Views and Experiences of the First Cohorts of New Zealand Pharmacy Accuracy Checking Technicians (PACTs)

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What is a PACT?

- Introduced in NZ in 2015
- Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (PSNZ)
- Initial cohort of 15
- Training based on UK model
  - Practical Portfolio and Assessment
  - Certification for 2 years
Objectives

- Motivation
- Job satisfaction / further career aspirations
- Expectations vs reality of the role
- Enablers and barriers to implementation of the role
- Ongoing learning needs and support
Method

Ethics approval obtained June 2017

PACTs recruited July 2017

Semi-structured interviews conducted July / Aug 2017

Results thematically analysed using NVivo 11
Results

• 29 eligible technicians
  • 2 ‘lost’ to follow up

• 15 agreed to participate
  • 8 Cohort A (qualified PACTs from 1\textsuperscript{st} cohort)
  • 7 Cohort B (in training during the study)

• 9 hospital / 6 community

• Limitations
  • Almost 50% didn’t participate
  • Those who left the role
  • Novice researchers
Professional Development

• Experienced
  • 5 – 10 years = 6
  • 10 – 30 years = 9

• Wanted a challenge

• Wanted to extend themselves

• Wanted a career

I do like furthering education as I like to better myself... And I guess prior to this you felt like you are in a dead-end job, it wasn’t a career
Skill Mix

• Release Pharmacist time
• Top of scope
• Contribute to improved patient service
• Potential for other extended roles

......to release their [pharmacists’] time to go and counsel patients, or spend more time on the wards

I definitely think that in the future, it will go beyond the PACT
Workplace Support

- Pharmacist / Manager drive
- Colleagues
  - Technicians supportive
  - Initial resistance from others
- Workplace practices
  - Rx workflow
  - Designated checking space

The support of the rest of my team, definitely, is a massive thing...I think if you don’t have that support then it’s not worth training.
Increased Responsibility

- Initially daunting
- Aware of consequences of making an error
- Ultimately rewarding
- Improved job satisfaction

When I am checking, I thrive, I love it

Hesitation in the beginning to be able to take up that responsibility and that was definitely a bit of a challenge to be able to step up.
Checking Log

- Confidence in ability
- Time to develop robust process
- Minimum 8hrs checking / month ✓
- Paper system - laborious

I think it’s perfect to have that number of prescriptions to be done and as I went further and further, I just felt like I was improving myself.

I think although the log is really big, that gets a lot of kudos from the pharmacist if a technician can do 1000 items, with only one or two mistakes.
Reality of the new role

- No real expectations
- Some check more / some check less
- Stress if still doing ‘old job’ too
- Slightly isolated once training finished

I didn't have any preconceived ideas... it is probably what I expected

For me, fitting it in with everything else, like adding that to my daily role. For me that was the biggest challenge
**Conclusion**

**On-going support**
Connect with other PACTs

**Learning Needs**
Minimum checking hours requirement seen as positive.

**Barriers**
Self-belief
Workload of old and new role
Paper logs – time consuming

**Enablers**
1000 item checking log
Workplace support

**Motivated**
To develop themselves, but also to release pharmacist time

**Role is as expected**

**Job Satisfaction**
Improved, increased responsibility

**Career development**
Potential for other extended roles
Implications

- Motivated technicians
  - Want to upskill
  - Support the profession to move forward

- Pharmacist / Manager support is essential

- PSNZ
  - 1000 item checking log vital
  - Minimum checking hours – could be raised

- Technician registration
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