

# Pharmacist-led education of social and healthcare assistants in drug dispensing and administration in hospital wards to alleviate the shortage of nurses.

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## What was done?

Because of massive lack of nurses and thereby healthcare professionals to administer medicine in psychiatric wards in Region Zealand, Denmark, the pharmacists developed and implemented a training course for Social and Health Care Assistants (HCAs) to participate in the task.

## Why was it done?

A shortage of nurses in Danish healthcare has led to the need for other professions to administer medicines. As Denmark has employed less than one clinical pharmacist per 100 beds in hospitals, pharmacists are not able to contribute to the task. Hospital pharmacists should ensure that the information needed for safe medicines use is accessible at the point of care.



## How was it done?

- Clinical pharmacists can have an important role in educating other health care professionals e.g. HCAs in handling medicines.
- The training courses has a duration of 3 days followed by a mentored trainee period.
- The course includes psychopharmacology lessons to teach HCAs to observe and react to overdoses, lack of effect or side effects.

## What has been achieved?

- Over 200 HCAs have attended the course since 2020.
- 8 out of 10 states that the course has enabled them to take on the new work tasks.
- 9 out of 10 believe they can use the newly acquired knowledge and practical skills for their new work tasks.
- HCAs are now managing the administration of medicines in the psychiatry ward, relieving the nurses time for more specialized tasks.

### What next?

There is also a shortage of nurses in the somatic hospitals.

To ensure patient safety and enough staff to administer medicines, hospital wards have requested similar training for HCAs.

It is believed, that similar training courses with modifications can target somatic wards as well.



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