

Pharmacy clinical educator program: A novel training program implemented across a multisite tertiary health service

Christine Pho¹, Connie Yin¹, Graham Rivers¹, Sue Kirsa^{1,2}, Samanta Wood^{1,2}

1. Pharmacy Department, Monash Health, Melbourne, Australia. 2. Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Monash University, Parkville, VIC, Australia

Introduction

Since COVID-19, hospital pharmacy has experienced unprecedented workforce shortages. This led to a largescale recruitment of pharmacists with limited or no prior hospital experience. In the last 12 months, 73% (n=109) of new pharmacists recruited to the hospital joined from a community pharmacy or non-clinical background and only 27% (n=41) had variable prior hospital experience.

Structured hospital training programs exist for pharmacy interns and early to mid-career pharmacists however tailored at-the-elbow training programs for new-to-hospital pharmacists have not been established.

Objective

To establish a robust pharmacy clinical educator (PCE) training model to support clinical training of new-to-hospital pharmacists to provide exceptional patient care and alleviate workforce challenges.

Action

A team of pharmacists was first recruited and credentialed as clinical educators (Figure 1).

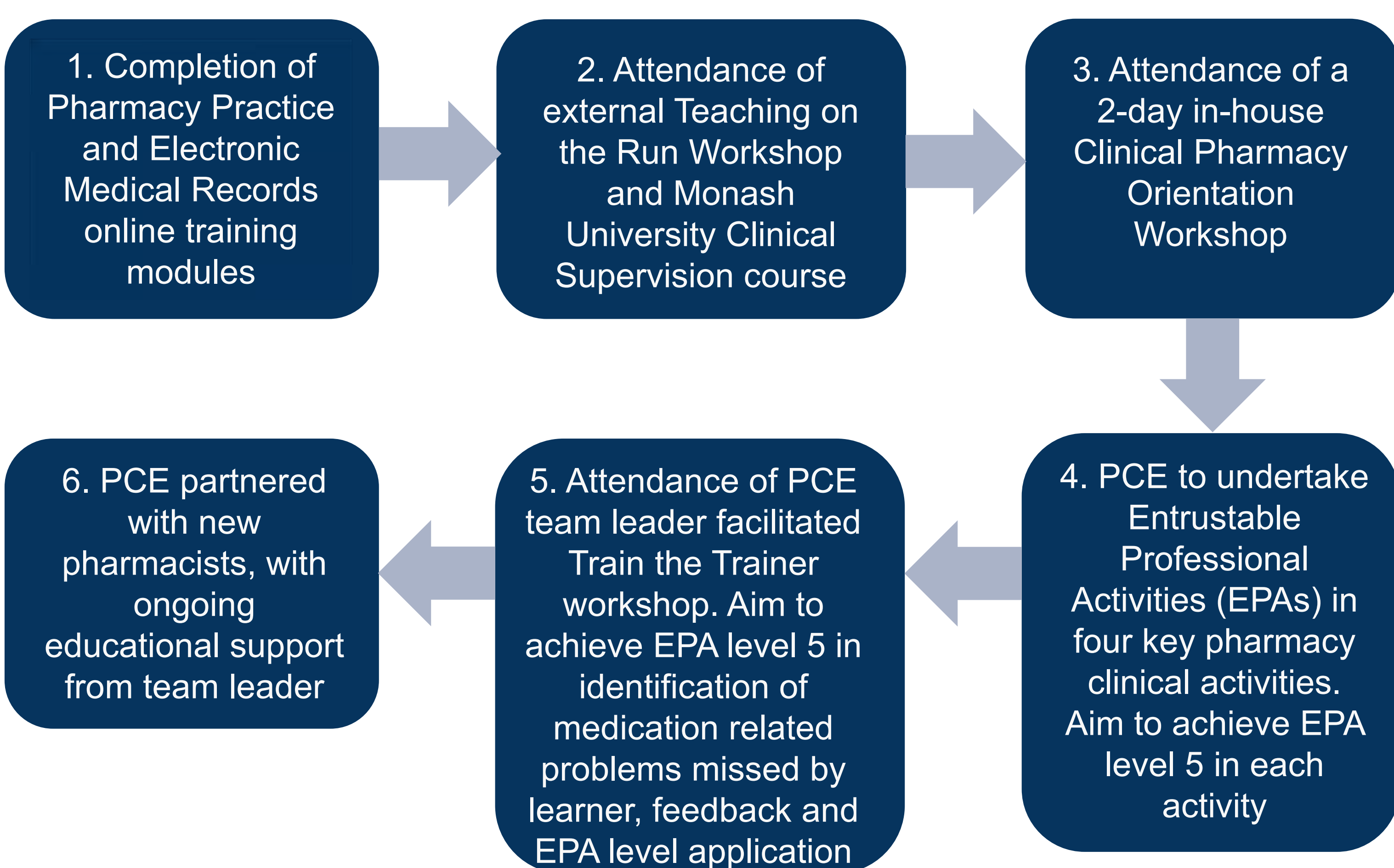


Figure 1. Clinical educator credentialing process

A clinical training program was then developed and implemented across the 7-site tertiary hospital (Figure 2). The program was based on established medical and nursing educator models, evaluation of pharmacy department needs and feedback from pharmacy team leaders and recently onboarded pharmacists.

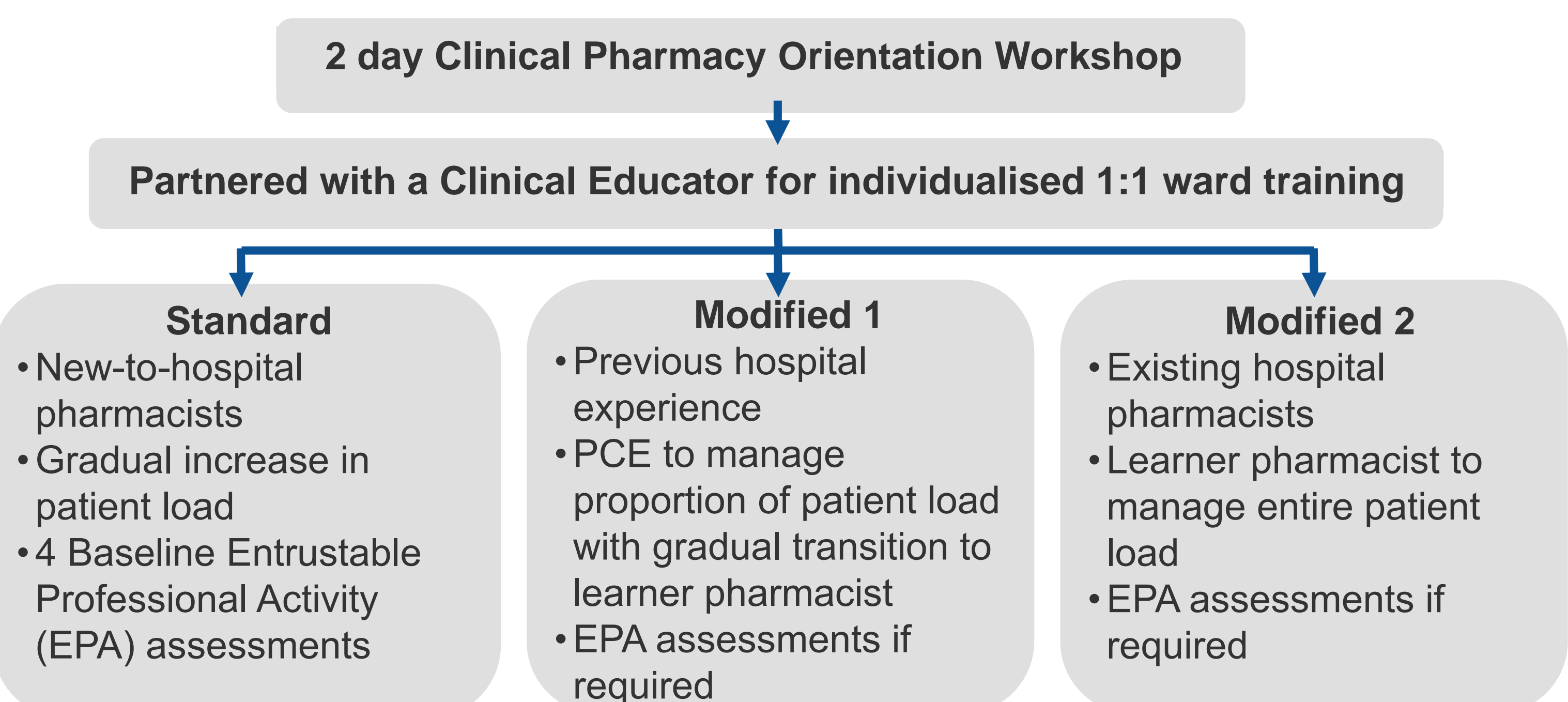


Figure 2. Overview of pharmacy clinical educator program for learners

Evaluation

In 12 months since the clinical educator program was implemented:

139 Pharmacists have partnered with an educator



20 Credentialed educators



951 EPAs have been undertaken

77%

Learners have achieved an EPA of 3 or more in all 4 EPAs and are working independently on the wards

93%

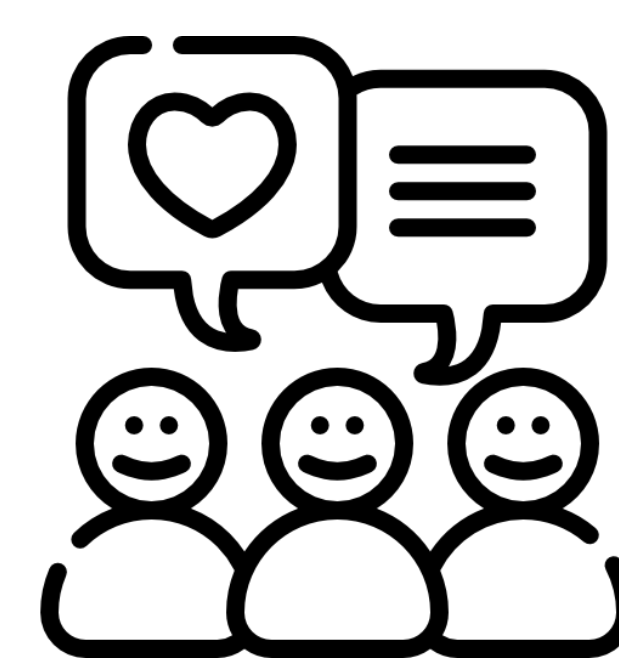
Learners strongly agree or agree that the designated time with an educator was more impactful for their learning than without an educator present

6.6

Average number of days for pharmacists to complete training

Pharmacists were surveyed after the completion of the training program to evaluate the delivery of the program and impact on their clinical practice. Some feedback received include:

- “The clinical educators were very professional and happy to teach which made me happy to learn. They made me want to be a better clinical pharmacist and to understand process rather than just rote learn things.”
- “The program has prepared me well to fulfill my role as a ward pharmacist. Coming from a community pharmacy background, I didn’t have much knowledge about the clinical aspects of the hospital and the tasks clinical pharmacists undertake. However, at the end of the training, I now feel more confident about completing these tasks on my own.”
- “I received individualised feedback from each EPA that I did and it provided me an insight as to what I was doing well in and what exactly I needed to improve on.”



Discussion

The novel PCE program has expedited the upskilling of pharmacists to wards to strengthen the pharmacy workforce and continue the exceptional clinical services delivered to patients. The program provides an effective framework for future clinical education models, and continues to evolve to improve the training for pharmacists and educators.

November 2023. Correspondence to christine.pho@monashhealth.org



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