

A review of pharmacist involvement in the delivery of medication education within QLD and northern NSW hospitals

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Education provision is a crucial part of a pharmacist's responsibility for Quality Use of Medicines in the hospital setting. When researching the literature on the nature of education provided by pharmacists, it came to our attention the overall lack of investigation into this area.

A snapshot of the current education provided by hospital pharmacists was determined by analysing the responses of a *SurveyMonkey*® questionnaire sent by email to 58 directors of pharmacy across Queensland and Northern NSW. Of these hospitals 29 pharmacists responded giving a response rate of 50% .

Directors of Pharmacy who responded to the survey were asked to classify the role of the pharmacist as an educator in terms of:

- education given to other health team members (i.e. Doctors, Nurses, other Pharmacists, healthcare students and other Allied Health professions
- the frequency of the education, the focus, how it is initiated, how it is performed and how long it lasted.
- The pharmacist role and how it related to specific patient populations was also investigated in light of which patients the education related to, the general topic of the education and the relative size of such patient education groups.

Key findings were;

- 89.3% indicated that pharmacist education to doctors was occurring
- the top three clinical specialties where educate provided were
 - cardiology (48.0%)
 - mental health (32.0%)
 - diabetes (24.0%).
- education sessions were initiated
 - 'on request' (86.2%)
 - as part of intern orientation (48.3%)
 - as part of hospital procedure' (44.8%).
- majority of pharmacists reported informal discussions as their main source of education provision (96.4%), closely followed by provision of printed material (75.0%) and formal lectures (71.4%).
- hospitals with more pharmacist resources spent more time educating patients and other health professionals than the smaller hospitals..