

## **Development and evaluation of an online dispensing guide for third year pharmacy students**

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**Title:** Development and Evaluation of an Online Dispensing Guide for Third Year Pharmacy Students

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**Introduction/Background:**

The dispensing of prescriptions is one of the core functions of pharmacists. Dispensing is a complicated process that involves a range of cognitive and manual processes. Ideally, pharmacy students first need to perform basic dispensing data processing functions before proceeding to more complicated clinical interpretation functions. From a training perspective, it is therefore important to introduce the various processes to pharmacy students in a systematic way, thereby training them to follow a good dispensing procedure.

**Purpose/Objectives:**

The overall objective of this project was to develop and test an online Dispensing Guide to be utilised by third year pharmacy students in addition to dispensing data processing workshops. Specific aims included to determine whether the guide improved the students' understanding of the dispensing process and the basic utilisation of dispensing software. The project involved (1) the development of the Dispensing Guide, consisting of two online modules, namely Module 1- The dispensing process, and Module 2- Data entry and (2) the testing of the impact of the Guide on students' knowledge and understanding. Issues/questions for exploration or ideas for discussion: 1. The impact of an online training guide, readily accessible outside of class workshop times, on students' understanding of the dispensing process. 2. The impact of a mandatory viewing session of the online guide on students' utilisation of the online guide, in their own time.

**Results:**

The third year pharmacy student cohort (n = 120) were randomised into three study groups, namely: Group 1: had access to the on-line modules as well as an initial compulsory session that involved viewing of the modules

**Group 2:** had access to the online modules (no compulsory viewing session)

**Group 3:** did not have access to the online modules Through pre-and post-testing of students' knowledge and understanding the impact of the online modules was evaluated as well as the effect of the compulsory viewing session that involved Group 1. Pre-and post-test data will be analysed in March 2010 following the exposure of the modules to the students.