

Exploring Pre-Registration Tutors' Views on Professionalism and Leadership Skills Shown by Pre-Registration Pharmacists

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Introduction

Previous studies have shown that on entry to the pre-registration year tutees possess basic professional skills (Jee et al., 2016), while leadership skills have not been studied in detail.

Aim: To ascertain pre-registration tutors' views on professionalism and leadership demonstrated by tutees.

Objectives:

- To determine what skills were desirable and compare these with skills shown.
- To determine the roles of tutors, tutees and undergraduate (UG) education in developing these skills.
- To identify challenges faced in developing these skills and determine what improvements could be made.



Methods

- Purposive sampling to recruit pre-registration tutors employed by Well Pharmacy, based in England and Wales.
- Semi-structured interview guide based on literature review.
- Telephone interviews audio recorded.
- Interviews transcribed verbatim and an analytical framework applied.

Interviewed

- 12 tutors, 7 males and 5 females.
- Experience ranged from newly qualified tutors to 20 years experience.

Main themes

- Tutors limited in the support they can provide tutees due to time constraints.
- Inadequate pharmacy experience of tutees on commencement of pre-reg.
- Leadership cannot be taught without practice.

"... it's something that's more likely to be learnt on the job rather than something being taught ..." (Pre-reg Tutor D)

Skills desired and shown

- Communication, confidence and teamwork were cited as most important, but tutees did not always perform as well as expected.

"... more communication skills ... dealing with patients and things like that because obviously sometimes they have the clinical knowledge but it's how to put it into layman's terms ..." (Pre-reg Tutor F)

- Good problem-solving, follow up skills and taking responsibility for specific tasks.

Roles

Tutors

Results

- Coaching, supporting learning and role modelling.

"...quiz my tutee on clinical stuff ... shadow me as much as possible and just talk her through my day ..." (Pre-reg Tutor E)

Tutees

- Learn from the tutor and other pharmacy professionals.
- Understand self limitations.

Undergraduate Education (UG)

- Instill professional attitudes and a basic understanding of leadership skills.
- Provide opportunities for placements.

Challenges

- Time constraints for tutors.
- Paperwork.
- Inadequate placement hours during UG.
- Staffing issues.
- Pre-reg's knowledge.

"It takes up a lot of time, there's a lot of paperwork, ... it's not that I don't like it, it's one of the more challenging bits of being a pre reg tutor." (Pre-reg Tutor A)

What can be improved?

- Protected tutor/tutee time.
- Increasing placement hours in UG with provision in different settings.
- Introduction of a basic leadership module in UG.

Discussion & Conclusions

Results from this study show that tutees' performance is mostly related to experience. Therefore, more placements should be offered in UG years. How this can be achieved is largely dependent on individual universities.

Acknowledging tutors' workload highlights the need for protected tutor/tutee time to ensure tutees learn as much as they can from their tutor. Pharmacies with two pharmacists may find this easier to implement.

Improving basic communication, confidence and teamwork skills in UG education will result in more capable tutees on entry to the pre-registration year. This will allow more time to focus on developing leadership skills in the pre-registration year.

References

1. Jee, S., Schafheutle, E. and Noyce, P., 2016. Using longitudinal mixed methods to study the development of professional behaviours during pharmacy work-based training. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, [online]. Available at: <<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/hs.c.12397>> [Accessed 13 October 2020].
2. Career Addict, 2020. *Pharmacist serving a customer*. [image] Available at: <<https://www.careeraddict.com/pharmacist-skills>> [Accessed 22 March 2021].