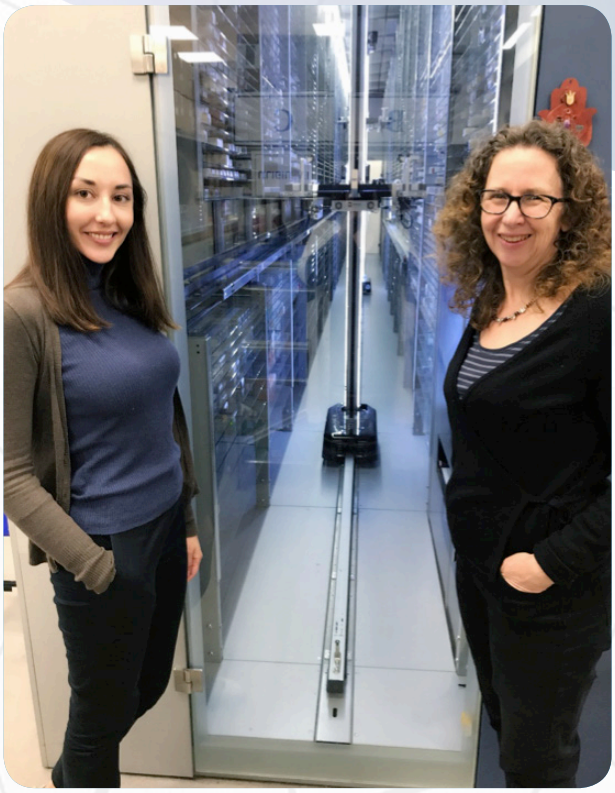
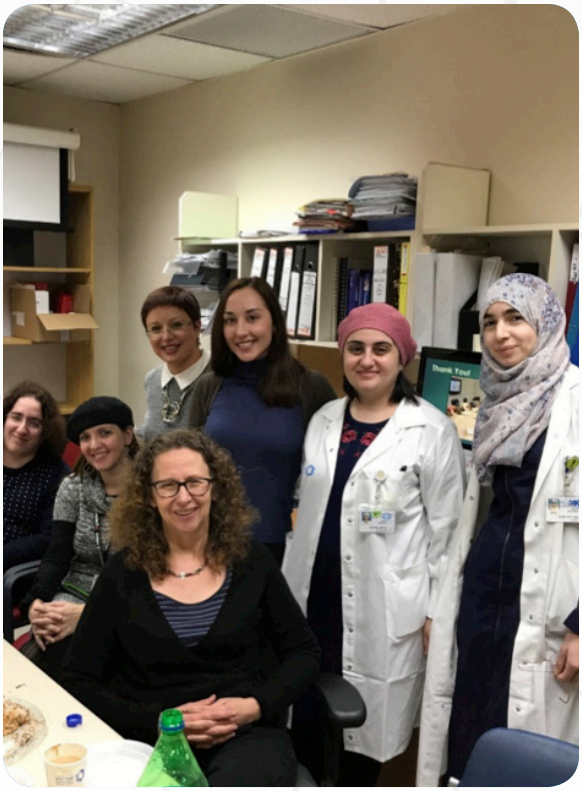
My International APPE: Israel

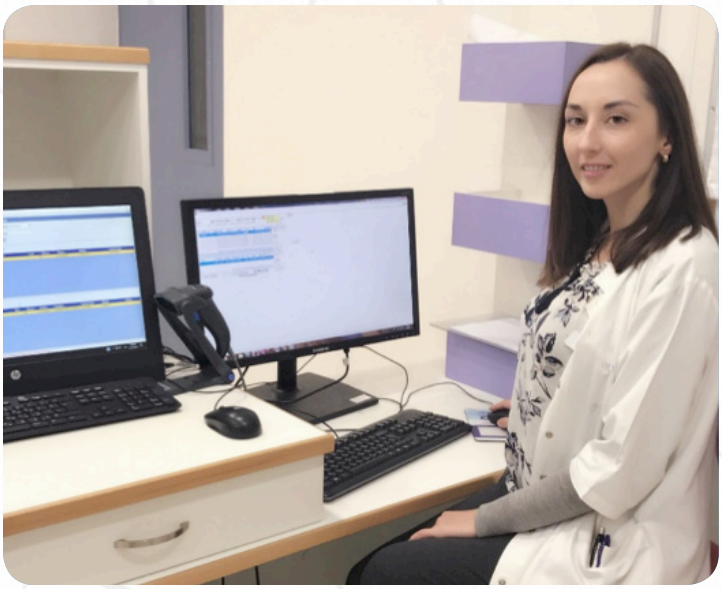


Olga Gornostay
PharmD Candidate of 2018

In the fall 2017 semester, I had the opportunity to complete a month-long international APPE at Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, Israel. It was a very exciting experience and I learned so much in thirty days. During this experience, I discovered that there are many differences between the pharmacy systems in Israel and the United States. One distinct feature of the Israeli health system is their focus on improving patients' access to medications. Israeli citizens all have national health insurance, which guarantees that everyone receives medications at reduced rates.

Another major difference in the pharmacist's role in Israel is that pharmacists are allowed to prescribe certain medications. This change was made by the Israeli government to eliminate inequality of access to health care services between urban centers and rural areas. When the government noticed that many citizens stopped filling their prescriptions, religious authorities, government ministers, and health care professionals lobbied lawmakers to pass the Pharmacist Prescribing Law in 2016, which was a major healthcare policy reform. As a result, the Israeli Medical Association established the Pharmacist Prescribing Policy in which licensed, experienced, clinical pharmacists could prescribe medications to patients who already have a pre-existing prescription for a given medication. The policy improves patients' access to medications and also taps into the competency of pharmacists who undergo years of training under the Israeli system. Pharmaceutical companies agreed to a formal statement of rules that would govern the prescription policy for pharmacists to ensure patient safety and improve the process of getting prescription medications to patients who need them.





As a future pharmacist such as myself who is just beginning her career, having the chance to work in the fast-paced and highly instructive Israeli pharmacy system was a joy and a privilege. I met several dedicated pharmacists and I had the chance to learn on the job, which was the best type of education. It was a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget.