

CREATING AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE FORMATION OF A COMMON TRAINING FRAMEWORK FOR HOSPITAL PHARMACY SPECIALISATION

A background paper for the 18th January 2015 CTF Steering Committee meeting

Introduction

The common training framework is a new tool to achieve consensual (or jointly agreed) qualification recognition across member states, enabled by the **revised EU Professional Qualifications Directive** of November 2013.

The European Commission describes a common training framework tool:

*“A common training framework should be based on **a common set of knowledge, skills and competences** necessary to pursue a profession. A common training framework or test could be set up if the profession concerned or the education and training leading to the profession is regulated in **at least one third of the Member States**. Qualifications obtained under such common training frameworks should automatically be recognised in the other participating Member States. Specialties of sectoral professions may also develop common training principles. **The Commission may introduce such frameworks by delegated acts**. Member States may be exempted from the application of common training frameworks or tests under specific conditions.”* http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-867_en.htm

Further information is available in the legal text of the Directive (see particularly recital 25 and section 49a), available in EU languages here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013L0055>

A common training framework has not been created before and the Commission has not yet published any formal guidance on the mechanisms they expect to use in creating such frameworks. In this sense, EAHP must take a relatively pioneering approach in its work in this area, learning from other professions’ experiences where possible, but also being unafraid to forge its own path and pursue its own methodology to create the consensus agreement on common competencies.

Purpose of this paper

This paper is intended to:

- guide productive discussion for the 18th January meeting towards firm conclusions on the CTF Steering Committee’s Action Plan for 2015;
- convey a sense of areas of required activity before a common training framework can be established, as well as timescales and order; and,
- assist Steering Committee members in preparing thoughts and reflections ahead of the meeting.

What is required to form a common training framework?

A fundamental requirement is to agree between not only EAHP member associations, but also relevant national governments and competent authorities for professional qualification recognition, “*a common set of knowledge, skills and competences necessary to pursue*” the profession of hospital pharmacy.

Beyond this, an evidence base for why the competencies are necessary, and why a common training framework would be beneficial, can assist in gaining support from governments, competent authorities and the European Commission.

The requirements could therefore be broken down into three areas:

- 1) the creation of a strong level of agreement on the commonly understood knowledge, skills and competencies required to be a hospital pharmacist in Europe;
- 2) the compilation of supporting evidence of the value that can be achieved in forming a common training framework for hospital pharmacy; and,
- 3) securing the strong engagement in, and support of, national governments, competent authorities and the European Commission for the project.

At this early stage, it may be possible to envisage 3 principal workstreams for the common training framework Steering Committee: a) competency framework agreement b) supporting evidence and c) engagement, advocacy and communication strategy.

How do we achieve an agreement on a framework set of competencies?

The EAHP secretariat envisages at this stage a 5-step process towards achieving a consensus on the knowledge, skills and competencies required to practice hospital pharmacy in Europe.

- 1) Carry out a comprehensive mapping of comparable similarities and differences between competencies (and or outcomes) of recognised European HP specialisation programmes.
- 2) Conduct an analysis from this mapping exercise (including comparison to PHARMINE) and make an evidence and value based judgment on what should be considered as the commonly agreed knowledge, skills and competencies at the heart of a European hospital pharmacy common training framework.
- 3) Consult openly on the assessment & proposal [using appropriate methodology], ensuring full opportunity for competent authority & national government input.
- 4) Conclude the exercise and propose a common training framework for national government, competent authority, EAHP member and European Commission endorsement (with the legal framework created through an EU Delegated Act).
- 5) Support countries to achieve CTF requirements and provide leadership for EAHP members to develop workforce policies aligned with the CTF.

What do we mean by a mapping exercise? What would that look like?

In very simple terms, a completed mapping exercise of the competences contained within Europe's hospital pharmacy programmes should give every reader, including the lay reader, a credible, easy-to-understand, outline and comparison of what each hospital pharmacy education programme in Europe teaches and tests, in commonly understood language and terminology.

The 2011 Pharmine project was a form of competency mapping in terms of investigating educational requirements for pharmacy across Europe. Further information here: <http://www.pharmine.org/>

The EAHP project may take the PHARMINE competencies, and as a starting point map these against the pilot countries, conducting a form of "gap analysis" (bi-directionally). We may also examine other nations that do not have regulated qualifications, but do have formalised hospital pharmacy training programmes.

Activities to support the evidence base and ensure clear communication

The establishment of a common training framework for hospital pharmacy specialisation in Europe will entail change on many levels:

- change for how competent authorities handle applications for qualification recognition by individuals coming from other countries;
- change for some national hospital pharmacy education and training programmes in order to meet the framework requirements;
- change for how the pharmacy profession is understood in the European sense (*moving towards a model more akin to medicine and dentistry with specific mobility mechanisms for specialisations*);
- change for countries without clear specialisation programmes in place at the current time; and,
- change for how other healthcare professionals, healthcare system managers and patients view the hospital pharmacy profession and the contributions they are competent and experienced to make to patient care.

Therefore the project should also give consideration to expanding the current evidence base that supports the case for forming the common training framework. The project should also ensure that at all times the goals, credibility and opportunities for engagement with the project are well communicated and understood by all relevant stakeholders.

Activities that could be helpfully conducted for these purposes include:

- examination of the desire within the hospital pharmacy profession and health systems for greater mobility of hospital pharmacy professionals;
- examination of the current mobility trends within pharmacy and hospital pharmacy in Europe, and the nature of commonly experienced barriers;

- a contact programme with all relevant national competent authorities and health ministries to better inform them of the project and the opportunities for their input and involvement; and,
- the creation of a suite of communication tools about the project to assist buy-in and understanding (e.g. website, briefing materials, testimonials, video material)

Financing the project

The first Steering Committee meeting should also give consideration to the budget needs of the project, and the sources from which these might be met.