

PROPOSING A COMPETENCY MATRIX FOR PHARMACISTS IN WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION

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INTRODUCTION

Pharmacy graduates practising in pharmaceutical wholesale distribution are expected to lead processes ensuring safety and quality of medicinal products, ensuring patient access and resilience in distribution processes as a function of a Responsible Person (RP). Having a defined set of competencies with a special focus on the wholesale distribution sector that may be implemented in pharmacy education curricula may be supported with a competency-based approach.

AIM

To develop a validated educational competency matrix for the Responsible Person position and pharmacists working in the wholesale distribution of medicinal products.

METHOD

In an earlier study¹, a validated competency framework for the RP role (RP-CF) was developed describing learning outcomes for knowledge, skills and competencies of the six competency clusters identified (Table 1).

Table 1 – Competency Clusters for RP Position

Quality Management System
Management of Outsourced Activities
Reviewing and Monitoring
Wholesale distribution premises and activities
Leadership
Documentation

A competency matrix was extrapolated from the RP-CF to summarise and provide guidance on RP competencies. Competencies present in the competency clusters were grouped into three competency bubbles (CB): Generic Pharmacist Competencies, Technical Competencies and Good Distribution Practice (GDP) Competencies.

A triangular matrix was proposed to interlink these three CBs and the six competency clusters. Validation was conducted with three academics and three regulators from the local competent authority.

RESULTS

The 6 competency clusters were positioned in the matrix in relation to how strongly or weakly related they are to the competency bubbles.

- Wholesale distribution is common to all 3 bubbles and is positioned at the centre of the matrix.
- Management of Outsourced Activities and Reviewing and Monitoring, were strongly associated with the generic CB and technical CB.
- The remaining three competency clusters were strongly associated with the GDP CB and Generic CB competencies.

The competency matrix was accepted by the expert panel during the validation round. The change implemented after validation was the shifting of the two competency clusters; Documentation and Leadership, which have commonality characteristics with all competency bubbles.

As a result, these two competency clusters were shifted closer to the mid-line but still pertaining to the Generic and GDP competencies in the context of the RP position (as shown in Figure 1).

Table 2 – Legend describing Competency Matrix

Competency Bubbles	Six Competency Clusters	Legend Describing Matrix
Generic Pharmacist Competencies	1: Quality Management System 2: Management of outsourced activities 3: Reviewing and monitoring	Axis: overlap between competency bubbles
Technical Competencies	4: Wholesale distribution premises and activities 5: Leadership 6: Documentation	Arrows: connectivity linking the competency bubbles
GDP Competencies		

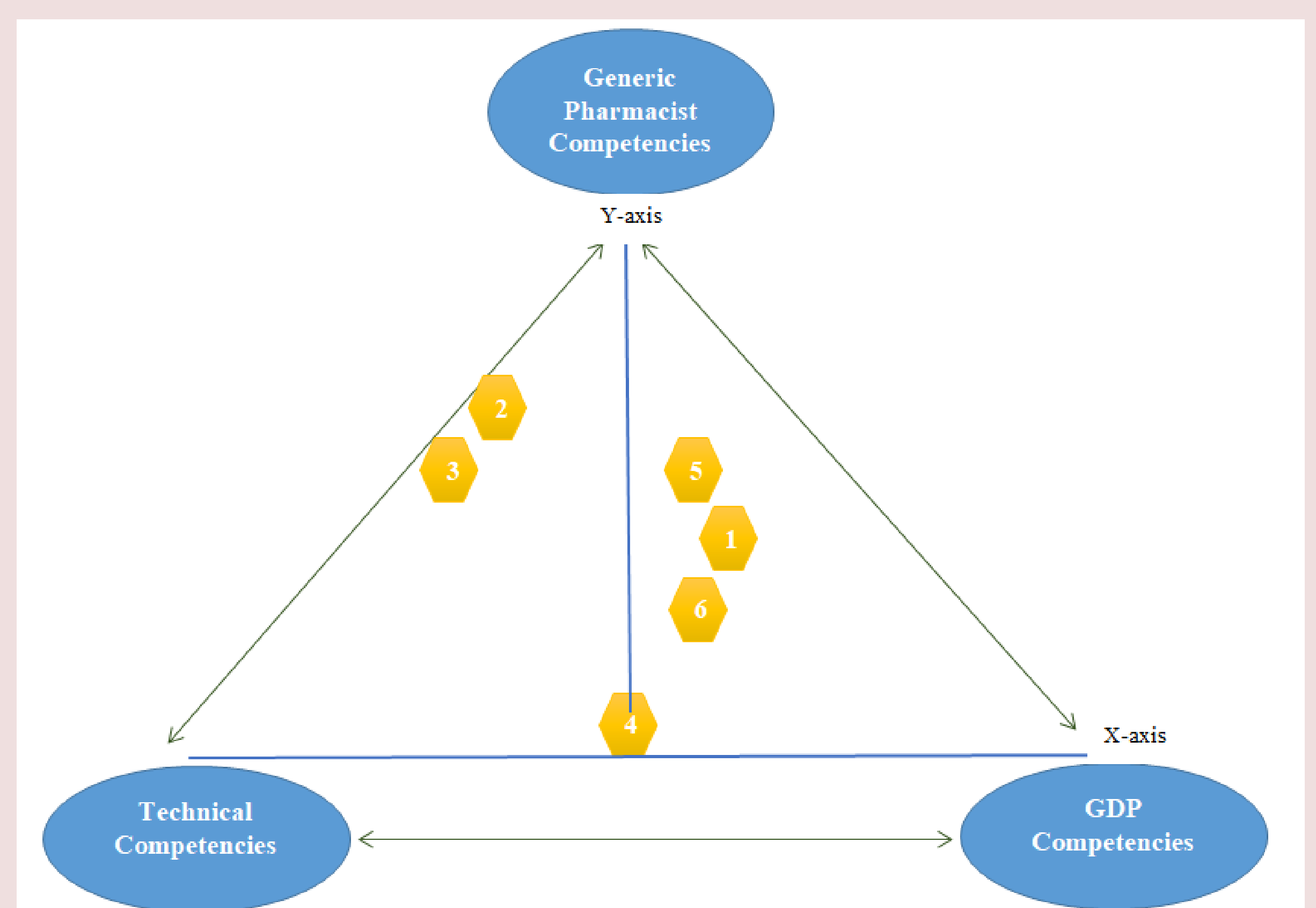


Figure 1 –Validated Competency Matrix for pharmacists and RPs working in wholesale distribution

CONCLUSION

The Competency Matrix for the RP position summarises competencies required for the RP position in a visual manner that can accompany the RP-CF. It can be adapted in tandem and is applicable for international scenarios and also has the potential to be adapted for local regulatory and legislative requirements. Competencies described in the RP-CF may have extended outreach or applicability beyond wholesale distribution, as generic and technical pharmacy competencies may be applicable for other pharmacy practice areas and could be adopted in other pharmacy practice educational frameworks. To conclude, adopting a harmonised approach to the RP formation, may contribute to the robust preparation of pharmacy graduates and RPs who enter the wholesale distribution workforce.

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REFERENCES

1: von Brockdorff B, Azzopardi LM. Competencies for the position of the responsible person in good distribution practice. Pharmacy Education. 2023;23(1):30–38.