The integration of prescribed standards and guidelines in community pharmacy practices in South East Queensland.

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Introduction: Community pharmacy practice in Australia is increasing its focus on patient care through partnering with government to deliver new professional pharmacy services. A key step in implementing and evaluating these new services is reviewing current core services and the application of practice standards. Method: This qualitative study involved 17 South-East Queensland community pharmacists recruited through self-selection and stratified to represent specific demographics. Semi-structured interviews were conducted during August and September 2006. Inductive analysis and continual comparison of categories and concepts enabled clarification of common and distinct themes. Results: The quality of services with regard to the supply of over-the-counter medicines varied with specific reference to the involvement of pharmacists. The delegation of dispensing procedures to dispensary assistants differed with most participants not clearly differentiating between pharmacists’ and dispensary assistants’ activities. Variations also existed with regard to dispensing processes and the involvement of pharmacists in the provision of patient advice. Pharmacist intervention record keeping was uncommon and records of ‘near miss’ incidents were not kept by any of the participants. Conclusion: Workflow models and the delegation of tasks need to be re-evaluated in the light of new roles and responsibilities and contemporary healthcare standards. It is important to keep improving work practices to ensure the delivery of quality pharmaceutical services.