



Extended? Advanced? What's the difference?

In July 2014 the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework Steering Committee (APPFSC), which has developed an Australian advanced practice framework, morphed into the Pharmacy Practitioner Development Committee (PPDC).

As part of its work the APPFSC produced a paper, *Understanding advanced and extended professional practice* (see page 76). **Andrew Daniels** spoke to some of the committee members about why it is important for pharmacists and for their future career paths to understand the difference between extended practice and advanced practice.

According to Professor Lisa Nissen, Head of the School of Clinical Sciences at the Queensland University of Technology, a member of the then APPFSC and now the PPDC, the advanced pharmacy practice framework (APPF) provides a career development pathway for the whole profession. It provides from the day they register a clear guide for pharmacists around the areas of professional development valuable to them as health professionals and pharmacists.

'Importantly these are not focused just on "medicines", but also on skills in

leadership, management, education, research, communication and teamwork. Regardless of where we work or what career trajectory we may have these are skills vital to the progress of the profession and our practitioners in the future,' she said.

'We are in the process of setting the recognition pathway for advanced practice pharmacists through the Australian Pharmacy Council. Once determined we will be able to appropriately and robustly determine advanced practitioners within pharmacy. It is planned that the first pilot group will go through this process in the next 6–9 months.'

However, Prof Nissen said that *extended practice* and *advanced practice* have been used in recent years to describe some of the changes taking place in the wider professional space around roles for pharmacists, therefore it is critical for pharmacists to understand not only the

relationship between extended practice and advanced practice, but also the concept of expanded practice.

She said it was important to understand that they were not interchangeable and although they all may speak to elements around roles, training, scope and areas of practice, they needed to be taken individually as items for consideration because the implications for the profession broadly around each were different.

For example, *expanded practice* related to pharmacists working at what is also commonly referred to as the 'Full Scope' of our current competencies.

'For many, roles and tasks maximising scope of practice involves enabling the Health Practitioner workforce to work to the full scope of practice of their specific profession i.e. having the opportunity to work to the full extent of the profession's recognised skill base and/or regulatory guidelines (competencies),' she said.

'Culture and historical practice has meant that working to full scope is not always possible. Full scope of practice is relevant across the full continuum of a Health Practitioner's career, from their entry to the workforce through to more advanced practice skills. For the pharmacy profession, expanded practice has most recently been used to recognise vaccination as part of our registrable scope of practice,' she said.

Prof Nissen said that *extended practice* (in the pharmacy context) referred to a discrete knowledge and skill base additional to the recognised scope of the profession. These would be tasks usually undertaken by other professions e.g. doctors, nurses or allied health professionals. Requirements for implementing safe and effective extended scope of practice varied depending on the task, the profession, and the context in question.

'However, where used in the pharmacy context it particularly refers to tasks requiring additional education, training and a demonstration of competence. For the pharmacy profession, *extended*

practice would incorporate roles like prescribing where additional training would be required by pharmacists undertaking the task,' she said.

'On the other hand, *advanced practice* involves 'high level clinical skills, knowledge and practice, closely integrated with clinical leadership skills, applied research and evidence based practice capacities, and competence in facilitating the education and learning of others.'

'Put plainly it is practice at a level so significantly different to the level you have at initial registration that it requires recognition by peers. It is significant in that pharmacists can practise at an advanced level in either a broad or narrow scope of practice.'

Why is it important?

Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) CEO Bronwyn Clark said that recognition of advanced practice would encourage pharmacists to embark on a journey towards 'mastery' that will enhance the capacity of the whole profession to further contribute to the health and well-being of the community.

'This is regardless of which part of the health sector that pharmacists are practising in, or where in their careers they currently are. I hope that pharmacists see that it is the journey that is most important, not just the destination, and when we collectively as a profession embrace a culture of lifelong learning we will cement our place as valuable health professionals.'

Ms Clark said the APC, as the nominated independent assessment entity for credentialing advanced pharmacy practitioners, had been working to develop credentialing policies and processes. A pilot credentialing project is presently underway.

She said that a Credentialing Manager, Andrew Matthews, was appointed in November.

Andrew Matthews, formerly the Pharmacy Guild representative to the APPFSC, said that Guild members

were still coming to terms with the concept of advanced practice and extended practice.

'As the paper highlights, advanced practice, extended practice (and also expanded practice) in some settings has been used interchangeably and it is not surprising that clarity around this terminology is still in its infancy.'

Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy (AACP) CEO Grant Martin said that at this stage a full understanding and appreciation for both concepts was probably not widespread.

'The discussion regarding extended practice versus advanced practice will become clearer as the recognition program progresses and real-life examples of advanced practice are publicised,' Mr Martin said.

'Other areas of practice such as vaccination and (hopefully in the not too distant future) pharmacist prescribing will assist the profession to understand what extended practice is as well as what an advanced practitioner looks like.'

National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA) President Sam Turner said that many students may be aware of advanced practice, but to those who have yet to graduate and/or choose their pathway in the profession, it was hard to grasp the depth and scope surrounding the journey to becoming an advanced practitioner.

'Our (NAPSA's) immediate role will be to raise awareness of the future opportunities surrounding advanced practice and to raise awareness of the avenues in which pharmacy is undertaking in relation to career options,' Mr Turner said.

'The most important part will be to ensure students know that becoming an advanced pharmacy practitioner is a journey throughout their career and graduating and registering is not the brick wall end of road.'

Mr Matthews said the Guild had always advocated that recognition of

advanced practice is not just for hospital pharmacists or academics, but that community pharmacists should also be acknowledged as having high level expertise worthy of recognition at an advanced level.

'The Guild through its pharmacy transformation work, has consistently promoted the opportunities for pharmacy and pharmacists to offer a broader range of services to meet the health needs of consumers. This is an opportunity for all in community pharmacy,' Mr Matthews said.

AACP's Grant Martin said: 'The most important beneficiary of any expansion or recognition program for pharmacist practice should and will be the consumer, their health and wellbeing should always be our primary focus. If more development opportunities and a more structured approach to extended/advanced practice possibilities are developed, the consumer logically benefits by having a greater level of access to more health practitioners with an extended skill-set or advanced expertise in a particular area.'

While formal recognition of advanced practice status would not be of interest to all, the process provided the individual with an aspirational target for development and progression of their own practice.

Mr Turner said: 'I believe it creates a structured journey, especially for young pharmacists and those joining the profession, to aspire to undertake. The APPF is a great start to what will hopefully be a staple for a pharmacist aspiring to do more in leadership, patient care and education as they travel along their career journey to support the profession.'

See page 76 for the paper, *Understanding advanced and extended professional practice*.