Position Statement

Advocate for regulatory and legislation changes to support continued expansion of pharmacy technician roles in hospital pharmacy

Position

NZHPA advocates for the appropriate utilisation of pharmacy technicians' skills, knowledge, and expertise to their full scope of practice, supported by relevant legislation changes and supportive regulation.

Background and Rationale

Traditionally, pharmacy technicians working in hospital pharmacy have undertaken roles in a more operational capacity such as dispensing, medicines distribution and ward supply, these functions remain essential to the delivery of safe and effective pharmacy services.

Continued expansion in the pharmacy technician scope of practice provides opportunities to improve workforce capacity, service efficiency, and continuity of care, while enabling pharmacists to focus their expertise on activities requiring pharmacist-specific clinical judgement and decision-making.

A well-supported and appropriately skilled pharmacy technician workforce can make a significant contribution to improving patient outcomes and providing increased accessibility to pharmacy services.

Regulatory Framework and Accountability

NZHPA supports a review of the definition and application of direct supervision to ensure that it appropriately reflects the responsibilities, competencies, and levels of autonomy required for extended pharmacy technician roles.

NZHPA also supports consideration of appropriate formal recognition, including registration and an equivalent professional framework for pharmacy technicians.

NZHPA Recommendations

NZHPA calls on hospital pharmacy services, employers, education providers, professional bodies, regulators, and policymakers to:

1. Enable the appropriate expansion of pharmacy technician roles in response to patient needs, service demands, and workforce requirements.
2. Invest in recognised education, training, competency assessment, and continuing professional development to support extended practice.
3. Establish sustainable career pathways that recognise advanced skills, increased responsibilities, and contributions to service delivery.
4. Review supervision and regulatory frameworks to enable appropriately trained and competent pharmacy technicians to practise with suitable levels of autonomy and accountability.
5. Promote formal professional recognition and registration or an equivalent framework that reflects the evolving responsibilities of the pharmacy technician workforce.

Conclusion

NZHPA strongly supports the continued evolution of pharmacy technician practice as an essential component of a sustainable, skilled, and effective hospital pharmacy workforce. This includes appropriate expansion of pharmacy technician roles, underpinned by education, competency, professional recognition, and fit-for-purpose regulatory frameworks.