

Rationale

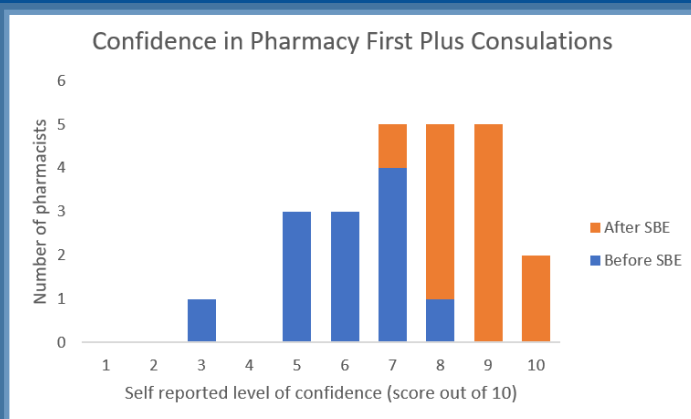
Pharmacy First Plus¹, introduced in September 2020, provides patients with appropriate and timely access to treatment for common clinical conditions from pharmacist independent prescribers in the community setting. However, there is variance in the confidence and competence of pharmacists providing this service. Supporting community pharmacists taking on this new role is vital to ensuring the Pharmacy First Plus service is delivered safely and effectively, and is sustainable into the future.

Methods

A series of *immersive simulation-based education* (SBE) sessions were piloted, targeted at active independent prescribers and those undertaking the independent prescribing qualification at the time of the SBE (n=12). These sessions provide a *psychologically safe* space for pharmacists to engage in scenarios involving the management of patients presenting with different clinical conditions and participate in a group debrief. Pharmacists have the opportunity to prescribe using the Pharmacy First Plus service and can practice these skills *without the risk of patient harm*.



Results



- Feedback revealed that the SBE and associated scenarios were very realistic to practice in a community pharmacy (8.8/10)
- **100%** of participants will make changes to their practice in delivering the Pharmacy First Plus service following the SBE.
- *Before SBE* average confidence in delivering Pharmacy First Plus consultations was scored 6/10
- *After SBE* average confidence in delivering Pharmacy First Plus consultations was scored 8.7/10
- Exercising professional judgement and prescribing within “grey areas” such as pregnancy and children were areas where prescribing confidence and competence improved the most.
- Overall rating of programme scored 9.6/10

“more confidence in prescribing decisions”

“taking fuller [patient] history”

“more confident in the consultation and broadening treatment options”

“more holistic approach to patients”

“increased confidence to have tricky conversations”

Conclusions

Immersive SBE targeted at community pharmacists can improve confidence and competence in the delivery of the Pharmacy First Plus service, improving consultation and clinical decision making skills.