

## Dorothy McCoy

PharmD, BCPS AQ-ID

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### *Nurturing Develops Achievers*

Dorothy is currently a medical writer at PharmaWrite Medical Communications and MedVal Scientific Information Services. She has been an Infectious Diseases/Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Pharmacist for over 10 years, during part of which she held an academic appointment as a Clinical Associate Professor at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University, Piscataway, New Jersey. Her clinical practice sites have included Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, New Jersey, and St. Joseph's Health in Paterson, New Jersey. She has mentored and served as a preceptor to 32 postgraduate year (PGY) 1 residents for infectious diseases and longitudinal antimicrobial stewardship learning experiences and over 100 pharmacy students during their advanced practice experiences. Dorothy enjoys teaching and mentoring learners and inspiring them to further their education and develop their careers. Her dedication to precepting was recognized when she received the 2011 ASHP Foundation's Pharmacy Residency Excellence New Preceptor Award and the 2017 NJSHP Preceptor of the Year Award.

Dorothy earned her PharmD degree at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University and completed her PGY1 at Hackensack University Medical Center, and her PGY2 in infectious diseases at the University of Michigan Health System in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



**Dorothy's precepting advice is: Create a nurturing environment for residents that will open their eyes to new things and support them when they are willing and ready to take on new opportunities. Keep the mindset that people achieve their best when they are provided with guidance and mentorship.**

*Dear Colleague,*

Being a preceptor is a privilege and a gift. Your life is enriched by the experiences you share with your mentees. It is a great feeling to teach others and assist them in achieving their goals. My teaching philosophy has been to foster the professional growth of residents by educating them in a nurturing environment and paying attention to them—not just as professionals, but as people. It is the preceptor’s responsibility to provide the best learning experience for each particular trainee. Residents learn best and achieve more if they are in an environment that is encouraging, motivating, and nurturing. As preceptors, it is our responsibility to maintain this type of environment to facilitate the residents’ professional and personal development. Demonstrating a vested interest for the residents’ success during your time with them and as they move on in their careers creates a lasting impact for which they will always be grateful. When they complete a learning experience with you, you can measure your success as a preceptor by the residents’ ability to think “I am a better resident, pharmacist, clinician, or person because of you.”

***One key component of nurturing is instilling a sense of pride in one’s work.*** Cultivate the residents’ ability to sharpen their critical thinking, problem solving, and time management skills using clinical and real-life scenarios to demonstrate the value of what they are learning. Show them the relationship between the information they are learning and the application of that information to a personal issue, a patient care issue, or a global issue. This is effective for residents to gain a true understanding and retention of the information, which will then allow them to impact patient care in a positive way. Initially, this may mean taking a little extra time to explain something. Or you might need to look for a different approach to demonstrate that specific scenario. However, once you catch the resident’s attention, grab hold of it and keep that momentum going to maintain their interest. Many times I would pique the resident’s interest for a specific disease state and then continue to provide examples when new cases arrived. Within time, the resident would be bringing me cases that they came across to spark discussions and continue their education on their own. Most importantly, I make sure to thank them and show my appreciation for their hard work and efforts when they help me with something.

***Another way to nurture is to provide feedback in an encouraging, constructive manner so that the resident is not intimidated by the critique but inspired to want to improve.*** Feedback is extremely important when residents are in the developmental stages of their projects or clinical responsibil-