

Motivational interviewing training for enhanced communication skills among pharmacists: a feasibility study

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Background:

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an evidence-based, empathetic communication style that supports behavioural change and improves medication adherence. We hypothesise that enhancing pharmacists' MI skills will improve their ability to provide person-centred pharmaceutical care and motivate patients to adhere to their medications.

Aim:

This study aimed to assess the feasibility of an educational intervention on MI for pharmacists who perform pharmaceutical care services.

Method:

The educational intervention was evaluated using a mixed-methods approach, incorporating pre- and post-tests, as well as qualitative methods. It consisted of two steps, both of which included asynchronous online learning activities and a workshop. The intervention was tested among ten pharmacists experienced in conducting New Medicine Services in pharmacies in Norway.

The outcomes of the training were assessed through role-play pharmacy consultations conducted before and after each training module. Role-plays were audio-recorded and coded using MI Treatment Integrity (MITI 4.2.1). Feasibility was evaluated through data on e-learning module uptake, semi-structured interviews with pharmacists and reflections by workshop leaders.

Results:

Pharmacists found the training to be valuable and feasible to implement within their work schedules. However, some participating pharmacists did not allocate the required time for the asynchronous learning modules before the workshops. Pharmacists appreciated the workshops for their training and understanding of key elements of MI. They valued the opportunity to reflect with peers on implementing these elements in their daily pharmacy practice. Workshop leaders reported full engagement and noticeable progress in understanding and skills, though with significant variation.

Discussion:

This study examined the feasibility of MI training to enhance pharmacists' communication skills, which are essential in facilitating patients' safe medication management and adherence. It highlights the need for continuous professional development in patient-centred communication using a work-integrated learning approach.