

# Innovation in education: A cancer training package for regional pharmacy assistants

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## Background

- The demand for regional cancer pharmacy services is increasing as we aim to treat regional patients as close to home as possible
- The Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) recommends that all staff involved in the provision of cancer services complete appropriate training to ensure they are competent to work within this high-risk area
- At present, there is no standardised training available for pharmacy assistants working within the cancer space

## Aims

- To develop, implement and evaluate a training package for regional pharmacy assistants to support the provision of cancer therapies

## Method

- A cancer pharmacist educator worked with regional lead pharmacists and conducted site visits (where possible) to identify the role of regional pharmacy assistants in cancer services across South Australia
- A self-directed training package was developed to address the knowledge requirements – consisting of readings and interactive e-learning modules, supplemented with in-person or virtual education
- To determine pharmacy assistant satisfaction regarding training and confidence in applying the knowledge gained, a SurveyMonkey® was developed

Fig 1. Example training material

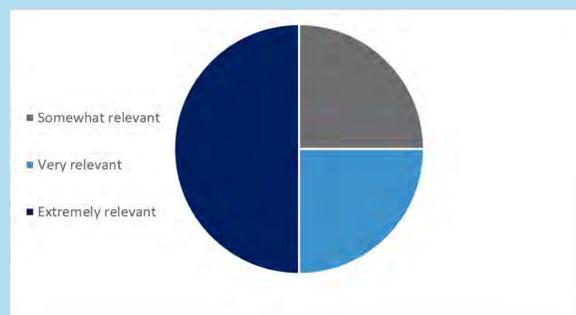
### Example of a PDF chemotherapy prescribing template

The image shows two examples of chemotherapy prescribing templates. The left template is a 'Chemotherapy Treatment Plan: Doxorubicin / Cyclophosphamide (AC)'. It includes sections for Patient Details (Name, UR Number, Date of Birth, Ward / Hospital), Indication (Breast cancer (Adjuvant)), Protocol Name (Doxorubicin / Cyclophosphamide (AC)), and a table for Cycle 1 dosing. The right template is a 'DOXORUBICIN / CYCLOPHOSPHAMIDE (AC) CHEMOTHERAPY PRESCRIPTION CYCLE No. 2 OF 4'. It includes Patient Details, Medication & Dose, and a table for Cycle 2 dosing. Both templates include a 'Treatment Flychart' table at the bottom.

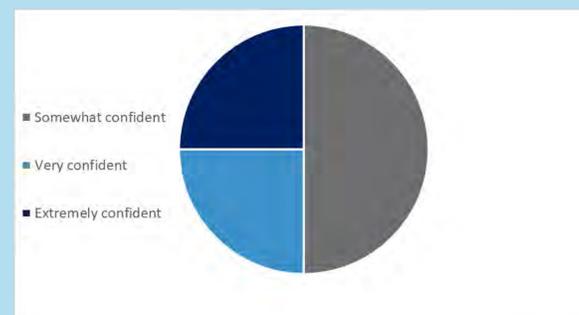
## Results

- 12 regional pharmacy assistants completed the training package over one year
- 8 assistants (67%) completed the SurveyMonkey®
- 7 assistants (88%) would recommend the training to a colleague

### How relevant was the training material to your role?



### How confident are you in applying the knowledge gained from the training session?



## Conclusion

- Pharmacy assistants were very satisfied with the package, however medium-levels of confidence at completion highlight the importance of supervised practice to support knowledge application
- Virtual learning was successful and will help facilitate continuation of regional training
- This training model could be used by other regional pharmacy services to support training of their cancer services assistants

For more information

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