



New Zealand Hospital Pharmacists' Association Incorporated
Te Kāhui Whakarite Rongoā Hōhipera o Aotearoa

Position Statement

Extended roles for pharmacy technicians

The New Zealand Hospital Pharmacists' Association (NZHPA) strongly supports the extension of pharmacy technician roles beyond traditional functions. Pharmacy Technicians are recognised pharmacy professionals who work under the direct supervision of a pharmacist.

Within hospital pharmacy, pharmacy technician roles have traditionally encompassed dispensing, ward supply functions, and aspects of extemporaneous (aseptic and non-aseptic) compounding. The health sector requires Pharmacy as a profession to expand its patient focused services. However, as there are insufficient pharmacists to do all that is expected and a significant increase in pharmacist numbers is unlikely, the profession will need to adjust its current skill mix. This will involve enabling pharmacy technicians to contribute more broadly within Pharmacy service provision. This in turn will increase both pharmacists' and pharmacy technicians' personal job satisfaction leading to greater retention of staff, and enhanced medicines management services to patients.

The potential to expand pharmacy technicians' roles is vast and expansion will enable pharmacists to work at the top of their scope of practice, and focus on the delivery of patient focused services.

Some of the extended roles for pharmacy technicians already in exist in pockets of innovative practice around the country. They include, but are not limited to:

- greater involvement in procurement, stock and medicine list management, checking of compounded and dispensed medicines
- medication history taking (as part of the medicine reconciliation process), assessment of patient self-medication administration processes, patient counseling, discharge prescription checking, or specific medicine monitoring (e.g. clozapine or warfarin monitoring)
- involvement in electronic systems e.g. dispensing, stock management, ePrescribing
- increased involvement in education and training, staff and service management and service development including quality improvement initiatives

The extension of roles will only be possible if pharmacy technicians are suitably qualified and accorded greater autonomy. The development and availability of the Level 6 qualification for technicians by Pharmacy Industry Training Organisation (PITO) will be an important step. Implementation and uptake of this new qualification must be encouraged by pharmacy managers, hospital management and policy makers. NZHPA has been working with PITO to ensure that the Level 6 qualification will be fit for purpose for hospital pharmacy technicians.

NZHPA would also like to see changes made to the definition of 'direct supervision' to enable some of these roles and the registration of pharmacy technicians to recognise the increase professional responsibility and accountability within these extended roles.

November 2013

NZ Hospital Pharmacists' Association

Mailing address PO Box 11-640, Manners Street, Wellington 6142

Level 10, Grand Arcade Tower, 16-20 Willis Street, Wellington

☎ (04) 802 0030 📠 (04) 382 9297 ✉ nzhp@psnz.org.nz 🌐 www.nzhp.org.nz