



ASPRINH (Assessment of Prescribing in Health) Project Information to be included via link to the NPS MedicineWise Learning Web Page

Project Background

The ASPRINH (Assessment of Prescribing in Health) Project is a collaborative initiative funded by the Commonwealth Government Department of Education and Training undertaken by Queensland University of Technology (QUT), the University of Western Australia (UWA) the University of Sydney (SU) and James Cook University (JCU).

What does the ASPRINH Project Aim to Achieve?

The ASPRINH Project aims to provide guidance to the higher education sector, accrediting, registering and professional bodies in relation to the assessment of student prescribing competence and to promote a consistent approach to the assessment of generic prescribing skills with an acknowledgment of discipline specific requirements.

Why do this work?

- Prescribing represents a high risk, high volume healthcare intervention that requires successful integration of pharmacotherapeutic knowledge with a range of clinical skills.
- Errors associated with prescribing impact significantly on patient safety.
- Currently, there is no single validated and reliable method for assessing all elements of prescribing performance.
- The Health Professionals Prescribing Project (HPPP) described five steps to safe and competent prescribing by health professionals and concluded that education providers must assume the responsibility for appropriate training and assessment of a health professional's competency to prescribe¹. The HPPP recommends that the teaching and assessment of prescribing align with the National Prescribing Service National Prescribing Competencies Framework (PCF)².
- Given the diversity of practice scope, environment and context in which different health professionals work, it is difficult, yet critical, to determine the most comprehensive method for assessing prescribing competence.
- Despite differing practice scopes and contexts, a number of core prescribing competencies remain common to all prescribing professions³.

References

1. Health Workforce Australia, *Health Professionals Prescribing Pathway (HPPP) Project: Final report*. 2013.
2. NPS: Better choices, Better health. Competencies required to prescribe medicines; putting quality use of medicines into practice. Sydney: National Prescribing Service Limited, 2012.
3. Lum, E., C. Mitchell, and I. Coombes, *The competent prescriber: 12 core competencies for safe prescribing*. Australian Prescriber, 2013. 36(1): p. 13-16.

Which Professions are included in the Project?

The project will investigate the following prescribing or emergent prescribing professions: Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, Paramedicine, Nurse Practitioner, Pharmacy, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Physician Assistant.

Key Project Achievements

- Curriculum mapping against the NPS Competencies Required to Prescribe Medicines is now complete for all professions. This provides an overview of how prescribing components are currently being taught and assessed within each profession.
- National practice standards for each profession have been mapped against the NPS Competencies Required to Prescribe Medicines to provide an indication of the expectation of graduates in relation to prescribing medicines.
- Final year students and teaching staff have been surveyed across all 10 professions to determine their perceptions of assessment methods applicable to prescribing.
- Focus groups have been conducted with final year students and teaching students at each of the four collaborating institutions to further understand their thoughts regarding the best method/s to assess student prescribing competence.
- A survey of key stakeholders, including accrediting organisations, regulatory boards and representative professional organisations has been undertaken to determine their needs with respect to prescribing assessment.

Coming Activities

- The ASPRINH Project will hold a national symposium on Monday 31st October to discuss the first draft of the Prescribing Assessment Toolkit. Further information regarding the symposium may be obtained by emailing asprinhproject@qut.edu.au.

Questions? Comments?

Questions, comments and suggestions may be forwarded to the Project Manager, Lynda Cardiff, by emailing asprinhproject@qut.edu.au.

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