Evaluating Continuing Professional Development needs of Pharmacist Prescribers in New Zealand

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BPharm Dissertation Group

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New Zealand pharmacists have been able to prescribe medicines since 2013. Establishing this new role has been challenging. Provision of pharmacist prescriber CPD identified as an implementation barrier in earlier research.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is essential for maintaining and developing prescribing skills.

Little is known about pharmacist prescriber CPD needs in NZ.
NZ Competence Standards for Pharmacist Prescriber Scope of Practice

- Prescribe safely
- Prescribe professionally
- Communicate with patients
- Maintain quality
- Establish Options
- Clinical and pharmaceutical knowledge
- The NZ Healthcare system
- Work in Collaboration

The University of Auckland
Clinical Pharmacist Prescribers

Cabinet has now approved the drafting of regulations under the Medicines Act 1981 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 to enable clinical pharmacists who have completed suitable training to become designated prescribers.

The regulatory change will allow those who have completed the new postgraduate certificate in pharmacist prescribing to prescribe medicines to patients who are being cared for by a multi-disciplinary and collaborative health care team.

Establishment of the new qualification followed a demonstration project.

Case Study - Di Wright

Experienced clinical pharmacists will soon be able to undergo special training and competency assessments to become designated prescribers.

The training has been developed by the Pharmacy Council with the support of Health Workforce New Zealand.

Di Wright is part of the first group of 14 pharmacists to undertake the requirements for the new postgraduate certificate in pharmacist prescribing, which builds on the postgraduate diploma in clinical pharmacy.

Case Study - Leanne Te Karu

A new qualification to enable clinical pharmacists to prescribe some prescription medicines has been established following a demonstration funded by Health Workforce New Zealand and run jointly by the Pharmacy Schools of the University of Auckland and University of Otago.

Leanne Te Karu is one of the first to complete the postgraduate prescribing certificate to become a pharmacist.
Background

• New Zealand pharmacists have been able to prescribe medicines since 2013

• Establishing this new role has been challenging. Provision of pharmacist prescriber CPD identified as an implementation barrier in earlier research.

• Continuing professional development (CPD) is essential for maintaining and developing prescribing skills

• Little is known about pharmacist prescriber CPD needs in NZ.
Aims

To explore pharmacist prescribers’ and pharmacy stakeholders’ views of CPD needs and barriers for pharmacist prescribers in NZ

(Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee)
Mixed method approach

Online questionnaire

• Pharmacist prescriber graduates and current students
• Quantitative analysis

Semi-structured interview

• Stakeholders (NZ pharmacy organisations)
• Qualitative analysis (NVivo 10) - general inductive approach

Methods

Two key participant groups and study methods identified

- Designed pharmacist prescriber study (survey)
  Piloted survey on two nurse prescribers and one pharmacist
  E-mailed survey to 23 pharmacist prescriber graduates/students
  20 participants responded
  Results were analysed using Microsoft Excel

- Designed stakeholder study (semi-structured interview)
  Piloted interview with one pharmacist
  Nine pharmacy organisations invited to participate
  6 organisations participated via telephone, or in-person
  Transcript contents analysed thematically with Nvivo 10
Pharmacist prescriber
Results

85% > 35yrs
Primary care 66.7%, Secondary care 33.3%
60% were currently prescribing (80% excluding students)
71% > 10 yrs experience in prescribing area (85% > 6yrs)
79% prescribe > once a week
Average of 11 hours per week in their prescribing role
91% have ongoing support from an experienced prescriber
Pharmacist prescriber

Results

CPD topics to help maintain prescribing competence

Most valuable
- Clinical decision making
- Communication skills
- Prescribes safely
- Critically appraises information

Less valuable
- Assess and monitor conditions
- Clinical knowledge
## Pharmacist prescriber Results

### CPD activities to help maintain prescribing competence

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<th>Most valuable</th>
<th>Less valuable</th>
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<td>Discussions/“On the job” learning</td>
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<td>Workshops/Seminars</td>
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<td>Online learning</td>
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<td>Utilisation of a CPD Portfolio</td>
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Pharmacist prescriber
Results

94% felt CPD provision for pharmacist prescribers could be improved

“We want to see guidance from Health Workforce NZ and (professional body)”

“Right now those of us who have done the training are pioneers. We’re making it up as we go along – future CPD included”

“Things may look different in years to come – assuming this is still a role when that time comes”
Pharmacist prescriber Results

While pharmacist prescribers were proactive in seeking sources of CPD, barriers were still prevalent

Barriers

• Lack of specific resources and support for pharmacist prescribers

• Education/training expenses

• Time constraints (work/family)
Stakeholder Results

Three key themes:

• Factors external and internal to the organisation
• Enablers

“There’s an element of responsibility on them, you know, to sort that out themselves”

“I don’t think there’s currently any barriers related to pharmacist prescribers”

“we should probably...get the doctors involved in helping to provide that”
Thematic analysis
Stakeholder Results

Factors external to the organisation

- Perception of pharmacist prescribers
- Awareness of pharmacist prescribers' CPD needs
- Newness of pharmacist prescribing
Stakeholder Results

Factors external to the organisation

Perception of pharmacist prescribers

- PP role seen as outside of pharmacy
- PP work at advanced level 'top of scope'

Awareness of pharmacist prescribers' CPD needs

- Lack of awareness of barriers and needs
- Perception that CPD is needed for clinical knowledge

Newness of pharmacist prescribing

- Small numbers
- Implementation support (incl. CPD) has not been considered
Stakeholder Results

Factors internal to the organisation

- Organisational priorities
- Organisational capacity
- Logistical challenges
Stakeholder Results

Factors internal to the organisation

- Organisational priorities
  - Lack of ownership for support for PP role
- Organisational capacity
  - CPD for PP has not been considered
- Logistical challenges
  - Suggestions for potential CPD providers
- Funding
Stakeholder Results

Enablers

- Collaboration & interprofessional learning
- CPD online platform
- Improvements
Stakeholder Results

**Enablers**
- Collaboration & interprofessional learning
  - PP collaborate with each other
- CPD online platform
  - Collaboration between pharmacy organisations
- Improvements
  - Recognised more support is required
Conclusion

Pharmacist prescribers’ views on CPD needs and barriers differed from stakeholder perceptions. Both pharmacist prescribers and stakeholders suggested collaborative, interprofessional approaches to address some of these barriers. Findings broadly similar to published literature.

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