



EAFP Position Paper 2018

EAFP Annual Conference

16—17 May 2018

Four Pillars for Relevant Pharmacy Education

Source: Stakeholder Discussion held during the 2017 EAFP Annual Conference in Helsinki

Partners: European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP)
European Industrial Pharmacists Group (EIPG)
European Pharmaceutical Students Association (EPSA)
Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)
International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Academic Section
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP)
Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)
Ibero-American Conference of Faculties of Pharmacy (COIFFA)

Scope

- To encourage pharmacy educators to reflect on characteristics expected from a pharmacy graduate
- To understand perspectives and expectations of different stakeholders from pharmacy graduates
- To support evolvement of pharmacy curricula to meet current and future needs of pharmaceutical professional services and processes

Rationale

Pharmacists have the opportunity to take up career options in a number of settings including community practice, hospital practice, industry, regulatory sciences and research institutions. There are characteristics which identify pharmacy graduates in the way that they contribute to these settings. This Position Paper identifies the characteristics and puts forward the view of EAFP on the pillars for the framework of a relevant pharmacy education. The pillars identified are based on the perspectives and expectations put forward by stakeholders representing the settings where pharmacists are working.

Pharmacy as an anchoring profession

EAFP recognizes that pharmacy graduates when practising in the different settings provide a **patient-oriented focus** and act as co-ordinators with other disciplines. They are able to anchor services and activities of other healthcare professionals and maintain a patient focus.

It is recommended that this patient-oriented inspiration is transmitted in pharmacy education by providing

a science-based patient-centred approach which embraces skills that contribute to patient safety in terms of logic processing, accountability, error minimisation and risk mitigation.

Four pillars of relevant pharmacy education

EAFP identified **four** pillars required for pharmacy curricula which equip graduates with skills and competencies that are relevant to contemporary and future pharmacy:

1. Maintaining a **science-practice balance** where science is translated into practical outcomes. The use of a scientific approach in the practical application is commended.
2. **Teaching methods** employed should engage students and provide opportunities for experiential and hands-on learning. The introduction of personalised learning through projects and electives is encouraged.
3. Preparing students to act as **team players** through interdisciplinary learning platforms that are embedded in teaching set-ups is fostered.
4. **Preparedness** for lifelong learning and innovation is fostered. Students should be exposed to innovations taking into account new technologies and economic implications. Providing independent learning opportunities that support leadership initiatives contributes to personal skills development.

Conclusion

EAFP considers that for pharmacy graduates to achieve the proficiency to act as an anchoring professional in all working environments, the four pillars identified are essential. In Europe, professional mobility of pharmacists is a reality. EAFP believes that harmonization in pharmacy education by considering the identified pillars of a relevant pharmacy education contributes to a smooth mobility of pharmacists.

EAFP encourages schools of pharmacy to revisit curricula to ensure address of the four pillars identified.

Approved by the Executive Committee, 16 May 2018

Lilian M. Azzopardi

Professor and Head of Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta, Tal-Qroqq, Msida 2080, Malta

Tel: +356 2340 2903 | **E-mail:** lilian.m.azzopardi@um.edu.mt
