



australian
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Learning Domains

for pharmacist prescriber education programs

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Acknowledgement of Country

We gratefully acknowledge the Ngunnawal people, the traditional owners of the land on which the APC is based. We pay our respects to the Ngunnawal people and recognise their deep connection to this incredible place we now share. We also pay our respects to the resilience, strength and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present across the nation.

We recognise First Nations people's vast knowledge in native plants and their uses. Indigenous Australians were our first pharmacists. Country has provided medicines and healing throughout history. We acknowledge this important connection to Country and the impacts colonisation continues to have on this integral practice.

Canberra means meeting place in Ngunnawal, and is a place where people have been meeting, living and learning for thousands of years. We hope to continue this tradition as we work toward our vision of collaborative, committed and safe pharmacy practice.

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Preamble

The purpose of accreditation is to assure the quality of pharmacy education programs, and to promote continuous improvement. The accreditation of pharmacy education programs is intended both to serve and safeguard the public by ensuring that graduates of programs can demonstrate defined competencies relevant to their stage of education, development, and experience. The [Accreditation Standards for Pharmacist Prescriber Education Programs 2027](#) (the Standards) are structured to articulate requirements for pharmacist prescriber programs across domains, criteria, intent statements, and evidence guides. Together, these components support consistent interpretation and application by education providers, accreditation assessment teams, and the APC Accreditation Committee.

The standards are accompanied by the [National Prescribing Competencies Framework](#) (3rd edition) (the Framework) which describe prescribing expectations for all prescribers, regardless of profession, and are a description of safe and effective prescribing. The Framework is also used by a number of non-medical prescribers as the graduate outcomes of their training. Education providers will be required to develop program content that aligns with the Framework. To be granted accreditation, programs need to demonstrate that learners have been assessed against all of these competencies. Program graduates who become endorsed to prescribe should apply the competencies to their individual prescribing context, including their scope of practice and the professional and legislative boundaries within which they prescribe.

When designing a pharmacist prescriber education program, in order to ensure that the competencies can be demonstrated, the curriculum must include a number of elements relating to knowledge, skills and behaviours which are generally recognised as critical for developing the capacity for safe and socially accountable prescribing practice.

The Accreditation Standards allow flexibility in the design and delivery of programs, and describe the governance, quality assurance, and learner support of programs. The Learning Domains identify critical content areas for programs (i.e. the knowledge and skills underpinning the curriculum) and are aligned with the National Prescribing Competencies Framework (NCPF). Both the Framework and these Learning Domains describe essential graduate outcomes for pharmacist prescriber programs and are used together.

The **Learning Domains** will be used together with the National Prescribing Competency Framework in the development and review of degree program curriculum. They are not intended to define or limit pharmacists' prescribing scope. Instead, they are intended to describe what pharmacist prescriber programs will need to contain at a minimum (but not limited to) and are based on the current common health conditions (see [appendix 1](#)) authorised by the jurisdictions for pharmacist prescribing outside of Pharmacy Board endorsement requirements (see [appendix 2](#)).

These are expected to be used during programs as part of the teaching and assessment of prescribing skills and will give assurance that all pharmacist prescribers have knowledge of these common health conditions in which pharmacist prescribing is occurring. This will build on the knowledge gained by a pharmacist in their pre-registration training to be able to recognise, describe and differentiate common health conditions to inform accurate diagnosis and management during a consultation, including their knowledge of biomedical sciences and medicines.

These Learning Domains were prepared referring to the policies and guidance documents included in the following jurisdictional pharmacist prescribing pilots and trials.

The **Learning Domains** will be reviewed regularly as scope of practice evolves. Pharmacist prescribers who have concluded the programs will maintain and update their knowledge and skills by completing the annual requirements for continuing professional development as required by the Board's [Registration standard: Continuing professional development](#).

Learning Domain 1: Clinical assessment

Building on clinical assessment skills developed in their pre-registration training, pharmacist prescribers will demonstrate they can elicit an accurate structured medical history, competently perform relevant physical examinations and integrate the findings from the history and examination to make an initial assessment including a differential diagnosis for conditions within their scope of practice. This is a key graduate outcome for pharmacist prescriber programs.

Pharmacist prescribers must be familiar with consultation assessment tools and measures within their scope of practice and be skilled in how to use them to support better patient care and optimise health outcomes.

Learning Domain 2: Clinical reasoning and further investigations

Building on clinical assessment skills developed in their pre-registration training, pharmacist prescribers must demonstrate that they can apply the principles of clinical reasoning to patient presentations in their scope of practice including history, examination and the appropriate selection of diagnostic investigations with a view to their diagnostic accuracy and sustainability. Pharmacist prescribers must then demonstrate they can interpret the results of these investigations to refine their diagnoses within their scope of practice.

Learning Domain 3: Professional practice supporting prescribing

Building on clinical assessment skills developed in their pre-registration training, pharmacist prescribers must demonstrate safe, ethical, and evidence-based professional practice to support effective and responsible prescribing in a range of contemporary settings.

The following knowledge is required by pharmacist prescribers. Pharmacist prescribers need to ensure their knowledge in these areas is contemporary and specific to their prescribing practice.

Pharmacist prescriber programs are required to assess learners on the following areas of professional practice:

- chronic conditions that require collaborative management
- clinical audit of prescribing practice, benchmarking and evaluating patient outcomes
- clinical governance
- continuity of care, particularly for managing undifferentiated presentations and follow-up
- defining scope of practice:
 - pharmacist prescribers must be able to define, document and review their scope of practice ensuring that is transparent, justifiable, and aligned with contemporary expectations for safe, competent and ethical prescribing
 - programs must include training on how graduates can meet the requirements of the Board's endorsement and guidance in relation to their personal prescribing scope and how it can be maintained and/or expanded/changed
- how to critically evaluate AI outputs and engage with AI technologies in practice
- initiating and responding to professional communication, sharing relevant clinical information in a timely manner, and incorporating input from other health professionals into patient management

- interprofessional collaboration and communication pathways with a patient's usual healthcare provider (e.g. GP)
- mechanisms for clinical escalation and safety netting
- public health (preventing disease and promoting healthy lifestyle):
 - health risks, trends in drug-resistant infections and impact of social determinants on health
 - current and accurate information of the global epidemiology of infections and non-infectious diseases
- travel destination specific regulations regarding immunisation and the importation and use of medications

Appendix 1 | Health conditions

Table 1 lists the health conditions covered by services at participating pharmacies determined by each jurisdictional legislation and the history, assessment tools, examination and investigations associated with each condition.

Body system / General	Common health conditions	History	Assessment tools	Examination	Investigations
Ear, Nose and Throat	Otitis externa and media Rhinitis	History and risk factors for common ENT conditions		Physical examination of the ear, nose and throat including otoscopy	
Gastrointestinal	Gastroenteritis Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) Nausea and vomiting	History and risk factors for common gastrointestinal conditions	SCOFF Questionnaire and InsideOut Screener	Physical examination of the abdomen	
General health and health promotion	Cardiovascular disease risk reduction Oral health Overweight and Obesity Smoking cessation Travel health Vaccines	History and risk factors for general health and health promotion	Australian type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool (AUSDRISK) Body Mass Index and waist circumference Weight related co-morbidities screening Smoking cessation assessment Travel risk assessment Kessler Psychological Distress Scale Oral health risk assessment Hydration status	Vital signs including blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, and temperature	HbA1c and fasting blood glucose Serum lipids including LDL-C, HDL-C and triglycerides Hepatitis A, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella serology
Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal pain	History and risk factors of common joint conditions	Pain history and assessment	Physical examination of joints	
Respiratory	Asthma Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)	History and risk factors for common respiratory conditions		Physical examination of the chest	

Body system / General	Common health conditions	History	Assessment tools	Examination	Investigations
Reproductive	Hormonal contraception Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)	History and risk factors for common reproductive health conditions	UK Medical Eligibility Criteria [UKMEC] 3 and 4 (in relation to hormonal contraception)		Serum human Chorionic Gonadotropin (hCG) levels STI screening
Skin	Acne Dermatitis Herpes zoster - shingles Impetigo Psoriasis Wound	History and risk factors for common skin conditions	SCORing Atopic Dermatitis (SCORAD) index Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PASI) score and Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) score Clinical acute wound assessment Eczema Area and Severity Index (EASI)	Physical examination of skin	Microbial Gram stain, culture and antibiotic sensitivity

Appendix 2 | Initiatives or programs of pharmacist prescribing

Table 2 provides the jurisdictional prescribing initiatives or programs of pharmacist prescribing currently authorised across Australia.

Jurisdiction	Program/Initiative	More information
Australian Capital Territory	Expanded scope pharmacy services	Expanded scope pharmacy services – Information for pharmacists
New South Wales	Expanded scope pharmacy services	Expanded scope pharmacy services – Information for pharmacists
Northern Territory	Community Pharmacy Expanded Scope of Practice Program	Community Pharmacy Expanded Scope of Practice Program NT Health
Queensland	Community pharmacy prescribing	Community pharmacy prescribing in Queensland Queensland Health
South Australia	Community Pharmacy Expanded Scope of Practice	Community Pharmacy Expanded Scope of Practice SA Health
Victoria	Community Pharmacist Program	Community Pharmacist Program health.vic.gov.au
Tasmania	Community Pharmacy Program	Tasmanian Community Pharmacy Program Tasmanian Department of Health
Western Australia	Enhanced Access Community Pharmacy Pilot	Enhanced Access Community Pharmacy Pilot



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