



LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

Student Pharmacist Collaboration with Loma Linda University Employee Health Tracking COVID-19 Exposures

Alireza Hayatshahi, Alireza FakhriRavari, Heather Hogue, Khaled Bahjri, Christopher Jacobson, Justin Kinney,
Lisa Hong, April Wilson
Loma Linda University Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy

Objectives

- During the first few months of COVID-19 pandemic, several advanced pharmacy practice experience (APPE) rotations were suspended due to the safety challenges
- At the same time a significant number of healthcare workers were exposed to confirmed or suspected patient cases or colleagues in the front line of inpatient or outpatient settings
- Through a collaboration between school of pharmacy the office of experiential education and LLUH employee health, a group of APPE students whose rotations were cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions, participated serving in an emergency planned COVID-19 tracking center

Results

- Between March and May 2020, the total of 63 confirmed COVID-19 patient cases were identified in both acute care and outpatient clinics at Loma Linda University Health
- The total of 1914 employees were potentially exposed to the positive patient cases
- The total of 32 confirmed COVID-19 positive employees potentially exposed 578 colleagues
- The rate of positive cases significantly increased from March to April. However, the rate of positive cases of employees remained steady from April to May 2020

Conclusions

This experience demonstrated an innovative interprofessional including medicine, pharmacy, and nursing faculty and students for a team approach during the first months of the pandemic crisis which allowed APPE pharmacy students to provide a significant service as a part of the COVID-19 tracking center .

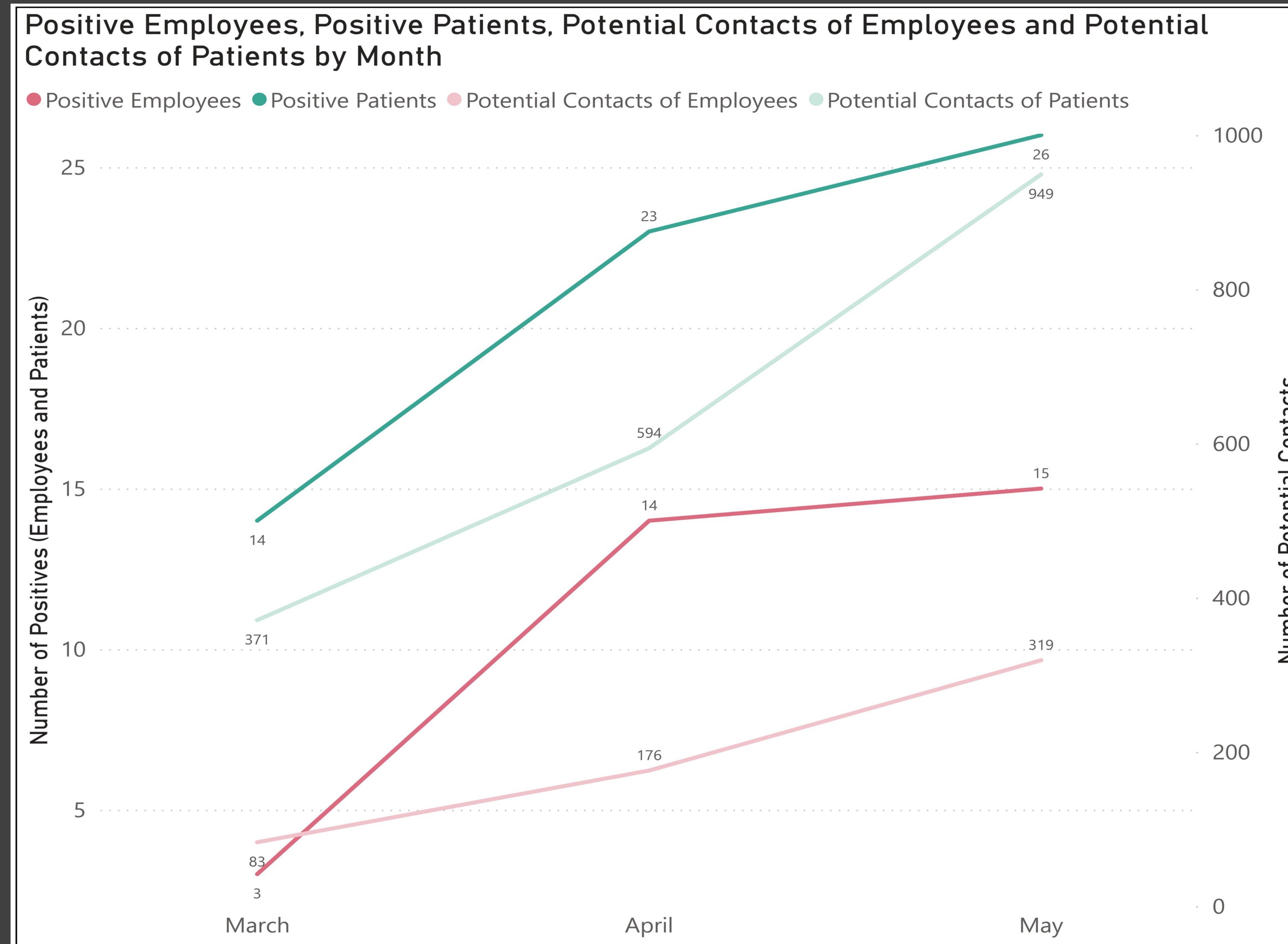
Important items to be acknowledged:

- CDC guidelines were updated frequently and students along with the supervisors kept updating the protocols in order to appropriately direct the employees to the right venue of care
- Precision, patience, professionalism, and critical thinking were all considered as the areas of competency which students needed to fulfil during this experience. These include protection of health information and individual's privacy, timely contact , as well as follow up to assure safety of the employees, patients, while avoiding unnecessary interruption in the manpower and services
- This emergency-formed call center served during the time that no vaccine was utilized yet and early identifying and notification of potentially exposed employees was a key factor to prevent the transmission of the infection

Methods

Timing and planning:

- March to May 2020
- Under the supervision of school of pharmacy and LLUH employee health faculty, 9 APPE students served at the COVID-19 call center located at the school of pharmacy
- A unique and highly secured online connection was formed to connect the inpatient and outpatient unit supervisors with LLUH employee health and the call center to inform and update the team with the list of COVID-19 patients and the potential exposed employees
- Utilizing the CDC guidelines, the team designed protocols for how to communicate the employees through a phone call and email, evaluate the exposure risk, and guide the potential exposed healthcare workers to the appropriate medical care venues



References

CDC Practice Guidelines: COVID-19 exposure, quarantine, and return to work. March-May 2020