

Evaluation of research capacity and culture among pharmacy staff in a state-wide health service

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Introduction

- Integrating research with clinical practice is essential for evidence-based practice and continuous improvement in health care.
- Little is known about the research capacity and culture of the Australian hospital pharmacy workforce.
- Promoting pharmacy contributions to research can improve patient outcomes, support cost-effective healthcare systems and provide individual benefits
- Understanding the variables which influence research confidence and success in the pharmacy workforce can assist in facilitating a tangible plan to increase research at individual, team and organisation levels.

Aims

This study aimed to:

- Characterise the research capacity and culture of a state-wide public-hospital pharmacy service at organisation, team and individual levels
- Explore variables that influence research confidence and success.

Method

- An online, anonymous, cross-sectional survey utilising the validated Research Capacity in Context tool was emailed to all pharmacists, pharmacy assistants/technicians and non-clinical staff employed by a state-wide pharmacy service.
- Respondent characteristics and organisation, team and individual scores of research skill and success were summarised using descriptive statistics.
- T-tests compared results for pharmacists and pharmacy assistants/technicians and metropolitan-based and non-metropolitan-based staff.
- Regression analyses explored predictors of pharmacist individual domain scores.

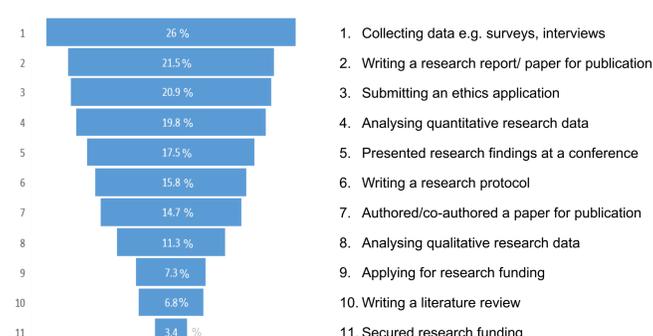
Results

- A response rate of 43.4% (n=278/641, 19 sites) was obtained. Respondents were primarily pharmacists (24% 'Pharmacist' Grade 2, 33% 'Senior Pharmacist' Grade 3) and pharmacy assistants/technicians (28.4%); 91% were practicing in a metropolitan setting.
- Highest scores for research skill and success were observed at the organisational level vs. team and individual levels (see Fig 1, 3, 4 and 5).
- 47% and 56.5% reported no prior research experience, or no research activity in the previous year (see Fig 2).
- Individual level scores were higher in pharmacists vs. pharmacy assistants/technicians (mean score 5.2/10 vs. 4.2/10, p<0.01), and were not different between staff in metropolitan vs. non-metropolitan settings (mean scores 5.2 vs. 5.0, p=0.77).
- In pharmacists, undertaking undergraduate, internship or postgraduate research training were associated with higher individual scores of research skills and success.

Figure 1. Comparison of mean overall scores for research support/skill/success across levels



Figure 2. Participation in research activities, research grants and research output over the last 12 months (n=177)



Conclusion

This research extends our understanding of hospital pharmacy research capacity and culture, describes research skills and success in hospital pharmacy technicians/assistants for the first time and highlights target areas to improve research capacity and culture at an individual, team and organisational levels.

Figures 3, 4 and 5 show participants' perceptions of the organisation and team's capacity to support research, and participants perceptions regarding their own individual research culture and capacity.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL RESEARCH SKILL AND SUCCESS

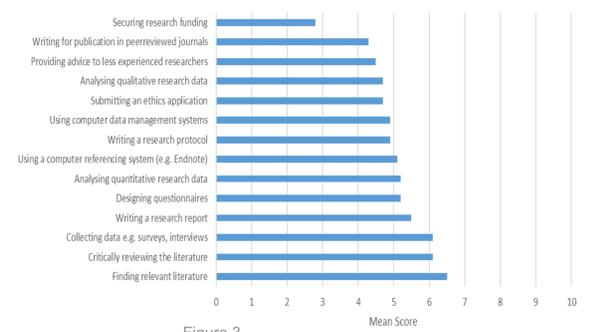


Figure 3. Scale: 1 = no skill or success to 10 = high skill or success

TEAM LEVEL RESEARCH SUPPORT AND SUCCESS

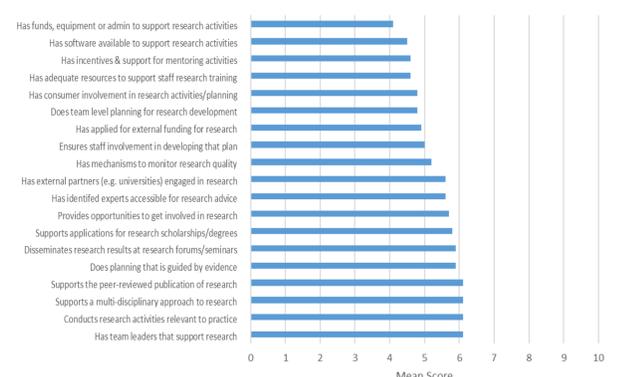


Figure 4. Scale: 1 = no skill or success to 10 = high skill or success

ORGANISATION LEVEL RESEARCH SUPPORT AND SUCCESS

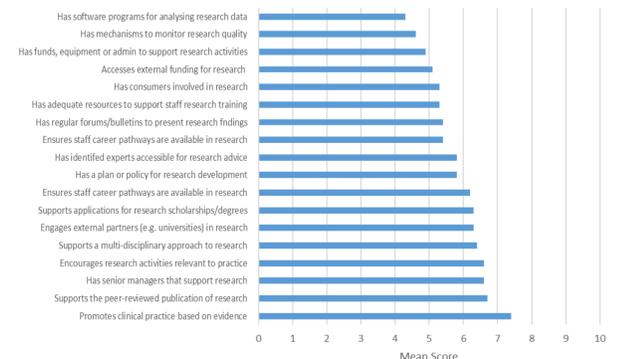


Figure 5. Scale: 1 = no skill or success to 10 = high skill or success

For more information

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