

Report

**Expert Consultation on Developing the Competencies for
Primary Health Care Pharmacist**
10th March 2022



Contact

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This report has been developed by Health Systems Transformation Platform (HSTP) to share the summary of proceedings of the expert consultation on developing the competencies for primary health care pharmacists held on 10th March from 2:00 to 3:00 PM, virtually.

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Prof Maharaj Kishan Bhan, HSTP's pillar of strength, continues to inspire our work. We are grateful to the HSTP Board for their support & Experts for their contribution. Special thanks to the efforts of HSTP & IIPHB Teams.

In 2019, under Odisha Health Systems Strengthening Program, a four-year collaborative effort of Health System Transformation Platform (HSTP) began with the Government of Odisha, Tata Trusts, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and the Indian Institute of Public Health Bhubaneswar. The collaborative effort intended to Improve Odisha Health Systems to provide affordable and equitable access to quality care for its population while avoiding significant financial risks and improving citizen satisfaction. The collaborative health systems diagnostic study identified Primary Health Care Provider's Competence as an area that is yet to improve.

The pharmacist is one of the critical members of the primary health care team. Hence, strengthening pharmacists' competence could play a significant role in improving Primary Health Care performance. Identifying the outputs to be delivered and defining the competencies needed to deliver them is the first step that begins with developing a competency assessment framework. HSTP experts conducted a review of literature to develop a Competency Assessment Tool. A list of literature-based competencies was drawn that requires validation for use in Indian context of primary health care/ community pharmacists. The expert consultation was organized for validating this list of competencies.

The expert consultation was held virtually on 10th March 2022 from 2 to 3 PM. Guru Prasad Mohanta, Raj Vaidya, Deepak Trehan, Gopinath K.V., Nilakantha Bhi, ThankchanV., Tilak S Gajendran , Shridhar Kadam, Pranab Patnaik, Soumya Ranjan Pani participated in the consultation along with Rajesh Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar, Sonali Randhava, Rugma M from HSTP (Details in Participants Annex).

The expert consultation was structured as below (*details in agenda*)

1. Welcome Address- Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Technical Advisor, HSTP
2. Round of introductions, and an overview of the Primary Health Care Provider Competency program presented by Sanjeev Kumar, Specialist Research, HSTP.
3. Specific Competencies discussion moderated by Guru Prasad Mohanta, Head, Department of Pharmacy, Annamalai University
4. Conclusion and next Steps by Shridhar Kadam, Director, IIPHB

Summary

Experts discussed the list of primary health care pharmacist competencies, needed to perform their role as a store manager, dispensing drugs, ensuring compliance with regulation on drugs, professional and ethical practice, workplace management, and management of minor ailments. The summary of the discussion is as below;

- **Role as a store manager:** Primary health care pharmacists have a significant role in-store management. However, the Pharmacist's workload as a store manager depends upon the size of the store. Considering the size of the store, Pharmacists should have competencies to deal with workload even in public health facilities. Inventory management through the digital solution is an efficient way for Competencies to build to handle IT systems like; e-Aushadhi and others. Competency to conduct inventory analysis through ABC and VED(Vital, Essential and Desirable) techniques is also essential. Procurement is another Pharmacist's function in the store that procedures including documentation should be known. Documentation of Scheduled drugs like C1 C2 is also critical behavior for Pharmacists. Program-Based drug management is another vital competency for Pharmacists.
- **Dispensing drugs:** The Competency to validate prescription, drug interaction, the adverse reaction should be known to Pharmacists. Patient counselling skills regarding medicine dosage, medicine storage, and rational use of drugs are essential behaviours that Primary Health Care pharmacists should be aware of. Prescription validation is complex and is being done globally through digital solutions. Equipping Competency and digital solutions in the Primary Health Care setting would be instrumental and lead to workforce efficiency.
- **Ensure compliance with regulations on drugs:** Primary Health Care Pharmacist should be aware of the pharmaceutical regulations and comply with regulation through document maintenance or registration, etc.
- **Professional and ethical practice:** The pharmacist should ensure Professional and Ethical and ensure confidentiality about the patient and its disease with others, including hospital staff.
- **Communication:** Effective communication is the fundamental Competence for Health Care professionals, including Primary Health Care pharmacists. Listening to patients, respecting their views, communicating in easily understandable language to patients, and using lay terms are the skills that Pharmacists should have.
- **Workplace Management:** Maintaining a collaborative professional relationship and complying with standard operating procedures are the behaviours in Pharmacists under workplace management competence.
- **Management of Minor ailments:** Competence to provide first Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) should have to the Primary Health Care Pharmacist, as it is approved for non-health professionals, too.

Next Steps

Robust skills for program management, monitoring, and evidence-based policymaking is fundamental to ensure successful programs with good outcomes. At the core of this are the practitioners – policymakers, managers, and other medical and non- medical personnel associated with these programs at the national, state, and district levels. We value their contribution to the current understanding of the Indian health systems. To enable transformation and lead the system on the path towards universal health coverage and achieving Sustainable Development Goals India needs enhanced capacities in the areas of their work and especially in monitoring and evaluation, course corrections using evidence generated from the program and systemic analysis effects that lead to better health systems diagnostics, design, policy, strategy and measuring performance.

- HSTP's envisioned program on Improving Health Outcome through developing Competency of Primary Health Care Workers in Odisha, implemented in collaboration with Indian Institute of Public Health Bhubneswar and the Government of Odisha. We plan to continue our work through the following steps.
- The final competencies for Pharmacists will be prepared based on the experts' suggestions. It will undergo another round of independent review for Primary Health Care Pharmacist competencies with all experts.
- HSTP, IIPHB, and identified experts from the respective fields would finalize the competency assessment framework for the Primary Health Care Team, including Medical Officer, Pharmacist, nurse, and lab technician. This will help in generating evidence for task sharing and task shifting.
- The Pharmacist Competencies will be finalized in consultation with GoO, and then these competencies will be used to assess the Competencies in Primary Health Care setting in Odisha.

Agenda

Video Conferencing Platform

10th March 2022, 02:00 PM –03:00 PM

Time	Proceedings
02:00 – 02:10 PM	Welcome Rajesh Kumar, Technical Advisor, HSTP Introduction, Identification of Moderator, Housekeeping Instructions Sanjeev Kumar, Research Specialist
02:10 – 02:15 PM	Project Brief & Primary Health Care Pharmacist Competency-highlights Sanjeev Kumar, Research Specialist
02:15 – 02:55 PM	Discussion on Competencies (Is the listed Competency appropriate for the Indian Setting?) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Role as a Store Manager2. To assist the medical officer in the preparation and implementation of different program3. Dispensing drugs4. Outreach to the community5. Ensure compliance with regulations on drugs6. Assessment of Medicines (Selection of Medicines, Adverse Drug Reaction, Medicine Dosage)7. Professional and ethical practice8. Communication9. Workplace Management
02:55 – 3:00 PM	Conclusion and Next Step Sridhar Kadam, Deputy Director & Additional Professor, IIPHB

Sr. No.	Name	Designation	Organization
External Experts			
1	Guru Prasad Mohanta	Head of the Department (Pharmacy)	Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu
2	Raj Vaidya	Member,	Indian Pharmaceutical Association, Goa
3	Thankchan V.	Retd. Chief Pharmacist	Government of Kerala
4	Nilakantha Bhoi	Procurement Senior Officer	UNOPS, Odisha
5	Gopinath K.V.	Pharmacist	Andhra Pradesh
6	Tilak S Gajendran	Proprietor	Medaux Pharmacy
7	Deepak Trehan	Program Officer,	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Go
Health Systems Transformation Platform Team			
8	Rajesh Kumar	Technical Advisor	HSTP
9	Sanjeev Kumar	Specialist-Research	HSTP
10	Sonali Randhawa	Research Associate	HSTP
11	Rugma M	Team Assistant	HST
Indian Institute of Public Health Bhubaneswar Team			
12	Shridhar Kadam	Director & Additional Professor	IIPHB
13	Pranab Patnaik	Consultant	IIPHB
14	Soumya R. Pani	Consultant	IIPHB