Guidance Statement: Pre-requisite Qualification Requirements for the Pharmacist Prescriber Course

Council Policy
The Council will require an approved University based post graduate qualification in pharmacist prescribing for registration in the proposed Pharmacist Prescriber scope of practice.

The pharmacist prescribing post graduate qualification will be equivalent to 600hrs of study and include a prescribing practicum. The prescribing practicum must consist of 300hrs and include at least 20 x 7.5 hr days (i.e. 150 hours out of the 300hours) of supervised practice under a Designated Medical Practitioner (DMP).

The pre-requisite qualification for entry into this prescribing qualification is a post graduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy or equivalent. The prerequisite qualification must include at least 600 hours of applied pharmacotherapy.

Rationale
The pharmacist prescriber qualification has been designed to meet the accreditation requirements set by the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand. One of these requirements is that a *Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy or equivalent* is held by those pharmacists applying for admission into the course. The rationale for this requirement is that it provides a pharmacist with a good foundation of current pharmacotherapy knowledge and its application across a wide range of therapeutic areas. This prerequisite was recommended by Council’s expert advisory group, the Competence Advisory Group who worked on the qualification requirements. The Competence Advisory Group consisted of pharmacists from a range of practice settings.

Health Workforce New Zealand Support for Pharmacist Prescribing
Health Workforce New Zealand has agreed in principle to designated prescribing rights for suitably trained and competent clinical pharmacists. Whilst there is currently no legislation for pharmacist prescribing, it is anticipated that the regulatory process to put legislation in place will commence in 2012. In anticipation of legislative change, Health Workforce New Zealand has agreed to financially support the pharmacist prescriber qualification in 2012 as a demonstration project under their Innovations Programme. It their expectation that entry requirements to the prescribing post graduate qualification as prescribed by the Council will be met by pharmacists approved to undertake the qualification.

Future Review of Policy
Council acknowledges that the prerequisite entry qualification may result in some clinical pharmacists being denied admission into the Pharmacist prescriber qualification this year. However, Council would like to assure these pharmacists that the prerequisite qualification requirement will be evaluated at the end of this year. The findings of the evaluation will be used to inform entry requirements for the pharmacist prescriber qualification for future years.

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