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Collaboration between the FIP Young Pharmacists Group and Academic Pharmacy Section: What impact have we had on early career professionals?

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Abstract

The International Pharmaceutical Federation Young Pharmacists Group (FIP YPG) and the Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS) have worked together within the FIP for many years. This paper describes the collaboration between the YPG and AcPS and the impact this has had on YPG members over the past few decades. The FIP YPG records were reviewed to extract information on past collaborations. YPG members were contacted to learn about how being a FIP member or being part of programmes organised by YPG-AcPS has impacted their careers. A historical perspective and growth in YPG-AcPS collaborations over the years, including testimonials from past and current AcPS presidents, are presented to highlight some of their collaborations. Recent initiatives described include the launch of the YPG-AcPS Leadership Development Workshop, AcPS leaders serving as mentors in the FIP YPG Mentorship Programme, joint FIP digital events, and AcPS members contributing to the FIP YPG 20 years report.

Background

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), founded in 1912, is the global body representing pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and pharmaceutical education (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021a). FIP supports global health by enabling the advancement of pharmaceutical practice, sciences and education (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021a). The FIP has eight different Sections under the Board of Pharmaceutical Practice (BPP) (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2020a) and six Special Interest Groups under the Board of Pharmaceutical Science (BPS) (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2022a). The BPP consists of the academic pharmacy, clinical biology, community pharmacy, health and medicines information, hospital pharmacy, industrial pharmacy, military and emergency

pharmacy, and social and administrative pharmacy sections (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2020a). The BPS consists of drug delivery and manufacturing, new generation of pharmaceutical scientists, new medicines, personalised and precision medicine, pharmacy practice research, and regulatory sciences and quality special interest groups (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2022a).

The Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS), founded in 1972, aims to serve as a resource for pharmacy educators throughout the world by providing a framework for networking, collaboration, and inspiration (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021b). AcPS is actively involved in many projects, including the Nanjing Statements Implementation Project and Developing Capacity to Ensure Contemporary Pharmacy Practice: Competency Framework for Educators (International Pharmaceutical

Federation, 2021b). Additionally, AcPS hosts various digital events, creates a quarterly newsletter, and has provided grants to pharmaceutical educators (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2020b).

The Young Pharmacists' Group (YPG) of FIP was founded in 2001, with the goal of providing a platform for early career pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists to find their professional home within FIP (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2022b). In 2021, the YPG celebrated 20 years since its founding. The YPG participates in many FIP activities each year, including awarding grants to young pharmaceutical professionals, providing mentees with mentors through a mentorship programme, and promoting professional development through toolkits, digital events, and various other projects and programmes (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021c).

One of the goals of the YPG is to foster leadership within each of the eight BPP Sections focusing on pharmacy practice and six BPS Special Interest Groups within FIP (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2022b). Since many early career professionals are interested in academia, either as full-time educators or as preceptors for students, there have been many great opportunities throughout the years for AcPS and YPG to work together. This article aims to delineate the history of collaborations between AcPS and YPG and to describe positive outcomes from these collaborations.

Purpose and scope of the paper

The purpose of this paper is to describe the collaboration between the YPG and AcPS and the impact this has had on YPG members over the past few decades. The two authors (RL and LS) reviewed FIP YPG records to extract information on the past collaboration between YPG and AcPS. The authors contacted YPG members to request their testimonials on how being a FIP YPG-AcPS member or being part of programmes organised by YPG-AcPS has impacted their careers. Specifically, the authors contacted the following people:

- 1) Ralph Altieri (2022 FIP Education [FIPeD] President and previous AcPS President), Toyin Tofade (2022 AcPS President and former AcPS Secretary), and Ema Paulino (2003 YPG Chair who has also been highly involved in AcPS) to learn about past AcPS-YPG collaboration;
- 2) YPG-AcPS liaisons to learn about their experience working with YPG and AcPS, details of any collaborations between YPG and AcPS, as well as how being the YPG-AcPS liaison impacted their careers;
- 3) Participants who attended the 2018 Leadership Development Workshop co-organised by YPG and

AcPS, for permission to reproduce feedback they provided on the programme; and

- 4) YPG members who contributed to the FIP YPG 20 years celebration in 2021.

Collaboration between YPG and Academic Pharmacy Section and its impact on YPG members

Historical perspective and growth in YPG-AcPS Collaborations over the years (E. Paulino, personal communication, 22 January 2022)

After YPG was founded in 2001, 85 young pharmacists joined the YPG group; as of 2022, there are approximately 1300 YPG members within the FIP (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021d). AcPS was quick to accept YPG into their formal meetings and willing to work with YPG on joint sessions during FIP Congresses. When YPG first launched The International Pharmaceutical Federation/Young Pharmacist Award for Innovation in Pharmacy in 2002, AcPS members were part of the jury to determine the first winner of this award. Nigel Hughes of Ireland was the first recipient of the award (E. Paulino, personal communication, 22 January 2022). Collaborations have continued throughout the years through similar activities, including many joint educational sessions during FIP Congresses, the Leadership Development Programme, involvement of YPG in AcPS digital events, and contribution to various projects such as the University Twinning and Networking (UNITWIN) FIP Pharmacy Education in sub-Saharan Africa report launched in 2020 and the FIP UNITWIN Pathfinder toolkit launched in 2021. The following testimonials from past and current AcPS Presidents highlight some of the collaborations (Table I). (E. Paulino 2022, personal communication, 22 January 2022, R. Altieri personal communication, 4 October 2021, International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021e).

Creation of the FIP YPG-Academic Pharmacy liaison position (J. Ly, personal communication, 21 February 2022)

The YPG liaison positions were created in 2018 with the aim to strengthen YPG's relationship within the FIP organisation, including with the Academic Pharmacy Section, and to provide YPG members with the opportunity to be involved in FIP. The roles and responsibilities of YPG liaisons include representing YPG at AcPS meetings, summarising relevant news and opportunities for inclusion in YPG newsletters, promoting the work of YPG to AcPS members, involving YPG members in the AcPS' projects and identifying opportunities for collaboration between AcPS and YPG.

Table I: Testimonials from past and current AcPS Presidents

Name	Affiliation	Testimony	References
Ralph Altieri (United States)	FIPEd Chair (2020-2023) and former AcPS President (2014-2017)	'YPG was invited to participate in FIPEd Internal Reference Group strategy meetings beginning in 2012 to provide input for early career pharmacists to assure education was meeting their needs as well as those of society. Among the numerous contributions of YPG to FIPEd are the establishment of the annual AcPS-YPG Leadership Symposium inaugurated at the 2018 FIP World Congress; contributions to the UNITWIN FIP Pharmacy Education in sub-Saharan Africa report launched in 2020 and the FIP UNITWIN Pathfinder Toolkit launched in 2021, and FIPEd and YPG collaborations on World Congress programming and webinars provided throughout the years. FIPEd and YPG share the common goal of preparing pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists to advance practice and science to meet the health needs of our communities.'	R. Altieri, personal communication, 4 October 2021
Toyin Tofade (United States)	AcPS President (2020-2023) and former AcPS Secretary (2017-2020)	'During my time as secretary of the FIP Academic Pharmacy Section, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with YPG. This was first with the Leadership Development training programme led by John Ly and launched in Glasgow, Scotland in 2018. It was a great opportunity to participate in the sessions focusing on personality management co-taught with Professor Lisa Nissen. Due to my role on the programme committee, I had the honour and privilege to advocate on behalf of the YPG leaders for a consistent presence of the leadership development program on pre-Congress programming. Given that YPG is about a third of the membership for FIP, this was embraced by the programme committee and the testimonials from the YPG leadership and attendees has been tremendous. Since 2018, the leadership development programme now runs on Saturday and Sunday pre-Congress every congress year except 2020 due to COVID-19. A sequel Leadership Development 2.0, an online longitudinal leadership programme involving global leader facilitators, was created in 2019 after the Abu Dhabi Congress and is now being launched in the 2021 programme year as a fully owned YPG programme with content delivery consultants from the academic section. YPG is a great place to belong and learn. It has been a pleasure to meet, work with and mentor our brilliant young leaders. The academic section continues to involve a liaison from YPG on Executive Committee meetings every other month.'	T. Tofade, personal communication, 8 July 2021

Testimonials from the first (Sherly Meilanti) and current (Dimitrios-Ilias Balourdas) AcPS-YPG liaison provide some insight into how the liaison position has progressed since its inception and how being a liaison benefited them and their careers (Table II).

Launch of the YPG-AcPS Leadership Development Workshop (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021c)

In 2018, the FIP YPG and AcPS co-led the development of the inaugural Leadership Development Workshop (LDW). The LDW is an annual workshop held at the FIP Congress with the aim to develop the pharmacy and pharmaceutical leaders of the future. The workshop also helps to create networking opportunities for young pharmacists interested in becoming part of the YPG Steering Committee to meet the outgoing committee. The Steering Committee is the leadership team within FIP YPG and consists of six members, including the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Chairperson of Projects, Chairperson of Public Relations and

Chairperson of Liaisons. The workshop and networking activities help ensure potential candidates have expectations set on their workload for each position and get advice on how to work better as a newly formed committee and how to have an effective year ahead in the office. The LDW was first held in 2018 at the 78th FIP Congress in Glasgow and again in 2019 at the 79th FIP Congress in Abu Dhabi.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of the annual FIP Congress, the online Leadership Development Programme (LDP 2.0) was developed in 2020 as a continuation of the LDW. The LDP 2.0 provides longitudinal sessions over a ten-month period, with international leaders in pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences serving as facilitators at the monthly sessions. The current cycle of the LDP 2.0 runs from November 2021 to September 2022. Testimonial from the 2018 FIP YPG President and feedback from the LDW participants highlight some of the motivation and benefits of the programme (Table III).

Table II: Testimonials from past and current AcPS-YPG Liaison

Name	Affiliation	Testimony	References
Sherly Meilianti (Indonesia)	Academic Pharmacy Section Liaison 2018	'The FIP YPG launched its first subcommittee position in 2018, so I was the first AcPS liaison. We were piloting this liaison position to see how we could improve the FIP YPG relationship with Sections and Special Interest Groups, and I was honoured to be appointed and worked together with the FIP YPG Steering Committee 2018 to represent youth voice in the AcPS. During my eight months of involvement with AcPS as the liaison, I attended the AcPS business meeting at the FIP Congress in Glasgow, Scotland and volunteered to be part of some working groups, namely Nanjing statement and framework for educators. Since the position was new and in a pilot stage, I did not get a chance to have an active involvement until my mandate ended in December 2018. Based on my experience as the liaison, I advocated for an extension of the liaisons' term to two years to allow sufficient time for relationship building and engagement, and to ensure a positive experience for the YPG-AcPS liaison. Being the AcPS liaison was a stepping stone for me to be more actively involved in FIP YPG. I had never been involved in a global young pharmacists group prior to this, and being involved as an AcPS liaison opened more opportunities for me to know more about FIP and YPG. Thank you for allowing me to be part of the AcPS success as the AcPS liaison! Happy 50 years anniversary AcPS and many wishes for future success and innovation!'	S. Meilianti, personal communication, 23 January 2022
Dimitrios-Ilias Balourdas (Greece)	Academic Pharmacy Section Liaison 2021-2022	'Even though my involvement with AcPS, as the current FIP YPG-AcPS liaison, is only a fraction to its rich 50-year history, I feel humbled and honoured to be part of such an international, multicultural and dynamic team, within the structure of FIP. I am truly elated to participate in impactful meetings within my section, contribute in significant decisions but most importantly work with inspiring and highly skilled individuals with unmeasurable expertise in their field. I had the opportunity to co-moderate, together with Dr. Naoko Arakawa, the second part of a successful webinar, focusing on stories of pharmacy students and young pharmacy professionals that have been working in the frontline fighting COVID-19. I was also grateful to be invited as a speaker in a webinar co-organised by IPSF and FIP, regarding FIP's Development Goals on Academic capacity and early career training, where I had the opportunity to represent YPG, as an author of the Career Development Toolkit. Being YPG-AcPS liaison enabled me to become a proactive and well-rounded professional striving for continuous improvement, and still motivates me to focus on the bigger picture. It takes a community to achieve a change!'	D. Balourdas, personal communication, 12 January 2022

Table III: Testimonials of Leadership Development Workshop

Name	Affiliation	Testimony	References
John Ly (Australia)	FIP YPG President 2018	'I am grateful to introduce the Inaugural Leadership Development Workshop in 2018, which aimed to empower young pharmacists to be more proactive within our profession locally across the globe, as well as give insight into YPG roles for future potential leaders. I am humbled that these programmes are still ongoing today to help fulfil the duties with a large active YPG committee. We are grateful for our ongoing collaboration with the Academic Section and Young Pharmacists Group.'	J. Ly, personal communication, 21 February 2022
Carolyn Dewart (United States)	FIP YPG President 2019	'I enjoyed the small, intimate setting of the LDW. It provided a good overview of FIP, YPG, and important leadership skills.'	C. Dewart, personal communication, 25 January 2022
Diana Ching (United States)	FIP YPG Public Relations Officer 2019	'The diversity of topics and speakers was very effective and informative. I genuinely enjoyed this LDW and the smoothness of how it was delivered.'	D. Ching, personal communication, 25 January 2022
Safiye Çağansel (Cyprus)	FIP YPG President-Elect 2022	'I believe it has been very productive and beneficial to all participants. I do like that a limited number of participants have been accepted (maximum 20) is the most ideal. Basically, it's been great to also introduce YPG and its structure and involving the participants in strategic planning ideas on the second day after having the soft skills trainings and basic must-know knowledge about FIP and YPG. Thank you!'	S. Çağansel, personal communication, 25 January 2022
Filipa Ferreira (Portugal)	FIP YPG Chairperson of Liaisons 2022	'I really enjoyed the LDW experience. I think that the speakers were very well chosen.'	F. Ferreira, personal communication, 25 January 2022
Chun Wai Mai (Malaysia)	FIP New Medicines Special Interest Group, Pharmacology focus group chair 2022	'The contents were very informative perhaps more hands-on activities would make it better.'	C.W. Mai, personal communication, 25 January 2022

Celebrating 20 years of FIP YPG and continued collaboration

In 2021, the FIP YPG celebrated a significant milestone by marking 20 years of FIP YPG. To commemorate this important milestone, the FIP YPG formed a working group and conducted a series of activities, including publishing the 'Global pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists: Twenty years of FIP YPG. Past, present and future' (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021e).

The report contained stories from past, current and future leaders of FIP and included many article contributions from AcPS members (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021e). In 2021-2022, the FIP YPG continues to work closely with the AcPS. The YPG liaison and members collaborate and actively participate as speakers or co-moderators at digital events organised by the AcPS. Likewise, YPG actively invites speakers from AcPS as speakers or moderators at digital events led by YPG. The YPG saw many AcPS leaders expressing interest to serve as mentors at the most recent call for the FIP YPG Mentorship Programme 2021-2022 cycle. A YPG member, who is also a liaison to the Drug Delivery and Manufacturing Special Interest Group, shared her thoughts on the FIP digital event to celebrate 20 years of FIP YPG in the following quote.

You Zhuan Lee (Malaysia) (Y.Z. Lee, personal communication, 25 January 2022)

FIP YPG Liaison to the Drug Delivery and Manufacturing Special Interest Group 2021-2022

'The FIP digital event 'Celebrating 20 Years of YPG in 2021' has been one of the most interactive and informative networking events I have attended in the year. COVID-19 pandemic has caused limitation on social events and digital networking has its barrier. The 20 years celebration, however, was very well organised. With the breakout rooms focusing on different specific topics, participants were able to share and learn from others over a more relevant and in-depth discussion. I enjoyed the event very much!'

Discussion

Members of the FIP Sections and Special Interest Groups have mentored early career pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists for many decades. From the founding of YPG in 2001, FIP Sections and Special Interest Groups have welcomed YPG in their meetings and invited YPG to contribute to joint sessions and other projects throughout the years. By allowing YPG members

to be involved in these collaborations, more experienced members of BPP and BPS have helped YPG members to develop confidence, experience, and connections within FIP.

The strong relationship between the FIP YPG and the many FIP Sections and Special Interest Groups took a number of years to establish, partly due to the small number of YPG members at its inception and only three FIP YPG ExCo members actively steering the group each year. The number of collaborative projects has increased in recent years due to growth in the FIP YPG memberships. In 2018, the FIP YPG expanded from a team of three Steering Committee members to over 30 Steering and subcommittee members, including the official YPG liaisons to the BPP and BPS (J. Ly, personal communication, 21 February 2022). Currently, the FIP YPG has six Steering Committee and over 40 subcommittee members. The expansion of the Steering Committee has enabled the FIP YPG to create new initiatives such as the Leadership Development Workshop and the Mentorship Programme (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2022c), develop resources such as the Career Development Toolkit (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2020c), conduct international surveys (Manikkath et al., 2020, International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021f), organise FIP digital events and be actively involved in BPP and BPS initiatives through the FIP YPG liaisons. Many of these activities and projects have been conducted in collaboration with the AcPS. Furthermore, YPG has been involved in discussions with AcPS about the future of pharmacy education, allowing young professionals to have a voice and impact on the profession globally.

Specific examples of positive outcomes from the collaborations between AcPS and YPG can be seen through the quotes from both AcPS leaders and YPG members who have been involved in these projects (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021c). Notable examples include four participants in the Leadership Development Workshop who later were elected as Steering Committee members of YPG; showcasing the direct positive impact of the programme on the leadership journey of these individuals. Additionally, the first Liaison from YPG to AcPS also went on to become the President of YPG, further suggesting that collaborating with AcPS has a positive impact on YPG members.

Unfortunately, there is limited information available about some aspects of early collaborations between YPG and AcPS, and it was not possible to include testimonials from everyone involved in every collaboration. The authors were also unable to find information about potential AcPS input into the celebration of ten years of YPG in 2011.

Of note, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted YPG collaborations with FIP Sections and Special Interest Groups, as it has affected most of the rest of the world, but YPG and AcPS have found new and innovative ways of working together (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021d). Moving proposed joint sessions at previously in-person Congresses to a digital event format has allowed speakers from YPG and FIP Sections and Special Interest Groups to come together for some informative and innovative discussions. By changing the in-person Leadership Development Workshop to a virtual format as the Leadership Development Program (LDP 2.0), future YPG leaders now have more time to gain information and insights into leadership development. Although brought about by the necessity to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic impacts, these changes have proven to be quite effective at increasing opportunities for engagement of our members (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2021d).

Conclusion

FIP AcPS and YPG have worked together within FIP in numerous ways to positively impact the profession on a personal and global level. Since YPG's founding 20 years ago, members of the FIP Sections (including AcPS) and Special Interest Groups have been supportive of and open to YPG involvement and input in many activities, often acting as a mentor for both individual members and the group as a whole. YPG has been able to successfully implement innovative ideas such as the Leadership Development Programme and the Mentorship Programme with the help and support of FIP AcPS. Future collaborations between FIP AcPS and YPG should continue to be evaluated and recorded for further elucidation of the positive impacts of these activities.

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Conflicts of interest

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