

# What is a hospital pharmacist, our competencies?

## What should be the focus for *EJHP*, and how can we stimulate research and publication in it?

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The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) represents and develops ‘the hospital pharmacy profession within Europe in order to ensure the continuous improvement of care and outcomes for patients in the hospital setting’.<sup>1</sup> This is stated to be achieved through ‘science, research, education, practice, as well as sharing best-practice and responsibility with other healthcare professionals’. The FIP Basel statements from 2008 list 75 statements reflecting the profession’s preferred vision of practice in the hospital setting.<sup>2</sup>

In 2011, based on the Bologna process, the Pharmine Consortium, presented a European common competency curriculum and specialised pharmacy practice curricula for the three main areas of pharmaceutical expertise, including a curriculum for hospital pharmacist education and training (WP4).<sup>3</sup> The aim of WP4 was to provide recommendations on a set of competencies for hospital pharmacy specialisation with the specific aim of reaching consensus on a core set of scientific and expert practitioner competencies required for modern practice.

Recently, a competency framework was developed under the Common Training Framework (CTF) project for hospital pharmacy in order to enhance the quality, safety and equity of access to, patient care in every European country.<sup>4</sup> The draft framework was prepared based on a thorough revision of existing specialisation programmes in Europe and the Pharmine WP4. It was reviewed through a Delphi Consultation with a diverse group of stakeholders. The final framework contains 24 competencies (table 1), 87 knowledge items, 136 behaviour competencies and clusters with individual outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

The traditional role of a hospital pharmacist focusing on the medicines (the product) and the day to day patient focused (pharmaceutical care) is clear

from the document. Also practice (professional) focus and system (management) focus is clear. But, how can a hospital pharmacist achieve advanced knowledge and competencies in all of these areas? It is hardly possible for a single pharmacist but it certainly is achievable within a hospital pharmacy by sharing competencies or by cooperation between pharmacies in a knowledge network.

The *European Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* (EJHP) is the official journal of the EAHP and it is committed to advancing the science, practice and profession of hospital pharmacy. The journal covers all aspects of hospital pharmacy from both a scientific and practice perspective, and aims to highlight innovations and developments in pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences, promoting safe, efficacious and cost-effective pharmaceutical care for hospital pharmacists to practise. *EJHP* provides a medium for pharmacists contributions to research in the hospital

pharmacy competency area. The CTF competency framework lists the following two behaviour competencies linked to research.

5.8.1 Can describe, explain and discuss commonly used research methodologies in order to be able to participate in pharmacy practice research and clinical research.

5.8.3 Can plan, lead on, and conduct research/practice development projects to promote safe and rational use of medicines. Able to collaborate with other healthcare professionals.

Both these competencies have a strong patient focus (competency 5). However, the *EJHP* team and I would like to encourage hospital pharmacists to broaden their research skills. Not only on patient care but also on product care such as being able to advise on the use and storage of medicines, the substitution of expensive biologicals and be a partner in clinical trials with high tech personalised medicines. We want to stimulate our readers to discuss and perform high quality research and publish it in *EJHP*. So, please share your thoughts with us on this matter by answering to the following questions.

1. What changes to the focus for *EJHP* would you like to see?
2. How can we stimulate hospital pharmacy research, and what types of research?
3. How can we attract hospital pharmacy scientists to publish their papers in *EJHP*, as their first choice?

**Table 1** Competencies for hospital pharmacists based on the competency framework of the Common Training Framework

Scientific knowledge	
Patient focus	Medicines focus
Patient care and clinical pharmacy skills competencies	Medicines and their use related competencies
1. Patient consultation	6. Development, production, analyses and control of medicines
2. Medicine, medication safety and medical devices issues	7. Provision of medicines and medical devices
3. Information and communication	8. Medicine and medical devices information and patient education
4. Providing information	9. Monitoring medicines therapy and medical devices
5. Expert practice	10. Interface management
Management knowledge	
System focus	Practice focus
Management competencies	Professional competencies
11. Procurement and management of medicines and medical devices	17. Professionalism
12. Hospital and medication safety management	18. Effective communication skills
13. Collaborative work	19. Team work
14. Clinical governance	20. Organisation
15. Staff management	21. Service provision
16. Development and research	22. Costs systems
	23. Training other healthcare professionals
	24. Leadership development

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We encourage our readers to discuss these questions. In further editorials, different aspects of this will be presented by our associate editors based on their competencies

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