

Exploring interviews – are intern pharmacists’ responses what employers want?

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Introduction

The National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2016 (NCSF) describes the skills, attitudes and attributes that enable a pharmacist to practise effectively.¹

Hospital employers are looking for the modern pharmacist that possesses these enabling competencies.

Intern pharmacists may have insight into what they believe is important for employability but also need to demonstrate this by utilising relevant evidence in an interview.

Aim

To explore hospital intern pharmacists’ self-perceived skills, attributes and experiences required for employment.

Methods

A novel approach to thematically analyse mock job interviews to more accurately measure intern perceptions was used.

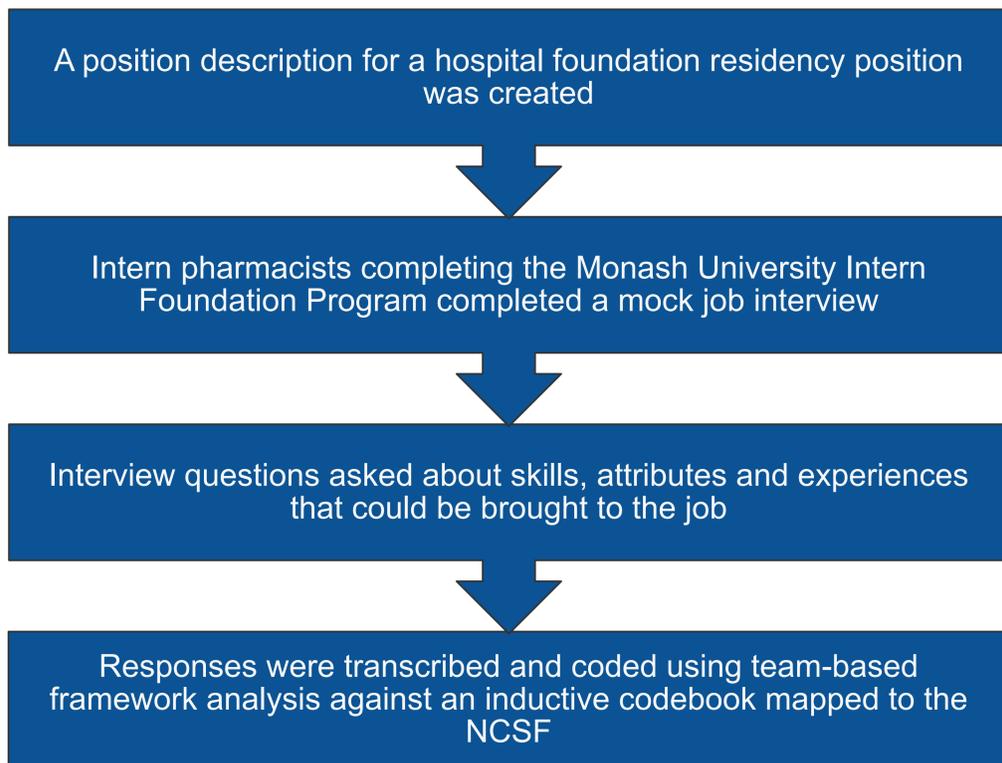


Figure 1. Method flowchart

Results

A total of 83 intern pharmacists completed an interview for a hospital resident position.

All interns referenced codes mapped to Domain 4 during their interviews (Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency of intern responses matched to NCSF competency domains

Competency Domain	Frequency (n=83)
Domain 1 – Professionalism & Ethics	94%
Domain 2 – Communication & Collaboration	94%
Domain 3 – Medicines Management & Patient Care	92%
Domain 4 – Leadership & Management	100%
Domain 5 – Education & Research	65%

Within Domain 4, only 6 interns mentioned another competency standard that wasn’t leadership of self (figure 2).



Figure 2. Most common frequency of mentioned competency standards by intern pharmacists within each domain and quotes from question responses

Discussion

- Leadership was mentioned by all interns however this more commonly referred to “leadership of self” rather than “of others” or “of practice” – there is a potential need to provide intern pharmacists more opportunities to establish mastery in other leadership competencies within the workplace
- Research domain was least mentioned despite interns undertaking a research integrated curriculum – the value of research skills developed during the program on future employability should be more strongly emphasised to interns

Conclusion

The skills and attributes reported by interns aligned closely with the National Competency Standards and provide insight into what is perceived as important for hospital residency positions