

Development of a professional competency framework for clinical pharmacy in Sweden

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What was done?

Two professional associations for health-system pharmacists in Sweden took initiative to collaboratively develop a national professional competency framework for clinical pharmacy practice.

Why was it done?

A growing number of pharmacists in Sweden are working in a clinical setting. They often have different responsibilities and tasks, which may seem confusing to other health care professionals. There is an interprofessional need to describe different roles for hospital pharmacists. Equally important, there is an intraprofessional need to establish core competencies and progression of those roles, and develop a professional framework to advance career structure for hospital pharmacists.

How was it done?

A working group of experienced clinical pharmacists was tasked with drafting a first role description and professional framework for clinical pharmacy practice.

The development of the role description was influenced by, and drew upon, previous similar efforts in Sweden – primarily Stockholm, the UK Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF) and the EAHP Competency Framework for Hospital Pharmacy. A reference group of approximately 40 Swedish clinical pharmacist volunteers provided feedback on the first draft, which improved the revised final role description.

What has been achieved?

The national role description for clinical pharmacy consists of an overview of the role, an outline of formal educational requirements and a competency framework strongly influenced by the APF. The framework has six competency clusters: *1 clinical pharmacy practice, 2 working relationships & communication, 3 leadership & motivation, 4 service development, 5 education & training, 6 research & evaluation* and lists four stages of experience: *junior, intermediate, senior* and *consultant* (figure 1).

The role description was launched in April 2022 with an open invitation to practitioners, employers and local union clubs to begin to adopt and try out the professional competency framework. It is too early to evaluate impact, but the initiative has been met with support from employers and the clinical pharmacy community.

What next?

The associations will further promote and support implementation of the published role description. New working groups are being formed to develop similar role descriptions for drug preparation and drug distribution. A system of credentialing progression between the experience stages of the professional framework also needs to be developed.

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	Stage 1 Junior	Stage 2 Intermediate	Stage 3 Senior	Stage 4 Consultant
Suggested title	Junior clinical pharmacist	Clinical pharmacist	Senior or specialised clinical pharmacist	Consultant clinical pharmacist
Seniority and level of responsibility	Trainee with some support and supervision.	Independent competent practitioner	Senior practitioner and local authority. Mentor/teacher/tutor.	Senior practitioner and regional/national authority. Often a leader who advances practice.
Suggested educational requirements	Elective undergraduate courses in pharmacotherapy and clinical pharmacy.	MSc in Clinical Pharmacy	MSc in Clinical Pharmacy + relevant specialisation.	MSc in Clinical Pharmacy + relevant specialisation and/or research training (PhD).
Competency	Developmental descriptors			
1.6: Medication review	Demonstrates general proficiency in doing medicines reconciliations and medication reviews.	Demonstrates proficiency in doing medicines reconciliations and medication reviews with a good sense of individualisation and priority of care issues.	Demonstrates in-depth proficiency in doing well-structured medicines reconciliations and medication reviews. Demonstrates good sense of individualisation and priorities of issues in a care context.	Same as stage 3.
1.11: Methods of clinical pharmacy	General knowledge of tools and methods of clinical pharmacy practice.	Ability to adopt and adjust tools and methods of clinical pharmacy practice based on evidence and local setting.	Same as stage 2.	Ability to develop and create new tools and methods of clinical pharmacy practice based on research.
2.2: Interprofessional teamwork	General understanding of the competence of other health care professions. Ability to work as a member of a multi-professional care team.	Knowledge of the competence of other health care professions. Ability work as an acknowledged member of a multi-professional care team.	Solid knowledge of the competence of other health care professions. Ability to promote and develop multi-professional collaboration locally.	Solid knowledge of the competence of other health care professions. Ability to promote and develop multi-professional collaboration regionally or nationally.
6.3 Evaluation and research	Participate in service evaluation or research projects.	Demonstrate ability to collect and synthesize data for service evaluation, for example local project reports.	Demonstrate ability to plan, conduct and report service evaluation projects with general scientific rigour, for example presentation of the project with poster or publication.	<i>Depending on position:</i> Demonstrate ability to lead, plan, conduct and report scientific evaluations, for example PhD-projects.

Figure 1: A selection of competencies from the developed professional competency framework for clinical pharmacy practice. The complete framework consists of 35 competencies.