

APF Research and Evaluation Cluster

Background

Pharmacists in all areas of practice need to undertake research and evaluation as part of their professional roles. Research and evaluation skills are essential for pharmacists working at advanced stages, developing enquiry-driven services that improve quality and outcomes. This cluster covers the competencies that pharmacists need to use research to deliver effective practice and identify and undertake research to inform practice. The different stages reflect the stages of competence as pharmacists move through their careers.

Getting Started with the Research and Evaluation Cluster

- i. Read the APF Research and Evaluation cluster outline and familiarise yourself with the areas and competencies. Look at the 'evidence examples mapping tool' to get ideas of examples of practice that you may have also had. Please feedback any examples you have that are not listed to us at the RPS.
- ii. Conduct a self assessment exercise to see at which level you feel you are currently practicing; the 'evidence examples mapping tool' may help you map your evidence against the appropriate Faculty stage for this process.

Tips

- If you are reviewing the APF one section at a time it is useful to be familiar with the other clusters as many examples of practice will also cover different competencies across the framework; you may generate ideas for evidence for other clusters as you go along.
- You might not feel you are conducting research if you are not in a senior or management position or a specific academic role, but consider one or two examples of projects you have been involved in consider the aspects where you have used evidence to support your practice or collected evidence in the form of audit. A mentor or peer supporter may be able to help you with this process.
- Once you have identified some evidence you can add this to your APP on the RPS website.
- Discuss with others, e.g. your mentor or peer supporters, how you can develop yourself to meet identified areas within the framework or find ways to fill gaps in your evidence for your portfolio.

Tip for Peer support

Discussions with a colleagues or groups of colleagues can help share ideas and examples of how different areas can be approached within your field of practice. We know this is a useful and supportive way to share development opportunities and solve problems.

Structure

The cluster is split into seven specific competencies. Each competency is described at three stages of practice: Advanced Stage I, Advanced Stage II and Mastery.

Advanced Stage I - Either early stages of specialisation and advancement, or established in a role, performing well, advanced beyond foundation years.

Advanced Stage II – An expert in an area of practice, experienced. Routinely manages complex situations and a recognised leader locally/regionally.

Mastery - Aligned to recognised leader in community or primary care; Consultant and corporate level practice in NHS; equivalent leads in academia; business/corporate leadership roles in industry; business or strategic leader in community. A nationally recognised leader in an area of expertise (often internationally), alongside a breadth of experience and expertise.

You may find you are currently at different stages across clusters.

The individual competencies for Research and Evaluation (cluster 6) are:

6.1 Critical Evaluation

6.2 Identifies Gaps in the Evidence Base

6.3 Develops and Evaluates Research Protocols

6.4 Creates Evidence

6.5 Research Evidence into Working Practice

6.6 Supervises Others Undertaking Research

6.7 Establishes Research Partnerships

6.1 Critical Evaluation

You can demonstrate that you are able to evaluate and critically appraise your practice as well support your peers within your area of practice.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to critically evaluate and review literature.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates application of critical evaluation skills in the context of working practice.

Mastery - Is recognised as undertaking peer review activities within working practice.

6.2 Identifies Gaps in the Evidence ase

You can demonstrate that you are able to identify, formulate and design strategies for a rigorous practice driven research.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to identify where there is a gap in the evidence base to support practice.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to formulate appropriate and rigorous research questions.

Mastery - Demonstrates ability to design a successful strategy to address research questions.

6.3 Develops and Evaluates Research Protocols

You can demonstrate that you are able to describe, design and be actively involved in research protocols formulated in your area of practice.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to describe the core features of research protocols.
Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to design a rigorous protocol to address previously formulated questions.
Mastery - Demonstrates active involvement in the critical review of research protocols.

6.4 Creates Evidence

You can demonstrate that you are able to create and develop evidence and outcomes that can be shared at a local, regional, national or international level.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to generate evidence suitable for presentation at local level.
Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to generate new evidence suitable for presentation at research symposia.
Mastery - Demonstrates authorship of primary evidence and outcomes in peer reviewed media.

6.5 Research Evidence into Working Practice

You can demonstrate that you are able to apply and include research evidence in your area of practice.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to apply the research evidence base into working practice.
Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to apply research and evidence-based practice within the team and/or service.
Mastery - Is able to use research evidence to shape policy/procedure at an organisational and/or national level.

6.6 Supervises Others Undertaking Research

You can demonstrate that you understand and are able to contribute to research projects of your team and/or postgraduate students.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates understanding of the principles of research governance.
Advanced Stage II - Is able to contribute to research supervision in collaboration with experts.
Mastery - Is a research project supervisor for postgraduate students.

6.7 Establishes Research Partnerships

You can demonstrate that you are able to work and motivate yourself or individuals within or beyond your team to conduct research projects together.

The three stages are:

Advanced Stage I - Demonstrates ability to work as a member of the research team.

Advanced Stage II - Demonstrates ability to establish multidisciplinary links to conduct research projects.

Mastery - Demonstrates ability to show leadership within research teams concerning the conduct of specialist research.

An Example of Applying the Research and Evaluation Cluster to Your Practice (using an example from community practice)

You read an article in Clinical Pharmacist on responsible antibiotic prescribing focussing on antibiotic “stewardship”. You decide to take on an antibiotic stewardship role for the area your community pharmacy serves.

[6.4 creates evidence; 6.7 Establish research partners]

- You review the literature around responsible antibiotic prescribing and write a project plan
[6.1 Critical evaluation; 6.3 Develops and evaluates research protocols]
- You contact your local GP surgeries to let them know what you are planning and what you hope to achieve. You then set up audit criteria looking at triggers for antibiotic prescribing, maybe using tools for assessing the severity of infections. You feedback the results of your audit to your GP practices, highlighting areas where prescribing has been outside the agreed guidelines and re-evaluating the guidelines in view of your findings
[6.4 Creates evidence; 6.5 Research evidence into working practice]
- After presentation of your findings, your GP surgeries wish to extend the data collection to other community pharmacies in the area. You visit the pharmacies and work through your audit criteria and enrol them as collaborative data collection centres.
[6.8 Supervise others conducting research]
- You hold an LPF event to present your findings and submit to the RPS Map of Evidence
[6.4 Creates evidence]
- You then contact the LPF team about submitting an abstract to the RPS Pharmaceutical Care Awards where your work is shortlisted for a presentation at the Awards event
[6.5 Research evidence into working practice]

This example may also provide evidence for other clusters of the APF clusters, for example:

EPP - delivery of professional expertise, reasoning and judgement, professional autonomy.

CWR - communication, team work and consultation.

L - strategic context, governance.

M - implementing national priorities, standards of practice, managing risk, working across boundaries.

ET&D - links practice and education.