

The National Prescribing Curriculum — a sustainable tool to build prescribing confidence in new prescribers

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The National Prescribing Curriculum (NPC) is a series of case-based modules which mirror the decision-making process outlined in the World Health Organisation Guide to Good Prescribing. The modules are currently used by most Australian medical schools and several pharmacy, dental, and nurse practitioner schools. The NPC emphasis is on learners building their own personal formulary of preferred drugs for specific conditions, enabling them to prescribe confidently and rationally. The modules were developed in response to emerging evidence that, increasingly, medical graduates demonstrate shortfalls in basic pharmacological knowledge and prescribing skills.

“ Interns about to commence practice in NSW teaching hospitals are not adequately trained to prescribe medications on admission, during hospitalisation or on discharge safely or efficaciously. The interns recognise these deficits and would have liked more training in clinical pharmacology while in medical school. ”

Hilmer *et al* 2009: p 433



The modules are situated in real life situations and include complex, authentic tasks. As most learners access the modules in a self-paced mode, sophisticated levels of expert and peer feedback have been integrated into the modules.



Results:

- ✓ 25 modules developed in consultation with internal and external experts
- ✓ Large increase in number and types of users from various professions due to flexibility within the software and curriculum design (currently over 2300 active users from 18 medical schools, 7 pharmacy schools, 2 dental schools and 5 nurse practitioner schools)
- ✓ Modifiable template to suit different delivery methods and audiences
- ✓ Positive feedback from students who felt the modules improved prescribing confidence, gave sufficient guidance and were satisfactory in terms of content and layout
- ✓ Positive feedback from educators who see the NPC as a valuable resource in teaching safe and rational prescribing

NPS is committed to continual improvement of the NPC to provide a valuable and sustainable tool for increasing prescribing ability and confidence.

For more information, contact the Educational Design and Support team at NPS on +61 2 8217 8642 or npcinfo@nps.org.au



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