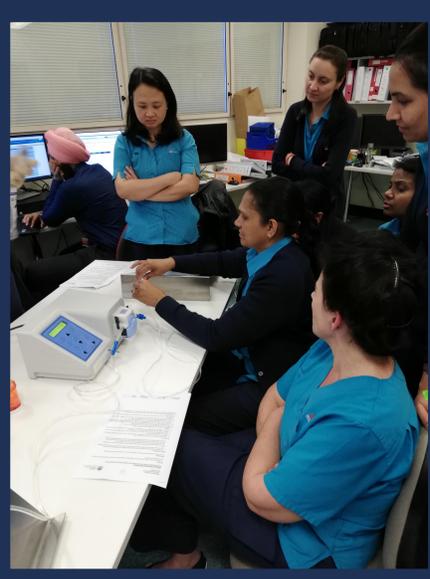


Technician Education & Development – Renewing Continuing Education Programmes

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Background

A Technician Education & Development (TED) Committee was formed to guide and promote technician continuing education (CE) within a large metropolitan teaching hospital. The focus of the group was to facilitate more pharmacy technician involvement, and to encourage interaction and collaboration within the pharmacy department and beyond. The committee was comprised of 3 senior technicians with an additional technician from each satellite pharmacy (Outpatients, Inpatients and Cancer Care). A pharmacist representative was also appointed.

Description

Feedback from technicians was sought regarding their CE needs and preferences, with the aim of revising the existing CE programme. The feedback highlighted that the technicians wanted the CE programme to include a greater focus on pharmacology; as well as the development of technical and interpersonal skills. CE topics were then selected based on the identified feedback. Pharmacology topics were identified using the SHPA’s ‘Principle for the Use of Medicines for Australian Pharmacy Technicians’ workbook.

Action

A monthly technician CE programme was developed (see Figure 1). Initially, pharmacist presenters led interactive CE sessions, with the aim of encouraging technician involvement. Positive feedback and discussions led to technicians presenting or partnering with pharmacists on CE topics, helping to develop technician’s soft skills. Presenters were able to use the SHPA workbook as a jumping off point for their own presentation. To encourage deeper learning and consolidation multiple-choice questions were developed and provided. Interaction was encouraged throughout, with many CE’s involving practical elements, quizzes or group activities. This created an enthusiastic atmosphere with technicians being keen and more engaged with the programme. A formal evaluation of the CE programme was implemented using a standardised evaluation form completed by participants following each session (see Figure 2). Evaluation forms were collated and analysed to provide ongoing information about technician CE needs and preferences. The form used 5-point Likert scale type questions as well as open ended questions.

Evaluation

In the first 6 months of the programme a total of 121 technicians had attended 9 CE’s. 87% of responses rated the Likert scale questions as excellent (scoring 4 or more, see Figure 3). These questions included responses on interaction, content and the effectiveness of the presenter. Open ended responses can be seen in Figure 4. CE’s have continued throughout 2019 and the programme continues to develop based on this feedback. Ongoing needs assessment has allowed the committee to be responsive to technician learning needs and provide relevant education in a timely manner.

Implications

As more technicians have presented alongside pharmacists this has encouraged others to participate in the programme, gaining confidence in public speaking and in their own personal development. Working relationships between pharmacists and technicians have also strengthened as a result of the renewed CE programme. Interestingly technicians are also more engaged now than they were with the previous programme, despite the fact that CE’s are now less frequent (monthly instead of fortnightly). Technician involvement, interaction and collaboration has been critical in the continued development of the TED CE programme with suggestions for follow up learning helping to meet the future needs of the technician team.

Pharmacology

- The 7 Ages of Poisoning - From Cradle to the Grave
- Medicines in Pregnancy & Breastfeeding
- Complementary & Alternative Medicines
- Administration of Medicines
- Palliative Care
- National Terminology, Abbreviations and Symbols
- Pharmacokinetics
- Medicines in Renal Disease
- Medicine Interactions

Workshops

- Identifying Skills and Development Needs
- How do we work towards expanding the Pharmacy Technician role at Westmead Hospital?
- 2 Part Communication Skills Workshop

Skills Development

- Manual Handling
- Introduction to Calculations
- Ward Based Technician Trial (Royal North Shore Hospital)
- Using the Added Pharma Smart-Pump for Sterile Production
- MM2018 Conference Debrief
- Abstract Writing

Figure 1: Technician CE Programme (as of October 2019)

Technician Education & Development Evaluation Form
Topic:
Date:
To assess the effectiveness of this session, please complete this form.

Please rate the following from "Poor" to "Excellent"
If the statement is not applicable, leave it blank.

	Score				
	Poor	1	2	3	4
1. Were the objectives of this session made clear.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The topics covered sparked my interests.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Session content and strategies will be useful in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The presenter was effective.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The atmosphere was enthusiastic, interesting and conducive to professional exchange.	1	2	3	4	5

7. What is the most significant thing you learned today?

8. What support do you need to implement / use what you learned?

9. How will you apply what you learned to your work?

10. How can we build this session for follow up learning?

11. What type of other professional development would you like to see?

12. Additional comments?

Figure 2: Evaluation Form

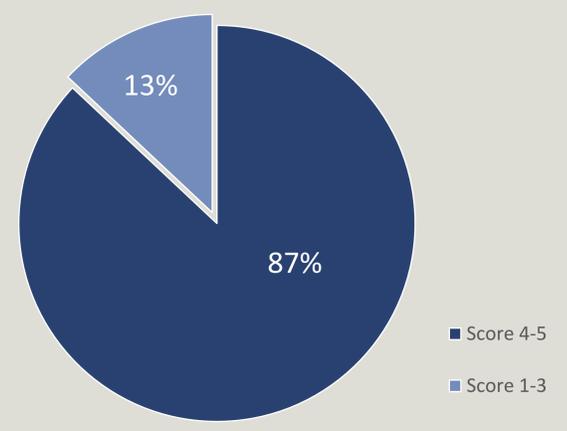


Figure 3: Evaluation Score Results

Figure 4: Feedback from Technicians

- Question 7: The 3 G’s – Ginseng, ginger & garlic all react with warfarin”
- Question 8: “Support and time from managers”
- Question 9: “More aware when dispensing these medications”
- Question 10: “More like this please – interactivity works well”
- Question 11: “More technicians presenting please!”
- Question 12: “Interactive-very engaging”
- Question 12: “Great presentation, presented a lot of information in a clear and precise manner”
- Question 12: “Good presentation. Liked the exercise to use the computers. Thank you!”

CONTACT

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