Alberta was the first province in Canada to enact legislative changes to enable expanded scope of pharmacist practice in 2007, which included prescribing. Shifting from a product-focused role to patient-care focused is complex and involves multiple factors. Education and professional development is an important facilitator of innovation and expanded scope of pharmacists’ practice.

An in-depth understanding of what professional development is needed to support pharmacists’ roles in patient centered care in the new healthcare environment is needed.

**OBJECTIVE**

To understand how pharmacists perceive their role and professional development needs in the changing health care environment in Alberta.

**METHODS**

Pharmacists on the Alberta College of Pharmacists’ clinical register were invited to participate in a web-based survey. The survey was open for four weeks in October 2014. Two reminder emails were sent.

Survey questions were developed based on the literature and focus group interviews of pharmacists. Reliability and validity testing of questions was performed.

The survey consisted of a number of scale questions about pharmacists’ perceptions of their current and future roles in practice, attitudes and beliefs about professional development, level of confidence in performing pharmacist activities and demographic information. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Analysis included descriptive statistics and chi-square to assess differences among groups.

This research was approved by the University of Alberta, Health Ethics Research Board.

A total of 416 pharmacists completed the survey (10.4% response rate). The majority of participants were female (73%), had been in practice for ≥10 years (57%), and worked in community practice (65%). (Table 1)

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Learning at work (66%), courses (66%), mentorship programs (63%), workshops (63%), and networking with peers (63%) were the most commonly reported professional development approaches required to support current and future roles.

Pharmacists reported most frequently wanting to receive additional training in skills such as physical assessment, interpreting lab values and making decisions about complex drug therapy. (Figure 2) There were significant differences noted based on previous education. (Table 2)

Topic areas of most interest for professional development are seen in Figure 3. Significant differences (p=0.05) in interest based on years of practice were noted for the following: clinical knowledge, life long learning skills, finding information, public relations, and networking.

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