

# Evidence-Based Pharmacy Practice

Editorial

**There is increasing awareness of the need for healthcare professionals to adopt an evidence-based approach to their daily practice. What this means is that there needs to be scientific evidence exhibiting the effectiveness of a particular practice. This concept is at times criticised as being unattainable since not enough evidence exists on which to base daily practice. This may be true, but a considerable amount of evidence does exist and this should be employed. Where evidence is found to be lacking, research should be encouraged.**

Pharmacy is the profession which is responsible for the provision of safe, effective and economic drug therapy. There is ample evidence both nationally and internationally to support this statement. However, are we making full use of our capabilities? It seems

that we are not. A much cited quote by Harding and Taylor infers that pharmacists' inertia will result in their downfall. The way to prevent this is by practising professionally based on the best evidence available and making the evidence of our practice available for policy makers.

Practicing pharmacy in an evidence-based manner will enhance professional satisfaction and increase the pharmacist's capability to do what is best for the patient. This concept must be engrained in pharmacists at an undergraduate level. Students need to be taught how to link science with professionalism.

Pharmacists must embrace the concept of lifelong learning professional development. Practising pharmacy in an evidence-based manner necessitates the ability to access relevant current literature, reading, understanding, assimilating and, if necessary, challenging the information presented. The next step would be for pharmacists to incorporate the knowledge obtained into their daily practice.

In order to ensure standards of practice, pharmacists must be willing to assess their knowledge and audit their

practice to determine the effectiveness of their interventions.

Many feel that this is an unnecessary exercise; however research has shown that the outcomes of certain interventions and practices are not as desirable as had been imagined.

Pharmacists need to measure and monitor their contribution to health care for the ultimate benefit of the patient.

The MCPP endeavours to address the educational needs of the profession. While the service provided by the college is by no means exhaustive, we try to direct pharmacists to areas of current interest and encourage them to be better informed about particular topics.

Our latest service in encouraging evidence-based pharmacy practice is an electronic review of the latest research relevant to the profession (see pg 20). We would appreciate your feedback regarding our first step in on-line CE. ✪

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of Pharmacy Practice  
c/o Department of Pharmacy,  
University of Malta, Msida

Tel: (356) 32902902 • (356) 343764  
Fax: (356) 340427

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Editor in Chief

Maria Cordina mcor1@um.edu.mt

Editorial Board

Claude Farrugia cfar2@um.edu.mt

Anthony Fenech afen@um.edu.mt

Edith Sciberras boxed@mail.global.net.mt

Email: mcpharm@yahoo.com

Website: <http://www.geocities.com/mcpharm>

The Malta College  
of Pharmacy Practice

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