year students in the entry-to-practice PharmD program, Karina plays a crucial role in their professional development. Her teaching responsibilities include first-year pharmacy practice, health systems, minor ailments prescribing, contraception, and menopause. She also coordinates pharmacotherapy courses in the PharmD for Working Professionals program. Her teaching approach is to simply bring life to the classroom, using relaxed and interactive methods and incorporating examples and personal experiences to engage students and bring realism to the pharmacist's role. Her dedication to teaching even extends beyond the classroom as she shares her passion with students during their clinical rotations.

A few years ago, Karina enrolled in a master's in counselling psychology program at Yorkville University. Returning to school after a 20-plus year absence was daunting, especially since she continued to work full-time while raising two busy teenagers. She is currently completing the final component of the program (her practicum) and will graduate in December 2024.

Being a student again was a transformative experience for Karina. She faced the same challenges as her students, like learning to balance time management, finances, family, and confidence. This journey of personal growth has deepened her understanding of her student's struggles and has made her teaching more relatable. She says, "There were many moments of doubt and stress. But with the support of family and friends, the journey was well worth it! I am so grateful to have been able to complete this degree." Her passion for mental health, her pharmacy background, and her relationship with her patients and

students have all converged to make this career path a perfect fit. “There is nothing more rewarding than watching the first-year students evolve and grow into confident and enthusiastic professionals eager to jump into their pharmacy careers.” As a budding mental health counsellor, she hopes to inspire and empower the young and the old to continue to grow as individuals and live a life that brings them happiness and fulfilment.

Karina's personal journey of growth and success has taught her the value of pursuing educational goals. She spends her spare time with her friends, family, and dogs, and enjoys binge-watching Netflix. This past year, she also began travelling a bit more to visit her sons who are pursuing their own dreams in British Columbia and New Brunswick. She remarks, “Watching your children pursue their passion is rewarding, but it is also fulfilling to pursue your own.” She encourages others to take that leap – whether it be to pursue PharmD studies or work towards other educational goals. The outcome of learning is always worth the hard work, and, in the words of Rachel Wolchin, “If we were meant to stay in one place, we’d have roots instead of feet.” Her words of encouragement are a testament to her belief in the transformative power of education.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Memorial University’s School of Pharmacy wishes to advise the pharmacy practice community that the eighth and final cohort of students will be admitted to the PharmD for Working Professionals Program (WPP) in the fall of 2025.

The WPP is a limited-life program. It was designed to meet the needs of pharmacists who wish to complete a Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

The first cohort of students was admitted in the fall of 2018. To date, almost 100 pharmacists from across Canada have completed the degree. The School of Pharmacy remains fully committed to supporting all students enrolled in the program.

The application deadline date for the 2025 admission cycle is March 1, 2025.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the program coordinator at mcgrathc@mun.ca



Important
Dates

For future applicants:

Next application deadline date:
March 1, 2025

For current students:

PHAR 4900 Clinical Skills I
Onsite: **September 13-15, 2024**

PHAR 6900 Clinical Skills II
Onsite: **end of April or early May 2025**



Catching up with program alumnus:

Dr. Bradley Adams

(PharmD, 2022)

Growing up in New Denmark, New Brunswick (NB), Dr. Bradley Adams (PharmD '22) knew he was going to be a pharmacist when he was in grade one. Though he admits he didn't have a clue what that even meant. When you know, you know.

All roads lead to pharmacy

Brad attended Dalhousie University's College of Pharmacy and graduated in 2016. Armed with way more knowledge about the profession than his six-year-old self, he headed to Perth-Andover, a small village nestled in the Saint John River Valley in northwestern NB, to begin a career in community pharmacy. He spent six years working in various community pharmacy settings in rural and urban NB.

In the middle of his six-year community pharmacy tenure, he decided to pursue a PharmD degree at Memorial University. In his own words, Brad began his second pharmacy degree journey a few Taylor Swift eras ago, in September of 2019. Little did he know what would happen just a few months later and how being a pharmacist during a pandemic would give new meaning to the concept of applied learning.

He adapted, perhaps even thrived. He found many doors opening for him, including the one that facilitated his transition into his current niche as a hospital pharmacist at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre in Moncton, NB. He focuses on oncology and cardiology.

In his spare time, he occasionally returns to his roots, picking up casual shifts in community pharmacy.

Advancing practice and gaining confidence

Brad advanced his practice in a variety of ways as a result of completing a PharmD degree. Most notably, his practice is positively impacted by his increased confidence.

When he completed his first pharmacy degree, he jumped feet first into the healthcare world thinking that patients would be on the best drug therapies at all times, that patients and other health care professionals would always want to collaborate, that drug coverage issues would be nonexistent, and that people would listen to his recommendations. Despite plenty of student practice experiences leading up to his eventual licensure as a pharmacist, reality quickly settled in.

When he finished his PharmD degree, he re-examined the lessons he once learned. He kept the realities of pharmacoeconomics, human behavior, regulatory requirements, social determinants of health, and advocacy at the forefront of his mind, as opposed to being solely focused on "Therapeutic Choices" with a side of PubMed as the only way to go. His patients have definitely benefited from this re-evaluation of knowledge the most.

Exploring opportunities post PharmD

Brad attributes so much of his career path to the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs) he completed during his time in the PharmD program. Under the incredible guidance of his preceptors Drs. Liam Walsh and Stephanie Moulton at the Horizon Health Network, Brad explored the world of hospital pharmacy and realized it was his path forward.

He also became a team member of the novel New Brunswick Pharmacy Assessment Clinic, a pharmacist-led referral-based clinical responsible for the assessment and prescribing of nirmatrelvir-ritonavir for patients with COVID-19. This led to some innovative pharmacy practice research work with a team of pharmacists who were some of Brad's role models. He presented the findings bilingually at the CSHP Together 2023 Conference (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10049770/>) in Banff, Alberta. The findings were also published in the Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37767393/>).

A few years ago, Brad took on the role of a per-course instructor in the School of Pharmacy at Memorial University. His teaching area focuses on patient safety, medication incident analysis, and healthcare quality. This role now seems like a natural stepping stone from his days as a teaching assistant with Dr. Tiffany Lee, back when he was a first-year student in the PharmD program.

He has also been a member of various working groups with the New Brunswick College of Pharmacists including the OAMT Practice Directive Working Group and the New Brunswick Pharmacy Workplace Wellness Task Force.

Connections and collaborations

Before starting his PharmD journey, Brad expected the program would be a refresher of his bachelor of science in pharmacy degree and that he would be able to review his previous knowledge using a different lens to elevate his practice and enhance his patient care skills. While this certainly did happen for him, the most impactful part of doing his PharmD degree happened to be the connections made with his classmates and instructors from across the country. He found the varying perspectives and experiences shared amongst peers allowed him to view his own practice in a different light. It had a big impact on him. And he feels he is a much better pharmacist because of it.



Enjoying solo travel in London, England

With experience comes wisdom

As cliché as it sounds, Brad's best advice to pharmacists considering doing a PharmD is to simply take the plunge and make the most out of the experience. On paper, the degree allows you to be called a doctor of something. Beyond the title, the working professionals' program can be a springboard to knowledge growth, patient care enhancement, and overall self-improvement.

As with anything in life, it is what you make of it. Brad has nothing but positive things to say about his time in the PharmD for Working Professionals Program.

Beyond pharmacy

Brad loves to solo travel. After completing his degree in 2022, he went on three independent adventures abroad and is in the midst of planning a fourth one.

He relates to Henry Ford's famous quote "One of the greatest discoveries a man makes, one of his great surprises, is to find he can do what he was afraid he couldn't do." Jumping into the unknown does not have to be a scary thing. It might even turn into a passion someday, just like it did for Brad when he ventured into solo travel and hospital pharmacy (both ventures he partially attributes to the confidence he gained from doing a PharmD degree).

Students in the Spotlight

We like to celebrate our students and let readers know a little more about the people in our neighbourhood. We share student profiles in every issue.

2020 Cohort Alishia Anstey

Alishia lived her childhood in a small town called Summerford in Central Newfoundland. She migrated to St. Johns in 2008 to attend Memorial University with ambitions to become a pharmacist. In 2014 she made that dream a reality when she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy.

When she was a pharmacy student, she worked at Sobeys' pharmacy in Mount Pearl. After graduation, she was offered a position with the same company as a relief pharmacist for the Avalon region. This gave her an opportunity to see a variety of practices and locations before she settled on community pharmacy with a specialty in addictions at Lawton's Campbell Avenue. At that practice site, she worked with the team at the Opioid treatment center to provide care for those with substance abuse issues. Five years later, she moved to Lawton's Nursing home services to provide care to the long-term care residents.

In 2020, she made the leap into an exciting new opportunity with BioScript Pharmacy in Newfoundland and has been practicing there ever since. "BioScript has been a big change, but I really enjoy the patient care side of my job. I see a lot of novel medications that can help vulnerable patients who struggle to navigate the health care system and access these specialty medications."

Continuing education is one of Alishia's passions. She has been volunteering with the Pharmacy Association of Newfoundland and Labrador conference committee since 2015. This committee is designed to create a lineup of continuing education credits for the pharmacists in the province.

She also decided to further her pharmacy career in 2020 and applied to the PharmD for Working Professionals Program. That year (2020) was certainly a year of change for Alishia. Not only was she starting a new job and returning to university, but she was also expanding her family – all while



adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic. "I found out I was pregnant with my first child when I got accepted into the program. I was also starting a new job with BioScript Pharmacy. I chose to follow the five-year course completion map so I wouldn't be overwhelmed with all the changes and so that I could really get the most of my time learning from this program while balancing my other responsibilities." With just one year remaining in the program, Alishia plans to complete her degree in 2025.

Alishia lives in Portugal Cove with her husband, Craig, and their now three-year-old son Alexander. They also live with Ovi, a rambunctious feline who often behaves more like a dog. When she is not working or doing schoolwork, she dedicates time to her son and husband and to adventures together around Newfoundland.

2021 Cohort *Krista Doirin*



Born and raised in Saint John, New Brunswick, Krista is a clinical pharmacist on the cardiac care unit at the Saint John Regional Hospital.

Her trajectory into the pharmacy profession began during her high school years when she worked as a clerk at a local pharmacy. After high school, she progressed into the role of a pharmacy technician through on-the-job training while simultaneously completing a bachelor of science degree. She eventually moved to Halifax where she continued working as a full-time pharmacy technician until she was accepted into pharmacy school at Dalhousie University. She graduated from the program in 2015.

While in pharmacy school, Krista fell in love with clinical hospital-based practice and was accepted into a residency program at the Saint John Regional Hospital. After completing her residency (six months late due to the birth of her first child), she began working in the cardiac care unit where she has worked ever since.

Several of Krista's colleagues completed a post-baccalaureate PharmD degree and encouraged her to apply. Cardiology has been a passion of Krista's from early on in her career. So she saw the Working Professionals program as an opportunity to expand her knowledge base and explore other areas of the discipline.

The program did not disappoint. She followed the three-year completion map, consolidating information previously learned and exploring new areas of pharmacy practice. She even discovered a new interest in community-based clinical practice.

Krista just graduated at spring 2024 convocation. She may be moving on from her time at Memorial University, but she is leaving with new friends and colleagues that will continue to be confidants and resources throughout her career.

Though cardiology remains her primary passion – and she continues to work in the same cardiac care unit – she has entered into a partnership with a family physician's office in New Brunswick. This requires office consults once a week to review medically complex patients and optimize their medical therapy. She credits the PharmD program for giving her the skills, confidence, and contacts to develop this novel partnership within her community.

Though the program is hard work and demanding at times, she finished her degree while working full-time, raising two wonderful children, and managing the stress that comes with a husband who travels frequently for work. The PharmD program has changed her clinical practice. She hopes by sharing her experience that she can inspire other pharmacists (who are considering the program) to take the leap.



2022 Cohort

Tamara Baker

Tamara Baker is originally from Moncton, New Brunswick. She completed two degrees in Nova Scotia: a Bachelor of Science in Biology at Acadia University in 2013 and a Bachelor of Pharmacy at Dalhousie University in 2017. She also completed an Accredited Canadian Hospital Pharmacy Residency at the Saint John Regional Hospital in 2018.

After completing her residency in New Brunswick, she returned to Halifax to begin her career in hospital pharmacy. She worked in geriatrics for two years, then transitioned to internal medicine (a practice area she truly loves) where she is now in a team lead position. She works on both the Medical Teaching Unit (MTU) and the Intermediate Care Unit (IMCU) at the QEII Health Sciences Centre and is also a preceptor to many pharmacy students and residents. Her areas of interest include infectious disease/antimicrobial stewardship, substance use disorder/harm reduction, and environmentally sustainable pharmacy practices.

During her initial years working in internal medicine, Tamara learned a lot and saw a variety of illnesses. This exposure instilled a desire to obtain more therapeutic knowledge and gain project management and leadership skills. Things she felt she could learn from a PharmD degree.

From discussions with colleagues who completed the PharmD for Working Professionals Program, Tamara heard about the applied learning courses whereby students implement projects into their practice site.

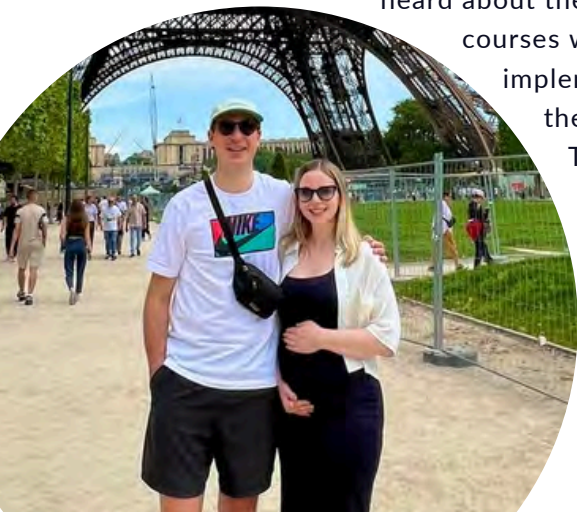
This, in addition to the program's flexibility and proximity to Nova Scotia, influenced her decision to



choose Memorial University to do her PharmD degree. Tamara began the program in the fall of 2022 and is grateful for the experience. She is enjoying the program and is even seeing the immediate impact of her learning within her practice site. She says, "several times I encountered something new at work that I had just learned about in a course and was able to apply this timely knowledge, and I have even shared this knowledge with the pharmacy students and residents I precept."

Post-graduation, Tamara plans to continue working in internal medicine as the team lead and will apply her knowledge and skills gained from the program in her everyday practice. She hopes to continue to implement quality improvement and research projects in her area and contribute to the exciting advancement of pharmacy practice.

Outside of pharmacy practice, Tamara enjoys spending time with friends and family and visiting live music events. She also has an adventurous spirit and embraces outdoor activities, especially hiking and camping. She is about to embark on her newest and greatest adventure in October, as she and her husband Matthew are expecting their first child! They could not be more excited to welcome this new addition in the fall.



2023 Cohort

Sejin Hwang

As a primary care provider in Canada, Sejin realized he needed to refresh his clinical knowledge and skills. He also felt some pressure because his more than 15 years of experience as a specialist and manager were not recognized in Canada. Despite finding this experience challenging, he embraced the opportunity to start afresh in his adopted country. And this led him to the PharmD for Working Professionals Program at Memorial University where he is just wrapping up his first year of studies.

Sejin appreciates that the program recognizes its student's work commitments and, as such, offers a flexible curriculum. He accesses the course's Brightspace site when he travels or has work pauses, allowing him to learn at his pace.

When he completes the program, he plans to continue to advance his career in Canada and aspires to use his geriatric pharmacy knowledge as a consultant pharmacist one day.

Outside the pharmacy profession, Sejin is an e-sport enthusiast (playing or watching computer games). His favorite players, Faker and Chovy, are just as famous in the field of e-sport as Canada's Wayne Gretzky or Connor McDavid are in the field of hockey. He understands this hobby may seem nerdlike, but he feels diversity is the spice of life and e-sport is a way for him to unwind from a busy work and school life.

One of his dreams is to take his family on a camping trip in the Canadian wilderness when his three-year-old son, Jayce, is a little older. Living a life connected to nature and people (and not to machines and technology) is one of the reasons he immigrated to Canada. Sejin looks forward to making that dream a reality someday, possibly even as a way to celebrate his graduation when he completes his PharmD degree in a few years.



Sejin was born and raised in Korea and completed his pharmacy studies at Seoul National University in 2004. He was a pharmacist in a general hospital with more than 2,000 beds, covering different departments that handled areas like A&E, cancer chemotherapy, inpatient, and hospice. Additionally, he served two years at a government hospital within the US military base in Bagram, Afghanistan. While there, he met his future wife, Hyeyun (a physiotherapist), and they got married when they returned to Korea a decade ago.

After returning to Korea from Afghanistan, Sejin cared for elderly patients at a community hospital, later earning his Board-Certified Geriatric Pharmacist designation. He also obtained a BA in statistics and an MBA from the Korean National Open University.

As a pharmacy manager at a community hospital, he conducted case studies for fellow pharmacists, co-hosted a podcast with doctors, and authored health reference books for the public.

Sejin relocated to Canada in 2018 and obtained his pharmacy license soon after. He worked for Rexall and is currently employed at Walmart. But it was not a seamless transition. There were challenges, mainly because he treated his community practice in Canada like his previous practice in Korea where he had to use the abilities and attitude of a specialist. Unlike in Canada, where primary care is solid, pharmacists in Korea need to be a specialist to earn respect as a health care professional.



Happy Happenings



KUDOS!

Congratulations to Dr. Shawn Bugden who just finished his second and final term as President of the Canadian Pharmacists' Association



SALUTE!

Congratulations to Dr. Stephen Coombs who recently received the School of Pharmacy's Teaching Excellence Award



NEWSWORTHY

Many faculty and staff from the School of Pharmacy attended the Canadian Pharmacy Education and Research Conference (CPERC) and presented their education and pharmacy practice research, including 1 oral presentation and 8 posters

HATS OFF TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES!

Fourteen students conferred their degrees at the February (In-Absentia) and Spring 2024 convocation ceremonies. Congratulations to:

Randa Ataya
Michael Boyle
Jillian Croke
Jill Cyr
Krista Doirin
Emily Edison
Paige Ellis

Fabianne Mahrous
Rebecca Oake
Robyn O'Rielly
C. Karen Rose
Amer Sharaf
Natalie Warren
Najwe Wehbe

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON SCHOOL OF PHARMACY COMMITTEES (2022-2024)

Academic Council
Nishi Gupta

Professional Suitability
Holly Noftall

Recruitment
Alishia Anstey

Undergraduate Student Admissions
P. Garrett O'Leary

Undergraduate Studies
Sarah Hyslop