

**WESTERN PACIFIC
PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM**
of the International Pharmaceutical Federation

Statement by the Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum

Strengthening of the pharmacy workforce

This statement is in response to the WHO Western Pacific Regional Committee October 2017 meeting agenda item 14: Regulatory strengthening and convergence for medicines and health workforce.

The health workforce is central to the delivery of health care and effective education and regulation are integral to assuring the quality of the health workforce. In the case of pharmacy, competence and professional development of the workforce underpins the delivery of good pharmacy practice.

Workforce Development Goals

The International Pharmaceutical Federation [FIP] developed thirteen **Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals** in 2016. The Goals provide global criteria for workforce development including foundation training, quality assurance, competency development, advanced and specialist development and CPD strategies. A subsequent base-line study by FIP of the **research, development and evaluation strategies for pharmacy education and the workforce**, conducted using the Workforce Development Goals, received input from five countries of the Western Pacific Region: Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore.

Competency and development of the pharmacy workforce

In 2016, the Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum of FIP facilitated workshop of the Presidents of the major pharmacy associations of the Region which identified the eight major Region-wide issues related to the implementation of the FIP/WHO Good Pharmacy Practice Guidelines. They determined the priority Region-wide issue is the need for **competency standards that enable the formulation of professional development frameworks that lead to enhanced pharmacy practice including patient care.**

A Regional survey conducted by WPPF in 2017 to evaluate this issue identified that:

- the pharmacist to population ratio across the Region ranges from less than 1 to more than 22 pharmacists per 10,000 people;
- the percentage of the registered pharmacist workforce engaged in patient care roles is on average lower in developing countries;
- 67% of developing countries and territories have no competency statements for pharmacists and most are unaware of the FIP **Global Competency Framework**;

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- of the countries and territories that have professional development frameworks, two thirds have no link to competency statements;
- only three countries have competency statements for advanced practice.

The pharmacist workforce capacity is very limited in a number of countries and territories of the Region and lacks a sound competency-based foundation in many of the developing countries and territories. Furthermore, the use of professional development programs linked to competency statements to sustain standards of practice is poorly developed throughout the Region.

WPPF seeks to work with national and regional partner organisations to undertake the following:

1. Conduct a gap analysis between the existing pharmacist workforce and medicines distribution practice, regulation and remuneration in the Region and the ***Western Pacific Regional Action Agenda on Regulation Strengthening, Convergence and Cooperation for Medicines and the Health Workforce***.
2. Drawing on existing pharmacy competency statements within the Region and the Global Competency Framework, to develop a Regional template for a competency statement and professional development framework and associated implementation strategy appropriate for use by those countries and territories yet to establish such resources.
3. Use the **Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals** to establish comprehensive Region-wide baseline data of pharmacy education and the pharmacist workforce.

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