

# Examples of using the Core Competency Framework

The Core Competency Framework is used by pharmacy students and pharmacists in different ways, depending on a range of factors and situations. For example, students use it while on placement during the MPharm to assess their progress, while pharmacists use it when reflecting on their CPD needs. The following examples demonstrate some different ways that the Core Competency Framework can be used depending on your role and experience.

## Example 1: Pharmacist in a patient facing role

Charlie is a supervising pharmacist, working four days per week in a community pharmacy situated beside a busy GP surgery. The pharmacy also provides services to three residential care homes in the town.

### Self-appraisal

Charlie decides to plan some CPD activities for the year ahead. They know the Core Competency Framework is an important tool to use when reflecting on their needs, so they access this and log into their ePortfolio on the IOP website.

Charlie selects **Competency 4.4: Provides patient consultations and counselling** within the **Pharmacy Care** domain, and reviews the behaviours provided. Reflecting on recent consultations they had with patients, Charlie notices that an increasing number of consultations are taking place over the phone, and from some recent interactions with patients, believes that some of their counselling skills are not as effective over the phone as in person.

They consider that all the behaviours under this competency are relevant to them, and identify **Behaviour 4.4.1: I use appropriate questioning techniques to gather relevant information from patients and carers**, as an area in which they have opportunities for further development.

### Develop a personal plan

Charlie plans to complete the following activities:

- Search for online resources on effective phone consultation skills.

- Attend a webinar provided by the IPU academy, called 'Five STEPS to Successful Pharmacist Consultations during COVID-19 (and Beyond)'.

### Action

Charlie takes the following steps:

1. Watched a recording of the webinar in two sittings.
2. Used a tool for evaluating consultations, provided as part of the webinar.
3. Read the "Telephone Consultations Calgary-Cambridge Guide" found on the HSE website.

### Document your learning

Charlie documents the following:

1. Learned that posture and facial expressions can affect how empathy is conveyed in phone consultations.
2. Learned a new tool to help patients participate actively and as an equal in consultations.
3. Using a tool to evaluate their consultations helped Charlie pinpoint skills and behaviours they need to work on further improving.

### Evaluate impact on practice

Three months later, Charlie returns to the cycle and reflects on whether their learning activity has had an impact on their practice. They find that they feel more confident in their counselling skills and that their consultations (over the phone and in person) are more structured and patient centred.

## Example 2: Pharmacist in a non-patient facing role

Jamie is a pharmacovigilance scientist, working for a multi-national pharmaceutical manufacturer. Their background prior to this role was as a hospital pharmacist.

### Self-appraisal

Jamie decides to plan some CPD activities for the year ahead. They know the Core Competency Framework should be consulted when reflecting on their needs, so they access this and log into their ePortfolio on the IOP website. Jamie selects **Competency 1.3: Establishes and maintains collaborative working relationships** in the **Personal Domain** and reviews the behaviours provided.

They consider that only two of the five behaviours are relevant to them in their current role and are confident that they are demonstrating these two behaviours at a proficient level. Therefore, they identify an additional behaviour that is not provided in the CCF but is relevant to their role and through conversations with their manager they identified it as an area for development.

Jamie identified this behaviour as: **I engage in networking behaviours by attempting to develop and maintain professional relationships**. Jamie is relatively new to their current role and determines that improvement in this behaviour is likely to boost their professional confidence. They decide to plan some CPD activity to further develop in this area.

### Develop a personal plan

Jamie plans to complete the following activities:

- Ask their direct manager for feedback.
- Watch a recording of the 'Strengthening our Connections' networking webinar hosted by the IOP.
- Search the PIER<sup>1</sup> website for resources, as they are a PIER member.

### Action

Jamie takes the following steps:

1. During their regular one-to-one meeting Jamie asked their manager for guidance and constructive feedback regarding their networking behaviours and activities carried out to date.
2. Watched back the 'Strengthening our Connections' IOP networking webinar.
3. Took part in a networking event hosted by PIER.

### Document your learning

Jamie documents the following:

1. Learned that useful opportunities and advice can come from the people at the periphery of your professional network, or people you might have lost touch with.
2. Learned about the 'Personal Boardroom' concept, which helped Jamie put a structure to networking and helped them to think about it more intentionally.
3. Learned about the benefits and pitfalls to networking over social media, e.g., LinkedIn.

### Evaluate impact on practice

Three months later, Jamie returns to the cycle and reflects on whether their learning activity has had an impact on their practice. They observe that they have been participating in more professional activities and have reconnected with a friend from college who is also currently working in a large pharmaceutical company.

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<sup>1</sup> Pharmacists in Industry Education and Regulation – [www.pier.ie](http://www.pier.ie)

## Example 3: Using the Core Competency Framework as a student of pharmacy

Lesley is a pharmacy student, on an eight-month placement in a hospital in the north west of Ireland.

### Self-appraisal

Lesley completes an interim review with their preceptor where they discuss Lesley's progress against the Core Competency Framework. Recently, Lesley witnessed a situation where one of the pharmacists in the department had to deal with an ethical dilemma and exercise their ethical decision-making skills. This prompted Lesley to reflect on their own competence in this area.

When preparing for the review with their preceptor, they identified that **Competency 2.2 within Domain 2, Practices legally and ethically** is applicable to this practice setting. Within this competency Lesley identified **Behaviour 2.3: I recognise ethical dilemmas when they arise and reason through them in a structured manner**, as an area for development. At the review with their preceptor, Lesley discusses this area for development and the fact that dealing with ethical dilemmas is something they are apprehensive about with regard to their future practice. They both agree that Lesley could benefit from further development in this area and come up with a learning plan together.

### Develop a personal plan

Lesley agrees an action plan with their preceptor and plans to complete the following activities:

- Examine the Ethical Decision-Making Tool available as a resource on the PSI website.
- Work through examples of ethical dilemmas with their preceptor.
- Make note of ethical dilemmas encountered in practice and discuss them with their preceptor.

### Action

Lesley takes the following steps:

1. Familiarised themselves with the Ethical Decision-Making Tool.
2. Worked through different examples of ethical dilemmas found on the PSI website and provided by other pharmacists in their practice setting.
3. Noted and reflected on ethical decisions as they arose in the course of their placement and discussed them during regular meetings with their preceptor.

### Document your learning

Lesley documents the following:

1. Learned a new framework for structuring their ethical decision making.
2. Learned the importance of reflecting on ethical decisions.
3. Learned the value of sharing experiences with colleagues.

### Evaluate impact on practice

During their next scheduled Competency Assessment, Lesley reflects on whether their learning plan has had an impact on how they demonstrate the behaviour in their placement. They are confident that they have developed this behaviour, which is also reflected by the feedback from their preceptor. Lesley feels better equipped to deal with ethical decision making in their future practice.