

BUILDING UPON PHARMACISTS' PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

A VISION FOR THE PROFESSION

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The statement endorses pharmacists as leading healthcare professionals in medication management, sets out the principles that underlie the focus, nature and quality of their practice and provides guidance for the advancement of their practice through integrated development of a range of key enabling domains.

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BUILDING UPON PHARMACISTS' PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

The health system in Australia is undergoing major reform aimed at improving access, enhancing primary care, integrating services and making the health workforce more flexible and responsive. Being an integral part of the health system, these reforms will affect the future of pharmacists either directly or indirectly.¹

A number of health professions are benefiting from reforms occurring in the health system by developing current roles and taking up new opportunities. Unless pharmacists act to identify and promote expanded roles, they will miss opportunities that arise and their future will be at the mercy of the vested interests of other groups within the health system.

Similar health system reforms have been implemented in a number of comparable countries including Canada,² England,³⁻⁵ Scotland,⁶ New Zealand⁷ and the United States^{8,9} and by regional organisations.¹⁰⁻¹² In each of these situations comprehensive reviews of the role of pharmacists and opportunities for them in the changing health systems have led to the preparation of vision statements.

Within an overarching philosophy of pharmaceutical care,¹³ common concepts have emerged in these vision statements. First, pharmacists must make the transition from a transaction-based, commoditised dispensing model of practice to a relationship-based, consumer-centric and collaborative model. Second, they must be competent, quality-focussed, information-based and accountable for outcomes. Third, the statements identified the principal opportunities for pharmacists as medication management, primary care and public health activities.

In response to the broad-ranging changes within the Australian health system and within the pharmacy profession itself, a number of local organisations have in recent years undertaken projects aimed at reviewing the current and future practice of pharmacists. In 2010 the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia [PSA] released an *Issues Paper on the Future of Pharmacy in Australia*¹⁴ which examined the current status of pharmacy and aimed to stimulate debate on the challenges and opportunities facing the profession. The paper presented issues raised by key opinion leaders of the profession but did not offer options as to how the issues could be addressed.

**“PHARMACISTS
MUST MAKE THE
TRANSITION FROM A
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OF PRACTICE TO A
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COLLABORATIVE MODEL.”**

A number of other publications have contributed to a profession-wide discussion of the future of pharmacy, most notably *The Roadmap: a Strategic Direction for Community Pharmacy*¹⁵ prepared by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia in 2010. This document was a ‘status report’ of Australian community pharmacy, as well as a practical plan for its future direction set out in ‘Program Development Templates’.

Seeking an all-inclusive response to the issues facing the profession, PSA convened a meeting of peak pharmacy organisations in July 2010. The Future of Pharmacy Stakeholder Forum resolved that, in concert with the work of individual organisations and in keeping with progress in comparative countries, the profession would benefit from the development of an all-of-profession vision for pharmacists’ practice in Australia.

A subsequent meeting of the Forum endorsed the development of a vision statement for pharmacists’ practice and elected a Drafting Group which compiled drafting principles and a preferred structure with three interdependent components:

- » a **CAPTION** which is a short statement encapsulating the unique aspect, focus and objective of the practice of pharmacists;
- » a set of **10 FUNCTIONS** which pharmacists undertake in order to give effect to the vision;
- » eight **ENABLERS** which are key areas or domains requiring integrated development to enable pharmacists to undertake the functions.

The initial draft titled *A Vision for Pharmacists’ Practice in Australia* was considered at a facilitated workshop and a revised and expanded draft was subsequently released to the profession for feedback. Input was sought via publication in professional journals, listing on a professional organisation website, presentations at conferences and reports in newsletters of professional organisations. Following the consultation, a final draft of the statement was presented to meetings of the Australian Pharmacy Liaison Forum [APLF] during 2012. The APLF confirmed support for the document, recommended it be titled *Building upon pharmacists’ practice in Australia: A vision for the profession*, and recommended the statement be sent to its member organisations for provisional endorsement. Eleven pharmacy and pharmacists’ organisations considered the final draft during 2013 and provided feedback leading to the unanimous endorsement of this document.

The purpose of the vision statement is to inform members of the profession, pharmacy organisations, consumers, governments, other health professions and stakeholders of the preferred future practice of pharmacists in Australia. The statement endorses pharmacists as leading healthcare professionals in medication management and related activities, describes the focus, nature and quality of their practice and provides guidance for the advancement of their practice through integrated development of a range of key enabling domains. Subsequent steps will include consultation with members of the profession and external stakeholders, establishment of a revision process and development of the capacity to implement the vision.

THE CAPTION

Pharmacists are healthcare professionals who are sought after and valued for their expertise in medicines in working with consumers and the healthcare team to deliver optimal health outcomes.

For optimal health outcomes, patients and healthcare professionals need access to high quality medicines and medication management processes and reliable information about medicines. Pharmacists use a defined model of care and apply their unique knowledge, skills and experience, with a focus on patient safety and health outcomes, to respond to consumers' and healthcare professionals pharmaceutical needs.

The pharmacists' model of care includes:

1. establishment of a professional relationship with the patient or carer;
2. a pharmaceutical needs assessment;
3. development of a care plan that recognises patient preferences;
4. implementation of that plan, including provision of appropriate medication where necessary, and patient follow-up to ensure desired outcomes are met.

As members of the healthcare team working in a range of diverse and evolving settings, pharmacists participate in a structured, coordinated, seamless and effective continuum of care.

As the third largest and one of the most trusted groups of health professionals in Australia, the public access pharmacists more frequently and more readily than any other healthcare providers.¹⁵

Those pharmacists practising in direct patient care are supported by pharmacists working in academia, research, industry, government and other areas.

This statement of pharmacists' practice incorporates 10 principal functions which pharmacists undertake when practising in direct patient care. The capacity of pharmacists to perform these functions is enhanced through ongoing profession-wide support and development of eight key domains, referred to as enablers.

FUNCTIONS

Australia's pharmacists realise the vision expressed in the caption by undertaking the following 10 functions. The first two functions describe pharmacists' commitment to their relationship with consumers and patients, the next five functions describe the nature of the professional services provided, and the final three functions describe the principles that underpin the quality of the services provided.

1 FUNCTION

BEING ACCESSIBLE

- » Using the network of community pharmacies, departments within community healthcare clinics, private and public hospitals, aged care facilities and consulting practices to provide access to quality and reliable pharmacist services.
- » Collaborating within multidisciplinary healthcare teams to provide medication management and other services related to their unique skills and knowledge.

2 FUNCTION

BEING CONSUMER-CENTRED

- » Recognising consumers' rights under the Australian Charter of Health Care Rights and associated documents.¹⁶
- » Working with individuals to incorporate their preferences, health beliefs and attitudes into the development of agreed care plans.
- » Conducting their practice in a manner that provides consumers with privacy for the delivery of appropriate and effective patient care.
- » Improving health literacy by assisting consumers to understand and use information relating to health and medicine issues, disease prevention and treatment, safety and accident prevention, first aid and emergencies and maintenance of good health.

3

FUNCTION

PROVIDING MEDICATION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- » Participating in decisions as to whether a medicine is required and if so, the appropriate choice for the individual.
- » Accepting responsibility for safe and efficient dispensing and supply of medicines and ensuring appropriate verbal advice and written information for the safe and effective use of the medicine is available for both consumers and other healthcare professionals.
- » Providing leadership and advice on all aspects of medication management in all sectors of the health system.
- » Providing consultation services including clinical assessments relating to medicine use and medication management.
- » Providing general, focussed and advanced levels of practice.
- » Optimising adherence to medication therapy through monitoring, patient-centred communication and shared decision-making.

4

FUNCTION

PROVIDING PRIMARY CARE

- » Responding to direct inquiries and providing triage for local communities.
- » Providing primary care and advice to promote and maintain good health and for minor ailments including information and support in relation to non-dispensed medicines and other therapies.
- » Prescribing *Pharmacist Only* and *Pharmacy* medicines with appropriate treatment advice.
- » Providing formal referrals to medical practitioners or other healthcare professionals for assessment and ongoing care.

5

FUNCTION

PROVIDING PREVENTIVE & PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

- » Facilitating public health campaigns in local communities including health promotion, pandemic response, immunisation and monitoring.
- » Providing access to screening and health checks to detect risk factors.
- » Providing healthy lifestyle advice and monitoring.
- » Providing community education on medicines and health.

6

FUNCTION

PROVIDING CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- » Participating in team-based care of patients through agreed medication management or care plans.
- » Assisting to optimise outcomes from medicines and care plans.
- » Undertaking prescribing and authorising continued supplies of medicines as part of care planning in collaboration with the consumer and medical practitioner.
- » Facilitating continuance of relevant medicines with referral to a medical practitioner for re-assessment.

7

FUNCTION

PROVIDING CONTINUITY OF CARE ACTIVITIES

- » In conjunction with the consumer and their medical practitioner(s), collation of a medication history, completion of medication reconciliation and preparation of a current medication list on all occasions of transfer between episodes of care.
- » Undertaking appropriate handover procedures when a patient moves to a new area of care or to the next care giver.
- » Facilitating care by undertaking prescribing activities in collaboration with the healthcare team.
- » Educating patients, carers and other members of the care team to ensure that they have the appropriate knowledge and skills to achieve the best possible outcomes from the use of the medicines.
- » Acting as an advocate for the consumer to other team members regarding medication management through episodes of care within the health system.

8 FUNCTION

PROMOTING EVIDENCE-GUIDED PRACTICE & QUALITY USE OF MEDICINES

- » Providing evidence-based advice about medicines to consumers and other healthcare professionals.
- » Contributing towards medicine protocol development and medicines education within the healthcare team.
- » Facilitating access to advanced medicines information resources, as required.
- » Working with governments, industry, academia and other agencies to support and promote quality use of medicines.
- » Practising in accordance with professional standards and guidelines.

9 FUNCTION

PROMOTING INNOVATION & RESEARCH

- » Participating in the design, conduct and analysis of research into medicines, medicines use, health and professional practice and enabling information, communication and automation technologies.
- » Providing leadership and mentoring, serving as a positive role model and promoting excellence and professionalism in research.
- » Identifying and embracing new opportunities for professional pharmacist services that aim to improve health outcomes for consumers.

10 FUNCTION

PROMOTING MEDICATION SAFETY & QUALITY ACTIVITIES

- » Advising, supporting and taking responsibility for safe medicine distribution and administration practices.
- » Undertaking risk management and quality activities including audit and drug use evaluation as part of the health care team.
- » Participating in practice-based research activities.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FUNCTIONS AND THE COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR PHARMACISTS' PRACTICE

The 10 functions should be considered in conjunction with the National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2010¹⁷ which describes the skills, attitudes, values and beliefs that together enable a pharmacist to practice effectively, and the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework for Australia 2012¹⁸ which aims to advance the capabilities of pharmacists, recognise excellence and create opportunities for future change.

ENABLERS

Australia's pharmacists practice in a well-resourced and accessible network of community and hospital pharmacies, aged care facilities and in multidisciplinary team settings. The capacity of pharmacists to strengthen and broaden current roles and pursue new opportunities aligned with the 10 functions will be dependent on the sustained development of the following enablers.

1 ENABLER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRACTICE

Pharmacists' current professional practice based on a defined model of care applied in medication supply and medication management services will be augmented with both focussed and advanced levels of practice. Additional opportunities for practice will be developed incorporating innovative patient-centred roles in which pharmacists will accept responsibility for delivery of outcome-focussed services, with enhanced levels of collaboration with other healthcare professionals.

2 ENABLER

VIABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Pharmacists will recognise both the opportunities and limitations that exist within the health system and be responsive to the financial constraints and other imperatives of governments and other funding agencies. Funding will be increasingly linked to outcomes associated with integrated models of care and will be derived from a range of government, private and community sector sources. Within this framework the ongoing contribution by pharmacists to improve health outcomes will be achieved by the application of the unique knowledge and skills that are the basis of their practice; assessment of patients' health care needs, appropriate referrals, participating in decisions about patients' needs for medicines and, if needed, providing the medicines, medication management, consultation and other innovative services within sustainable, adequately remunerated, appropriately managed and marketed practice models.

3

ENABLER

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Pharmacists' contribution to improved health outcomes for patients will be achieved through competency-based undergraduate and postgraduate education, a commitment to lifelong learning including credentialing for advanced practitioners, practice-based training and comprehensive continuing professional development, plus appropriately trained support staff. Their practice will include delivery of educational messages targeted to the community, other healthcare professionals, government and other funding agencies.

4

ENABLER

WORKFORCE

Utilising its existing and inherent skills and through continual development, the pharmacist workforce will maintain the capacity, capability and flexibility to function within a healthcare system which will progressively become more patient-centred and team oriented. The workforce will need to consist of a diverse range of practitioners from generalists to advanced practitioners, from educationalists to scientists. Recognition of advanced level practitioners will be an essential driver to pharmacists' ability to maintain and grow their role in the healthcare team.

5

ENABLER

LEGISLATION & POLICY

Regulation and policy must facilitate rather than hinder the advancement of pharmacists' practice within a framework of appropriate public safety. Access to, and use of, relevant and timely standards of practice, guidelines and framework documents and national harmonisation of medicines regulation and regulation of the profession, will facilitate quality and efficiency in pharmacists' practice.

6

ENABLER

INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY

Access to, and use of, accurate, secure, standardised and integrated electronic information systems including data management, electronic communication networks, personal electronic health records, patient monitoring, e-prescribing, telehealth systems, remote care networks and automation will enable enhanced quality and efficiency of individual pharmacist's practice, facilitate a profession-wide approach to patient care and link pharmacists' practice within the profession and with other health professionals.

7

ENABLER

LEADERSHIP & PARTNERSHIPS

All pharmacists will share a sense of responsibility to lead in medication management activities, medication safety and quality services through continuing personal and professional development, empowering the leadership potential of colleagues, consulting and engaging widely, building and maintaining relationships, working within teams and encouraging contribution.

8

ENABLER

CULTURE & PROFESSIONALISM

A culture based on ethical values, attitudes and behaviours is necessary for effective practice as a pharmacist and to be a responsible health professional in the wider healthcare environment. Pharmacists will actively acquire and inculcate professional attitudes and behaviours within a culture of lifelong learning, in order to take on the responsibility to optimise patient well-being and to be patients' advocates.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENABLERS

To varying extents, each of the eight enablers is related to the other seven and their development will be interdependent, however they will all be driven principally by developments that arise in the first Enabler, *Opportunities for practice*. If a new opportunity for practice is to be successfully adopted it will need to be viable and sustainable, require an appropriately educated and trained workforce, emerge within a supporting legislative framework, be directed by appropriate policies, have access to the required information and technology, with leadership by practitioners working within ethical and professional partnerships.

DRAFTING PRINCIPLES & FUTURE STEPS

DRAFTING PRINCIPLES

- » The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia initiated the meeting that resulted in this statement however the subsequent planning, drafting and consulting leading to the final document has been undertaken with input from all major pharmacy organisations on behalf of all pharmacists.
- » The statement relates to the practice of pharmacists, not to the pharmacy profession or pharmacies. It is based upon the principle that pharmacists are health practitioners with unique knowledge and skills.
- » It is not the purpose of the document to define or describe preferred roles for pharmacists. Rather the intention is to create a framework that supports pharmacists to build upon their current practice and further utilise their knowledge and skills in responding to community needs.
- » Its purpose is to be an educational document for practitioners and pharmacy support staff, patients and consumers, regulators and health service planners, health professionals and other stakeholders.
- » The statement is nationally consistent and not location specific. It applies in all settings in which pharmacists may practice.

- » While the statement is applicable to all practising pharmacists, it will be directly applicable to those pharmacists working in patient care in primary, secondary and tertiary settings. It will be indirectly applicable to pharmacists practising in other settings such as academia, policy, regulation, research and pharmaceutical manufacturing in as much as the work of all pharmacists ultimately contributes to patient care.

FUTURE STEPS

- » There has been repeated consultation with members and organisations within the profession during the development of the current statement and further consultation within the profession and with external stakeholders is proposed.
- » Pharmacy organisations are encouraged to utilise the statement and the principles therein when preparing strategies, policies and programs.
- » Academic institutions are encouraged to incorporate the principles of this statement in the undergraduate education of pharmacists.
- » External stakeholders are invited to use this statement when considering engagement with pharmacists and the pharmacy profession.
- » Comments can be submitted to the Chairperson of the Drafting Group, C/- PSA, PO Box 42, Deakin West, ACT 2600 or to john.jackson@psa.org.au.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Future of Pharmacy Stakeholder Forum

Eleven organisations nominated the listed individuals to attend the Future of Pharmacy Stakeholder Forum, convened by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia in Melbourne on 23 July 2012.

Workshop

A facilitated workshop was conducted on 28 October 2010 to consider the draft vision statement, the draft work plan for remainder of project and the development of an implementation strategy. The following individuals attended the workshop:

Yvonne Allinson, Daniel Bowtell, Ashleigh Coome, Gabrielle Cooper, Janet Cooper (CPhA), John Coppock, Joe Demarte, Anne Develin, Bruce Elliot, Andy Gilbert, John Harvey, Libby Hotham, John Jackson, Shane Jackson, Grant Kardachi, Bill Kelly, Lyn LeBlanc, Shu Chuen Li, Alistair Lloyd, Geoff March, Timothy Mizzi, Joe Monteith, Lisa Nissen, Karen O'Leary, Warwick Plunkett, Toni Riley, Marie Ritchie, Dean Schulze, Sarah Sinclair, Anthony Tassone, Michael Tsui, Liesel Wett, Gilbert Yeates.

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