

Abstract

General practitioners' perceptions of pharmacists working in general practice: a qualitative interview study.

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Abstract

Introduction: Pharmacists in general practice have been shown to enhance patient care and are becoming increasingly prevalent worldwide. Yet, little is known about general practitioners' (GPs') perceptions of pharmacists prior to potentially working alongside them in this setting. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate these GP perceptions to inform future efforts to integrate pharmacists into general practice.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with GPs practising in the Republic of Ireland between October and December 2021. Content analysis was used to identify the most relevant Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF) domains that affected the theoretical integration of pharmacists into general practice.

Results: Fifteen GPs were interviewed. Five TDF domains were found to be most relevant in affecting pharmacist integration: (1) 'environmental context and resources' (space, government

funding, information technology, current workplace pressures, increasing patient complexity, indemnity, moves towards group practices); (2) 'skills' (GP mentors, practical in-service training, consultation skills development); (3) 'social professional role and identity' (role definition, clinical governance, pharmacist prescribing, medication review and monitoring); (4) 'beliefs about consequences' (patient safety, cost savings, workload); and (5) 'knowledge' (pharmacists as medication experts, lack of knowledge of pharmacist undergraduate training).

Discussion: This is the first qualitative interview study to focus on exploring GPs' perceptions of pharmacists working in general practice outside of private practice settings. It has provided a deeper understanding of GPs' considerations regarding the integration of pharmacists into general practice. In addition to informing future research, these findings should help optimise future service design and aid pharmacist integration into general practice.

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