

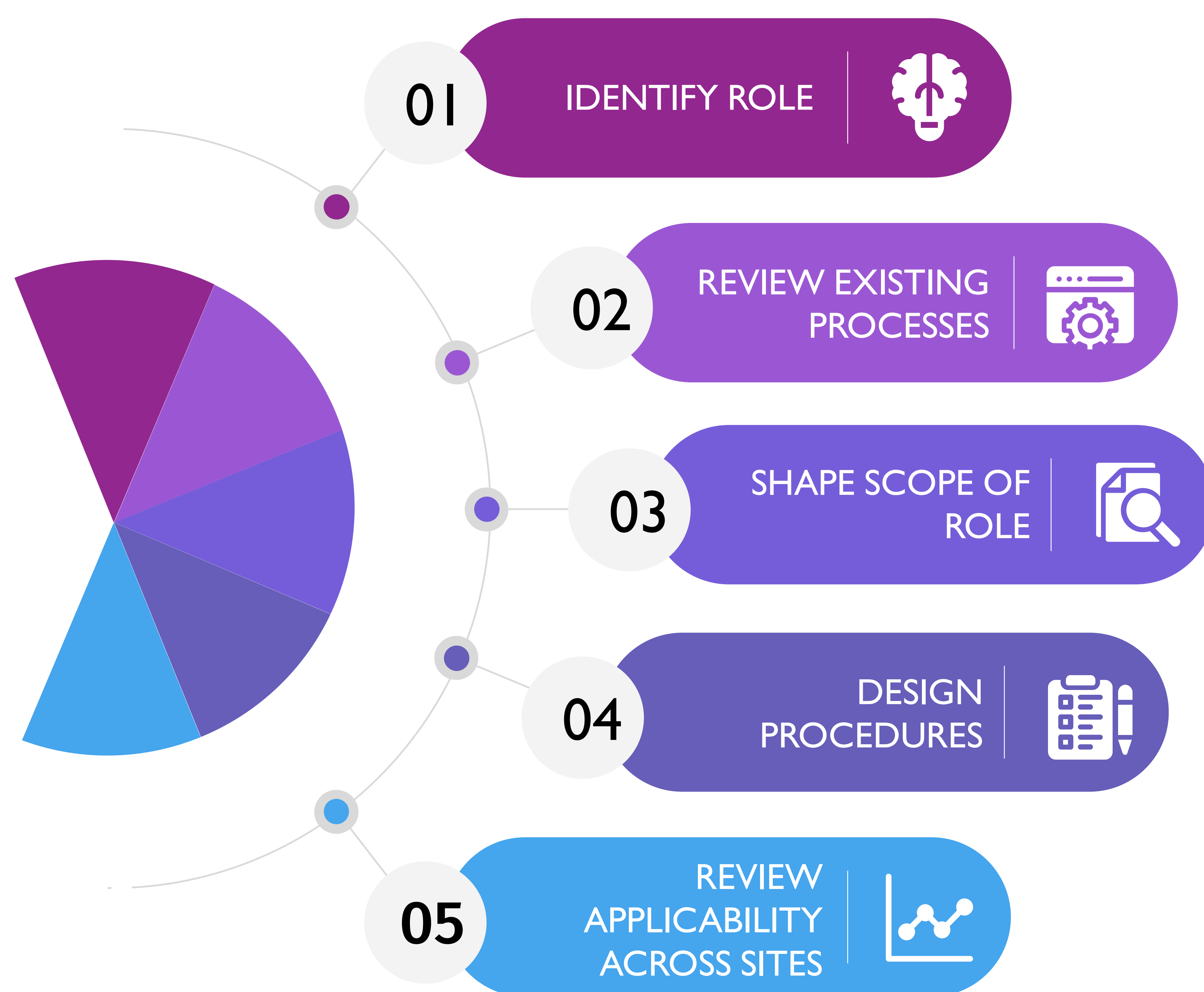
Shaping the scope of practice: the Ward-based Pharmacy Technician role

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Pharmacy Technicians have the knowledge and skills to assist with medication-related tasks on the ward



Background

With increasing pressures for nursing staff to prioritise direct patient care, whilst completing administrative tasks such as co-ordination of medication ordering and supply, workforce productivity gains are necessary. Pharmacy Technicians have the knowledge and skills to assist with medication-related tasks on the ward such as requesting, transporting, and sorting medications.

Objective

To develop a streamlined, Ward-based Pharmacy Technician (WPT) role for multiple hospital sites with comprehensive procedures identifying scope of practice, workflow processes and referral pathways.

Action

Existing medication-related tasks on the ward were reviewed to identify tasks appropriate for the WPT scope of practice and defined role. Identified tasks included reviewing the National Inpatient Medication Chart for medication availability. Step-by-step procedures were developed for each identified task, then documented and incorporated within the 'Ward based Pharmacy Technician (WPT) Orientation Guide with Standard Operating Procedures'. Procedures were reviewed for applicability to the rural and metropolitan hospitals across the organisation. Multiple stakeholders reviewed the document to ensure optimal patient safety is maintained.

Evaluation

The WPT Guide with Standard Operating Procedures is used, with online training, as an additional tool during orientation and referred to ongoing to support work activities. The WPT Guide with Standard Operating Procedures provides streamlined, specific procedures for technicians commencing in the WPT role across multiple hospital sites. It is anticipated an evaluation of the document and utilisation will occur within the next six months.

Discussion

The WPT Guide with Standard Operating Procedures provides a structured scope of practice to improve timely access to medications. This allows WPTs to assist with medication management and supports nursing staff to redistribute time to direct patient facing tasks. The creation of the WPT Guide with Standard Operating Procedures has ensured appropriate training and reference material is available for transitioning the technician workforce into the WPT role.