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Evaluation of a Mentorship Programme for New Pharmacy Registrants

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Case Study Synopsis

Background:

Newly-registered pharmacists face immediate professional responsibilities while losing university and preceptor support. This can negatively impact confidence, stress levels and capability. Mentorship is widely utilised to support early transitions in healthcare professions, however evidence related to pharmacy is lacking. This study aimed to evaluate a three-month mentorship programme for newly registered Irish pharmacists, to support their transition into practice.

Aim:

This study aimed to evaluate a three-month mentorship programme for newly registered Irish pharmacists, to support their transition into practice.

Method:

MPharm students from University College Cork, School of Pharmacy were invited to participate in a pilot mentorship programme upon joining the professional register in October 2024. Mentees were assigned to an appropriately trained mentor and invited to meet monthly for three months. Online mentee surveys were administered pre-mentorship (T1), at programme conclusion (T2) and three months post-mentorship (T3). Mentors completed a T2 survey. Quantitative Likert-scale questions assessed emotional and practice-related challenges. Free-text responses captured participants' reflections on their experiences. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were conducted.

Results:

Both groups (n=10 mentees, n=5 mentors) highlighted personal and professional development benefits post-mentorship. Mentee self-belief in relation to their professional practice increased (50% T1, *n*=10;100% T3, *n*=4). Mentors reported increased mentee confidence and improved mentee decision-making post-mentorship. Mentees reported high programme satisfaction; all T2 respondents would recommend mentorship to peers (n=5). Themes generated related to challenges in practice transition**,** programme structure and engagement and mentoring relationships and experiences.

Conclusion:

Mentorship represents a strategy to support newly-registered pharmacists by enhancing early emotional and professional development. To optimise future mentorship offerings, clearer role expectations, standardised programme design and sufficient duration of mentorship are recommended.

Key Words:

Newly-registered pharmacists Mentorship programme
Professional transition Professional development
Practice readiness Programme evaluation

Enabling Belonging

This research supported our students as they transitioned out of the School of Pharmacy, UCC into the community of practice as a Pharmacist, thus supporting their sense of 'Belonging' as they moved into their autonomous, independent professional practice.

Video Links | Graphics

https://www.ucc.ie/en/pharmacy/events/news/

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Additional Information

[Insert any additional info here]

Key Impacts

Key Impacts of the Mentorship Programme

Increased professional confidence and improved decision-making among newly registered pharmacists

Enhanced support during the transition to independent practice, reducing emotional and practical challenges

Strengthened personal and professional development, including communication, reflection and self-management

Positive mentor–mentee relationships that enabled trust, guidance and safe discussion