

A call to action for pharmacists

A culturally competent profession will reduce health disparities

Sector support for Pharmacy Council's introduction of a new recertification requirement in cultural competence

Moemoeātia te moemoeā, engari whakatinanahia

Dream the dream, but achieve it also

The pharmacy sector has been challenged to implement the Ministry of Health's 2016 Pharmacy Action Plan which prioritises the reduction of health disparities in New Zealand. Pharmacists provide an ever-increasing range of primary health care services and are often the first health professional a person sees. They are therefore ideally placed to improve access to healthcare and health outcomes for Māori and other priority populations. Pharmacists are being urged to strengthen their core cultural competency skills to ensure that peoples' health needs are understood and met through interactions that are culturally safe and respectful. Acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the place of Māori in New Zealand, pharmacists are also expected to have a working knowledge of the historical, spiritual and social factors that influence health and wellbeing of Māori.

The Pharmacy Action Plan has accelerated Council's growing need for assurance that the profession has the skills and knowledge to be effective in reducing persistently poor health outcomes of Māori, Pacific peoples and other priority populations.

Starting in 2019, Council will introduce a new recertification requirement that focuses on CPD to increase assurance of cultural competence. The Pharmacy Reference Group for Implementation of Strategy for Māori Health (PRISM)¹ has played a significant part in development of the new requirement. PRISM's constituent organisations, including: The Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand, The Pharmacy Guild and Ngā Kaitiaki o te Puna Rongoā support the new requirement and encourage their members to respond to the call to engage in learning that improves patient-centred care of people whose cultures differ from them.

In each three-year CPD cycle, practising pharmacists must complete at least 18 points of learning in one or both of the competencies M1.4 and M1.5: *Practise Pharmacy within New Zealand's Culturally Diverse Environment* and *Understanding Hauora Māori*. Of the 18 points, 8 must be Group 2 learning and at least some points must focus on Hauora Māori.

The requirement will be partially implemented in March 2019 and fully implemented in March 2020.

More information will be provided through 2017 about the application of the new recertification requirement. We encourage pharmacists to share their experiences of improving their practice as a result of new learning and we plan to publish examples of transformed practice to celebrate the important role pharmacists are playing in improving health outcomes. The Council is working closely with the Society to ensure that ENHANCE will allow pharmacists to show in their Group 1 and Group 2 records that learning has had a significant component of cultural competence.

¹PRISM is the Pharmacy Reference Group for the Implementation of the Strategy for Māori Health. It was founded in July 2006 and is a voluntary group of stakeholders from every sector of pharmacy in New Zealand. It works to implement the Māori Health Strategy for the pharmacy profession and works with the pharmacy profession towards achieving improvement in Māori well-being.

Member Organisations

- Clinical Advisory Pharmacists Association (CAPA)
- Midland Community Pharmacy Group (MidCPG)
- Ngā Kaitiaki o Te Puna Rongoā o Aotearoa – The Māori Pharmacists' Association Inc (MPA)
- New Zealand Hospital Pharmacists' Association (NZHPA)
- Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (Inc) (PSNZ)
- Green Cross Health (ex PBL)
- Pharmacy Council of New Zealand (PCNZ) (Te Pou Whakamana Kaimatu o Aotearoa)
- Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc) (PGNZ)
- School of Pharmacy, University of Auckland
- School of Pharmacy, University of Otago, Te Kura Mātauraka Wai-whakarōa