

# Development of a Health Literacy education package for community pharmacists and pharmacy staff in Australia

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## The Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia (PGA) is the national peak body representing community pharmacy. The PGA negotiates the Community Pharmacy Agreements with the Australian Government and Pharmacy research and development is one of the priorities identified in the Fifth Agreement. The objective is to contribute to maintaining and improving the health outcomes of Australians through evidence based best practice on issues related to pharmacy and the provision of quality services to patients.

Six projects have been commissioned in this agreement including Health Literacy in Community Pharmacies. The focus of other funded projects includes Consumer Needs, Professional Integration, Mental Health, Chronic Diseases and Rural Pharmacy Workforce. More information can be found at [www.5cpa.com.au](http://www.5cpa.com.au)

### Funding statement

The project is being undertaken as part of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Research and Development program, which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

## Background

Community pharmacies in Australia are a pivotal location to provide primary care services and address consumers' health literacy needs, whereby pharmacy staff can engage with consumers in a constructive manner. However, this only occurs if pharmacy staff have the capacity, knowledge and skills to understand and alleviate the impact of low health literacy on consumers. This means enhancing the skills of pharmacists and pharmacy assistants to *identify the capacity* of the consumer and to *target information and resources* specifically to their needs. Understanding health literacy and how it may affect health consumers, and having the knowledge and skills to address some of those effects, will put community pharmacy staff in a strong position to reduce the risks associated with poor health literacy.

## Project summary

Building on sound evidence from a comprehensive literature review and exploration of resources, tools and supporting structures in Health Literacy, an educational package for Australian community pharmacies will be developed, evaluated and refined to help them recognize the health literacy levels of consumers and adopt appropriate communication strategies, and thus enhance their interactions with consumers. A consortium of experienced pharmacists and other academics will take the evidence framework and design an innovative, accessible and manageable educational package in Health Literacy. A train-the-trainer approach will be used to prepare pharmacists to deliver the training to other pharmacists and pharmacy assistants in the workplace. For convenience of pharmacists, this will be delivered in traditional face-to-face workshops as well as online. In the pharmacy, the pharmacist trainer will have the support of a range of online resources to enhance delivery of the package to the pharmacy staff.

# Project development

## Phase One

### Literature review

The Healthy Communities Research Centre at The University of Queensland will identify and distil research findings that can guide the development of the educational package that will meet the subsequent objectives of this project.

The review will build on a previous systematic review that was conducted by the Healthy Communities Research Centre in 2009. The updated review will focus on pharmacy as a setting for interventions and impacts and the quality of published studies will be rigorously assessed using recognised tools.

## Phase Two

### Collation and review of existing resources and tools

This stage will explore the 'grey' resources that may not be reflected in the emergent scientific literature, including :

- conference presentations
- information relating to specific individual pharmacy activities
- online educational resources developed
- other web-based resources
- input from key stakeholders.

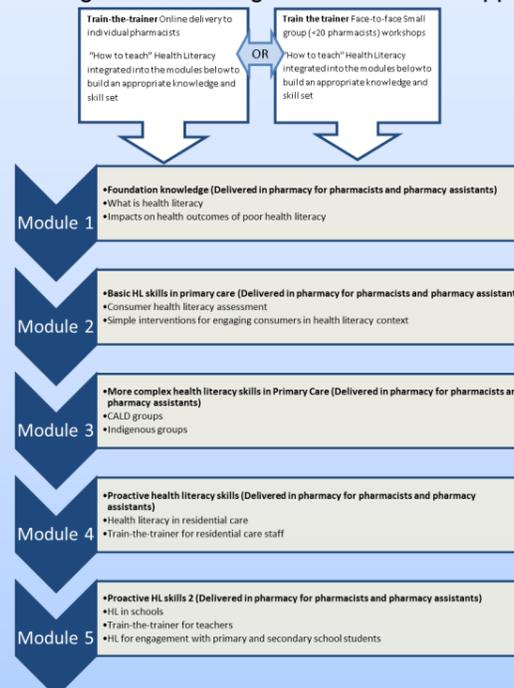
Through the Academic Section of the International Pharmacy Federation, a survey of pharmacy educators and organizations around the world on the nature, process and impact of health literacy education in Schools of Pharmacy will be conducted.

The content for the educational package will be informed by the literature review and collation of resources and tools in Phases 1 and 2.

## Phase Three

### Development of the educational package

While the content and specific activities will be guided by the reviews of phases 1 and 2 the package is expected to follow the following structure using a train-the-trainer approach.



## Phase Four

### Pilot testing and evaluation

The evaluation will reflect structure, process and outcome measures

- quantitative and qualitative
- utilise surrogate outcome measures from the perspectives of the pharmacist
- feedback from train-the-trainer participants
- focus groups of pharmacists and pharmacy assistants

Cluster-randomised controlled trial on pharmacy staff behavioural change

- convenience sampling of pharmacies by geographic/demographic clusters
- monitoring of structure, process and outcome measures
- baseline and post-intervention monitoring (change in rates of identification of HL needs and interventions based on HL assessment)

Simulated patients

- measure of patient experience of the process.

## Phase Five

### Refinement of the piloted educational package

The quantitative and qualitative data generated from the evaluation of the educational package implementation and input from key stakeholders will guide the review and modification of the package for preparation for wider delivery. The final version is due for completion by May 2014.

On completion it is expected that this educational package would be delivered nationally as part of PGA supported Continuing Professional Development for community pharmacists and pharmacy assistants in Australia.

Outcomes of the research elements around the development and implementation of this project will be published during the course of the project.