



# Interdisciplinary role profile development of hospital pharmacists: a theory informed focus group pilot study

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## BACKGROUND

The role profile of hospital pharmacists is not clearly defined in every country, which leads to a slower role profile development of pharmacists compared to other healthcare professionals.

## PURPOSE

This study aims to use behavioural theory informed focus groups with hospital physicians and pharmacists to identify perceived capabilities, motivations and opportunities to optimise the interdisciplinary role profile of hospital pharmacists within the hospital setting.

## METHODS

A qualitative focus group study involving hospital physicians and pharmacists from Switzerland was conducted. Using study materials and semi-structured questions based on the COM-B and Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF), the study received ethical approval from the University of Innsbruck (Certificate 90/2024). Two online focus groups, including five physicians or five hospital pharmacists were conducted. Sessions held via Zoom (v.6.2.11) were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Framework analysis based on COM-B + TDF domains (Figure 1) coded independently by two researchers and further analysis was conducted using the Johari window. Results adhered to the COREQ guidelines for qualitative research reporting.

## RESULTS

### Capability

Hospital physicians were aware of hospital pharmacists' capabilities, although hospital pharmacists were not aware of the extent physicians appreciate them. Hospital physicians expressed that they value hospital pharmacists' role for advising and recommending appropriate medication for patients, especially in light of the overwhelming number of medications. Nevertheless, hospital pharmacists were concerned that they were not taken seriously.

### Opportunity

Physicians believed that the opportunity to have a hospital pharmacist as part of their interdisciplinary team helps to improve patient safety and quality of care, as well as reducing their workload. Consequently, hospital physicians wished for a hospital pharmacist to become part of their interdisciplinary team and to extend their professional role, although the lack of financial resources and staffing problems might be rate limiting. Participants believed that reimbursement of services would be appropriate to emphasise the significance of the pharmacists' role. Both groups wished to meet earlier in their career (starting at undergraduate level) to better understand the different decision-making thought processes. Physicians requested that access to information provided by a hospital pharmacist is more easily accessible and both groups stated that they would prefer personal communication over emails or electronic notes.

### Motivation

Hospital pharmacists and physicians expressed that their biggest motivation to work together is to make a difference in patients' lives, as they aim to ensure the best patient care.



## CONCLUSION

Behaviour theory analysis helped to demonstrate the value placed on hospital pharmacists by hospital physicians and their support for pharmacists' role to develop in daily practice. Defined reimbursement strategies and the motivation of participants to improve patient safety are strong facilitators for hospital pharmacists to have a more significant role. Hospital pharmacists would benefit from having a more precisely defined role profile in order to accelerate the future development of their interprofessional role.

## Capability, Motivation, Opportunity - Behavior & Theoretical Domains Framework



Figure 1 Combination of the COM-B Model and the TDF (The Center for Implementation, 2023 based on Michie et al., 2011)

### References:

1. Michie, S., Van Stralen, M. M., & West, R. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. Implementation Science, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-6-42>
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