

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PHARMACY ITO

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PITO Qualifications review by Alasdair McIntosh

The qualifications review has been carried out during the course of 2011 and I am happy to say is drawing to a close. Throughout this period we have had great support from many pharmacists and technicians working in the Advisory groups. There have been opportunities for everyone to have their say and provide feedback during the online survey and more recently through the dedicated website set up for the review. We have also received excellent support from all of the organisations within pharmacy including the Pharmaceutical Society, Pharmacy Guild, Pharmacy Council, NZ College of Pharmacists, Maori Pharmacists Association and NZHPA

I would like to thank all those who took the opportunity to provide feedback and completed the surveys. All of the information gathered was invaluable and provided the advisory groups with a lot of material to work with.

This is the first part of the overall process with the recommendations now being considered by NZQA. They will determine if we can proceed to the final stage of the qualification development. We anticipate that this next stage will happen very quickly once we have the approval from NZQA. If all goes to plan we should have it all wrapped up early in 2012.

You can read the full review summary by visiting our website www.pito.org.nz

Once the review is completed we will be sending out information on what has changed and when the changes are likely to be implemented.

Thanks again for all the support and feedback and we look forward to 2012 when we can start implementing all the great ideas that have come out of this review.

What differentiates a pharmacy assistant from assistants in other retail outlets? by Jill Watt

Pharmacy is very different to other retail outlets. Firstly, pharmacies are licensed to sell medicines and are operated by pharmacists. Secondly, pharmacists are registered health professionals and are governed by their Code of Ethics. The Code is a set of principles which describe their responsibilities and professional values.

You are a vital part of the team which support the pharmacist and because their work is bound by the Code of Ethics, you are required to work within the same boundaries. This demand isn't a requirement of all other retail assistants. Pharmacists must have the appropriate attitudes and behaviour and work in an ethical manner. The first priority is the health and well being of patients. Medicines are not to be sold in excessive quantities which might have potential for misuse, abuse or dependency and as a consequence, you must be aware when it is not appropriate to sell some medicines. Generally retail assistants are

encouraged to sell as much as possible, especially if that is what the customer wants, however because medicines are different to other retail goods, they can't be treated in the same manner.

Because pharmacies supply medicines, they are required to be registered and are governed by special legislation which differentiates pharmacies from other retail outlets. There are rules which must always be adhered to and pharmacy assistants are not entitled to sell or handle all items within the pharmacy. There are some medicines that they are not able to sell such as prescription medicines and Pharmacist Only medicines. The dispensary is a focal point of the pharmacy but legislation demands that pharmacy assistants are not able to help in the dispensing process.

Generally pharmacy assistants are the first point of contact for customers who are sick or in need of

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Christmas and New Year Holiday Period

The office will close at 12.00 pm on 23 December 2011 and will reopen again at 8.30 am on Monday 9 January 2012. We wish everyone a happy and safe holiday period.

PITO will also be closed on Monday 23 January 2012 for Wellington Anniversary Weekend.

