

APF Expert Professional Practice Cluster

Background

Pharmacists working in all areas of healthcare, academia, industry or other areas do so with the aim of continuously improving standards of pharmaceutical care for patients. Pharmacists in all areas of practice are involved in delivering patient care whether directly, via a team, or indirectly if your role supports others via patients accessing a service or product, if you are involved in delivering educational programmes, research grants or all aspects of drug development. We all aspire to improve pharmaceutical care for patients and so this cluster outlines the breadth of components, or competencies, which demonstrate expert professional practice.

The different stages reflect the level of competence, depth of knowledge and understanding and sphere of influence as pharmacists move through their careers, and are applicable to pharmacists in patient and non patient facing roles across all sectors.

Getting started with the Expert Professional Practice Cluster

- i. Read the APF Expert Professional Practice cluster outline and familiarise yourself with the areas and competencies. Look at the 'evidence examples mapping tool' to get ideas of examples of practice that you may have also had. Please feedback any examples you have that are not listed to us at the RPS.
- ii. Conduct a self assessment exercise to see at which stage you feel you are currently practicing; the 'evidence examples mapping tool' may help you map your evidence against the appropriate Faculty stage for this process.

Tips

- If you are reviewing the APF one section at a time it is useful to be familiar with the other clusters as many examples of practice will also cover different competencies across the framework; you may generate ideas for evidence for other clusters as you go along.
- You might not feel you are able to deliver Expert Professional Practice if you are just beginning in a new clinical area or service. However, remember that these competencies can start with simple projects or experiences and extend and develop as your career progresses. Also, many of the competencies at Advanced Stage I start with "knowing" or understanding principles rather than "doing" or "directing". Consider one or two examples you have been involved in where Expert Professional Practice was applied to a patient or service and consider the role you personally played. Think about the principles outlined in the cluster and use them to plan your next project taking more of a directive role.
- Once you have identified some evidence then add to your APP on the RPS website.
- Discuss with your mentor or your peer supporters how you can develop yourself to meet identified areas within the framework or find ways to fill gaps in your evidence for your portfolio.

Tip for Peer Support

Discussions with a colleague or group of colleagues can help share ideas and examples of how different areas can be approached within your field of practice. We know this is a useful and supportive way to share development opportunities and solve problems.

Structure

Each competency is described at three stages of practice: Advanced Stage I, Advanced Stage II and Mastery.

Advanced Stage I - Either early stages of specialisation and advancement, or established in a role, performing well, advanced beyond foundation years.

Advanced Stage II – An expert in an area of practice, experienced. Routinely manages complex situations and a recognised leader locally/regionally.

Mastery - Aligned to recognised leader in community or primary care; Consultant and corporate level practice in NHS; equivalent leads in academia; business/corporate leadership roles in industry; business or strategic leader in community. A nationally recognised leader in an area of expertise (often internationally), alongside a breadth of experience and expertise.

You may find you are currently at different stages across clusters.

The individual competencies for Expert Professional Practice (cluster 1) are:

1.1 Expert Skills and Knowledge

1.2 Delivery of Professional Expertise

1.3 Reasoning and Judgement

1.4 Professional Autonomy

1.1 Expert Skills and Knowledge

Pharmacists working in all areas of healthcare, academia or industry do so with the aim of continuously improving standards of pharmaceutical care for patients. This can be directly in cases where practitioners have a direct relationship with a patient, providing individually tailored care for rare or serious conditions. In research and drug development, the aim will still be to produce excellent quality products or services to be used by patients, regarded as indirect. Pharmacists involved in research do so with a view to furthering the knowledge base and ultimately ensuring patients receive the best possible care. This also applies to those involved in clinical trials, drug discovery and formulation, programme managers for research or education or running a company.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates general pharmaceutical skills and knowledge in core areas.

In addition for patient focussed roles: Is able to plan, manage, monitor, advise and review general pharmaceutical care programmes for patients in core areas.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates in-depth pharmaceutical skills and knowledge in defined area(s).

In addition for patient focussed roles: Is able to plan, manage, monitor, advise and review in-depth/complex pharmaceutical care programmes for patients in defined area(s).

Mastery - Advances the knowledge base in the defined area(s).

In addition for patient focussed roles: Advances in-depth/complex pharmaceutical care programmes for patients.

1.2 Delivery of Professional Expertise

You can demonstrate how you are involved in the provision of patient care. This can be as a junior or more advanced practitioner directly to an individual patient or overseeing and being accountable for the direct pharmaceutical care of a group of patients via service delivery.

You can convey your specialist knowledge to your service user (patients/clients/agencies) in a useable and useful manner, according to agreed or self determined deadlines and are accountable for how that information is used. These skills apply across industry, academia, science, healthcare and corporate roles.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates accountability for delivering professional expertise and direct service provision as an individual.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates accountability for the delivery of professional services and expertise via a team or directly to groups of patients/clients/ users.

Mastery - Demonstrates accountability for the delivery of professional expertise at a defined higher level. May include providing expertise and service delivery nationally or at a strategic level.

1.3 Reasoning and Judgement

You can demonstrate your analytical skills to appraise situations, interpret information gained, appraise available options and make judgements as to the most appropriate course of action. Any professional practicing at an advanced stage needs to demonstrate they are able to apply knowledge to specific individuals or situations and can interpret available evidence and tailor patient care or service needs. This requires analytical, judgemental, interpretational skills and options appraisal. You will need to demonstrate the ability to analyse all available information, including conflicting information, taking the value or grading of the available evidence or information into account. Again, these skills apply across all sectors and roles.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to use skills in a range of routine situations requiring analysis or comparison of a range of options. Recognises priorities when problem-solving and identifies deviations from the normal pattern.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to use skills to make decisions in complex situations where there are several factors that require analysis, interpretation and comparison. Demonstrates an ability to see situations holistically.

Mastery - Demonstrates ability to use skills to manage difficult and dynamic situations. Demonstrates ability to make decisions in the absence of evidence or data or when there is conflicting evidence or data.

1.4 Professional Autonomy

You can demonstrate that you work as an independent decision maker within your professional scope of practice: your professional autonomy is based on the skills and knowledge you have demonstrated in the other competencies in this cluster. In addition to possessing these skills, you will also demonstrate them pro-actively on a consistent basis. As ever, autonomy and decision making is required across roles in healthcare, academia, industry, science and regulation.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Is able to follow legal, ethical, professional and organisational policies/procedures and codes of conduct

Advanced Stage II - Is able to take action based on own interpretation of broad professional policies/procedures where necessary

Mastery - Is able to interpret relevant policy and strategy, in order to establish goals and standards for others within the defined area(s).

An Example of Applying the Expert Professional Practice Cluster to an Example of Your Practice (using drug discovery as an example)

You have identified a new drug relevant to your area of practice which has recently been through the licensing process in the UK. You are familiar with the key research published related to its use and you plan to introduce it into clinical practice within your area.

You consider all aspects of your project as you are planning how to proceed:

- Critical appraisal of all available evidence and identifying an appropriate patient group
[1.3 Reasoning and Judgement; 1.2 Patient Care responsibilities]
- Health economic analysis, budgetary considerations and formulary submissions
[1.1 Expert skills and knowledge]
- Developing an in-house guideline, including considering place in therapy and identifying auditable standards
[1.1 Expert skills and knowledge; 1.3 Reasoning and Judgement; 1.4 Professional autonomy]
- Risk assess the use of the drug in practice then plan and deliver educational programme to ensure all relevant stakeholders (including prescribers, nurses and patients) are able to use the drug safely and effectively
[1.1 Expert skills and knowledge; 1.4 Professional autonomy]
- Introduce the drug into practice, monitor its use and pro-actively provide expert advice
[1.1 Expert skills and knowledge]

This example may also provide evidence for other clusters of the APF, for example:

CWR - Communication, negotiation skills and team work to achieve formulary submission. Influence required to guide changes in prescribing practices. Able to negotiate within financial constraints.
L - Clinical governance in ensuring patient safety is improved by and not compromised by the new drug; innovation in showing a demonstrable improvement in patient outcomes as a result of the new drug; sharing a vision and leading a team to deliver a new drug.
M - Use staffing resources to achieve implementation of educational programmes. Setting standards of practice within new guideline. Identifying and putting in place safety nets for any risks identified. Successfully change prescribing practices. Demonstrated strategic planning by horizon scanning. Working across professions to implement project.
ET&D -Conducting education and training across professions. Ensuring your own professional development is considered.
R&E -Critical appraising evidence for use. Auditing use against own standards. Publishing report or review of new drug introduction to contribute to the knowledge base. Identifying further research that could be carried out.