

# Principle Three: Communicate Effectively

February 2020

Dr. Conor B.  
McCrystal MPSI PhD



## Who am I?

- Pharmacist, Graduate of QUB (1992)
- 1993 – 2003, Research & Development
- Pharmacy Contractor, Co. Cavan, 2004
- Teacher-Practitioner School of Pharmacy, TCD
- Practice Reviewer, CPD Accreditation, IIOP
- PSI Health Committee
- PSI Expert Witness, 2013
- Monitoring Committee, Medical Council

# Importance of Communication in the role of the Pharmacist

Domain	Competency
Professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practises 'patient-centred' care</li> <li>Practises professionally</li> <li>Practises legally</li> <li>Practises ethically</li> <li>Engages in appropriate continuing professional development</li> </ul>
Personal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership skills</li> <li>Decision-making skills</li> <li>Team working skills</li> <li>Communication skills</li> </ul>
Supply of medicines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufactures and compounds medicines</li> <li>Manages the medicines supply chain</li> <li>Reviews and dispenses medicines accurately</li> </ul>
Safe and rational use of medicines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patient consultation skills</li> <li>Patient counselling skills</li> <li>Reviews and manages patient medicines</li> <li>Identifies and manages medication safety issues</li> <li>Provides medicines information and education</li> </ul>
Public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population health</li> <li>Health promotion</li> <li>Research skills</li> </ul>
Organisation and management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-management skills</li> <li>Workplace management skills</li> <li>Human resources management skills</li> <li>Financial management skills</li> <li>Quality assurance</li> </ul>

## Competency:

### Behaviours:

## 2.4 Communication skills

- 2.4.1 Uses effective verbal, non-verbal, listening and written communication skills to communicate clearly, precisely and appropriately
- 2.4.2 Communicates effectively with patients and their carers, with other healthcare professionals, other support staff, and other relevant third parties
- 2.4.3 Uses appropriate language and checks understanding
- 2.4.4 Demonstrates respect, cultural awareness, sensitivity and empathy when communicating
- 2.4.5 Demonstrates influencing and negotiation skills to resolve conflicts and problems
- 2.4.6 Demonstrates the ability to build positive relationships with patients, carers, colleagues and other healthcare professionals
- 2.4.7 Listens to patients and respects their views about their health and medicines

# Importance of Communication in the role of the Pharmacist



## Standardised Pharmacy Interaction Review\*

\*IOP Practice Review Process.

[https://iio.ie/sites/default/files/20170321\\_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions\\_v6.2.pdf](https://iio.ie/sites/default/files/20170321_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions_v6.2.pdf), accessed 31/01/20.



## Principle 3, Code of Conduct

Communicate effectively so that patients receive safe and appropriate care. Ask relevant questions, listen carefully and respect confidentiality. Welcome questions from patients and respond to them in an open, accurate and honest way.

Communicate in a manner that enables patients to make decisions that are informed and right for them.

# Role of the PSI

- The PSI regulates the profession of pharmacy in the State to protect, maintain and promote the health and safety of the public.
- The PSI carries out this role through the Council and through various committees established by the Council.
- The (Preliminary Proceedings Committee) PPC is one of these committees and forms part of the disciplinary structure of the PSI.



## Role of the PSI

- It is the initial committee to receive complaints regarding registered pharmacists and pharmacies.
- It considers each complaint and decides
  - (a) There is sufficient cause to warrant further action;
  - (b) There is not sufficient cause to warrant further action.
- It is not the function of the PPC to establish that a complaint has been proven or otherwise.



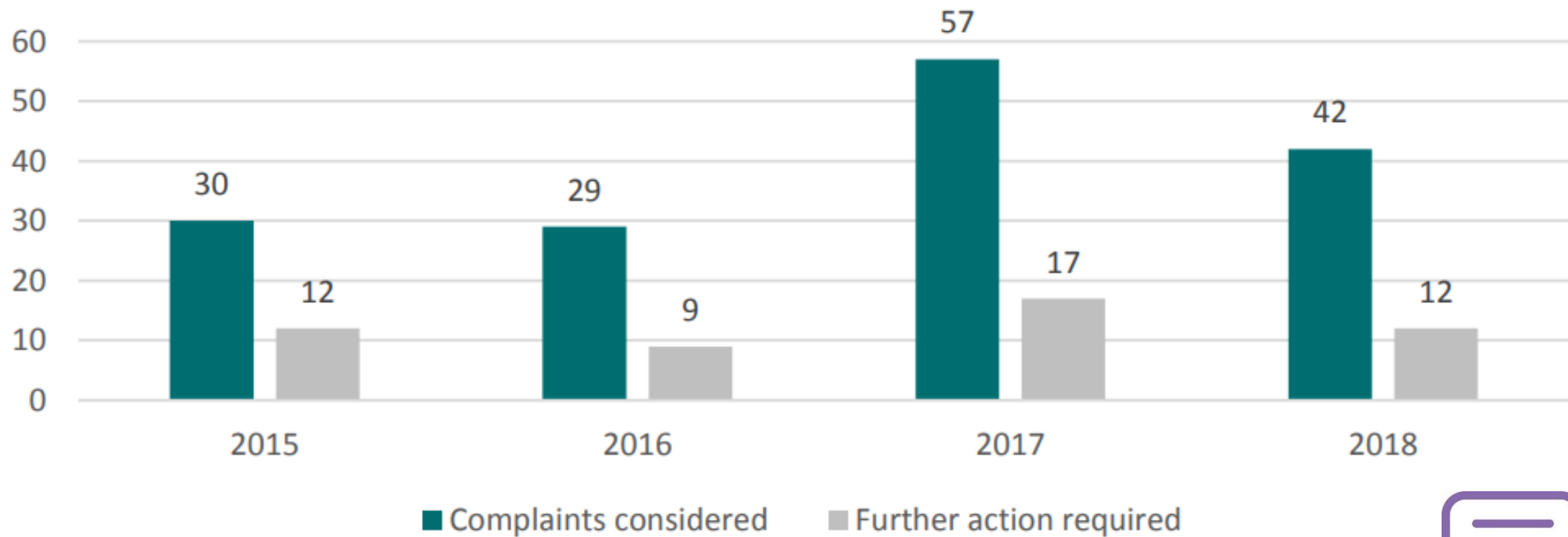
# Role of the PSI

- Where the PPC has decided that there is sufficient cause to warrant further action being taken in relation to a complaint it will either:
  1. Refer the complaint for mediation subject to the consent of the complainant and the pharmacist(s) and / or pharmacy against whom the complaint has been made; or
  2. Refer the complaint to the Professional Conduct Committee for inquiry; or
  3. Refer the complaint to the Health Committee for inquiry.

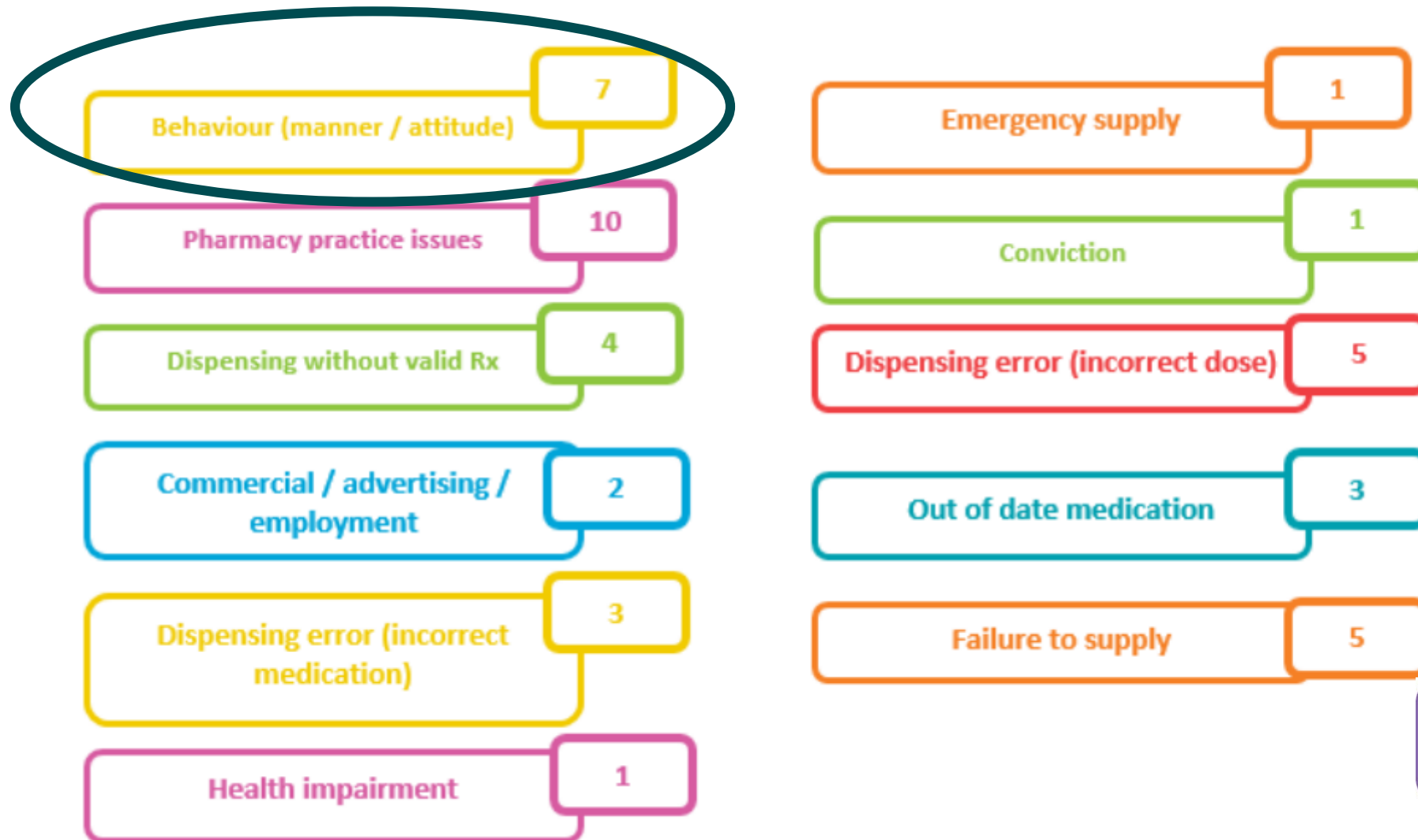




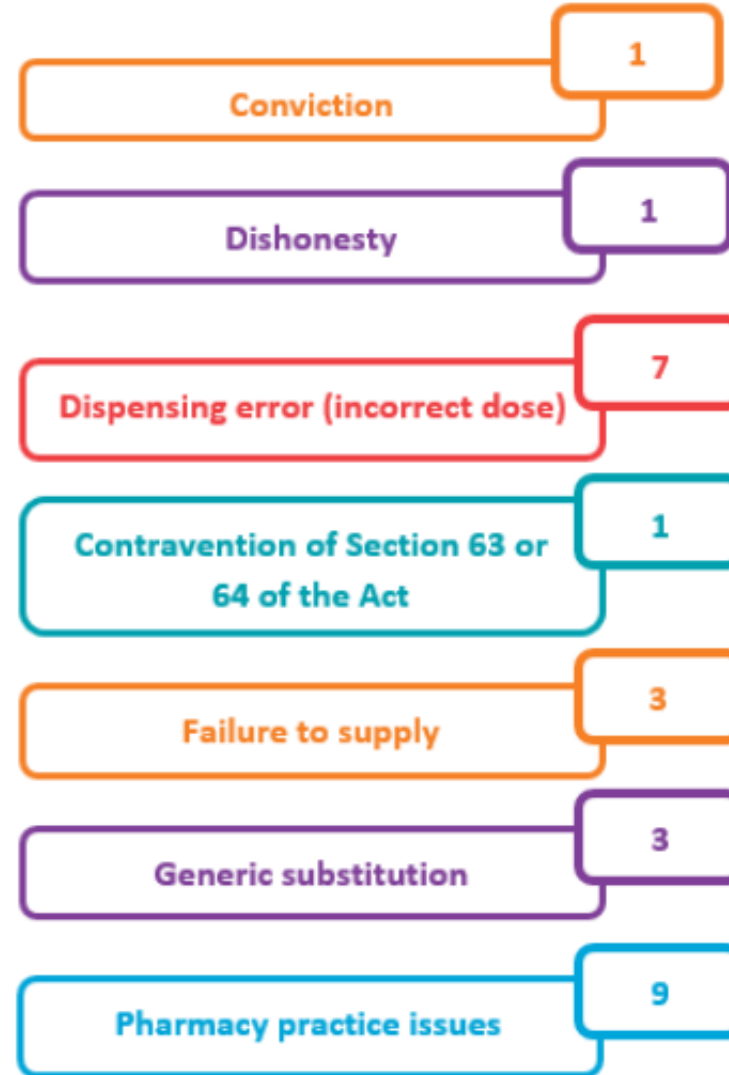
## Complaints considered by the PPC and where further action was required



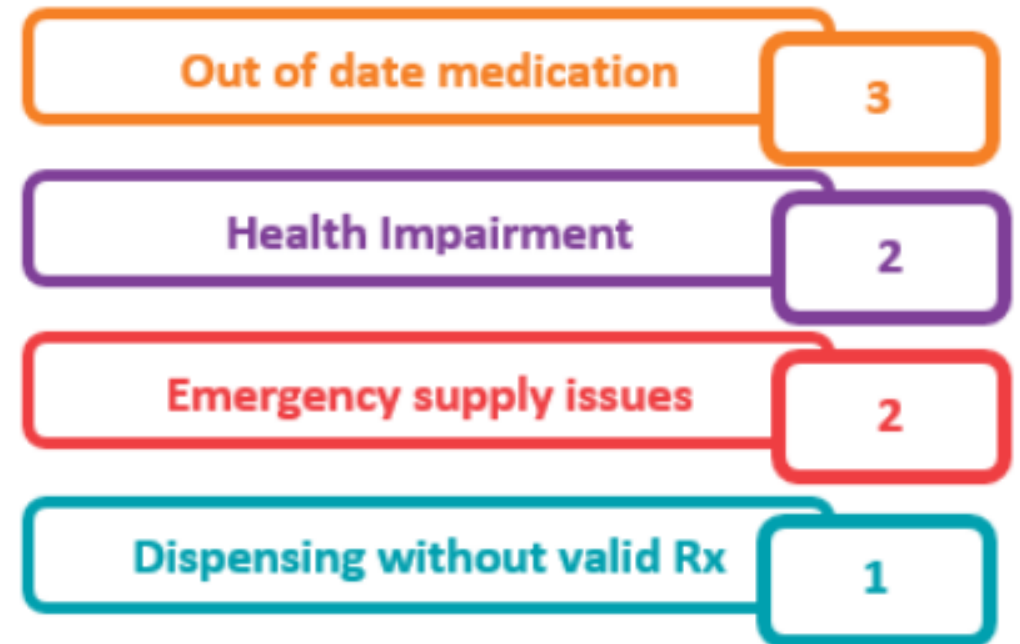
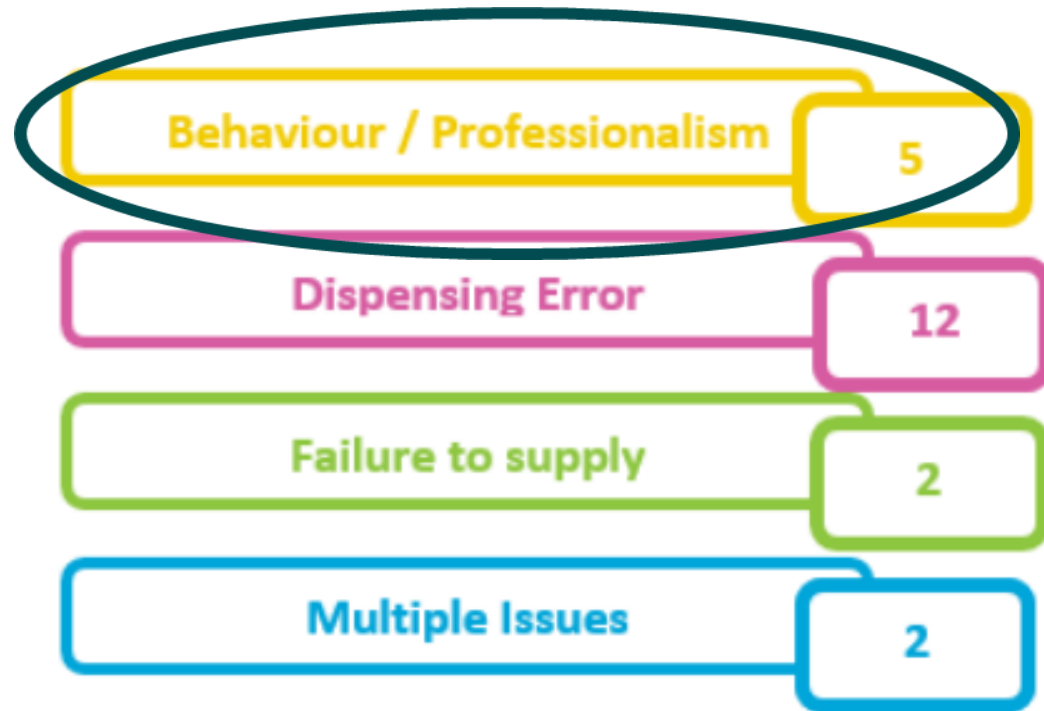
# Categories of Complaints Considered in 2018



# Categories of Complaints Considered in 2017



# Categories of Complaints Considered in 2016



## Feedback from the PPC on Complaints Relating to COMMUNICATION

- Number of complaints made often contain poor communication issues.
- Meaningful & clear communication between a pharmacist and a patient can often assist in resolving the issue before it escalates to a formal complaint to the PSI.
- Lack of appropriate complaints handling procedure in place in the pharmacy.



# Examples of Complaints relating to POOR COMMUNICATION

- manner in which information was communicated to a patient by the pharmacist or member of staff.
- conversations being conducted in the public areas of the pharmacy
- patients expressing concerns that confidential health matters could be overheard by other persons
- inability of the pharmacy to provide information when requested
- telephone calls not being returned when indicated that they would be.



## Principle 3

### Communicate Effectively

Communicate effectively so that patients receive safe and appropriate care. Ask relevant questions, listen carefully and respect confidentiality. Welcome questions from patients and respond to them in an open, accurate and honest way. Communicate in a manner that enables patients to make decisions that are informed and right for them.

#### In order to satisfy this principle, you:\*

1. Must listen to the patient and respect their views about their health
2. Must seek all relevant and available information required to assess the patient's needs
3. Must provide information in a way that is clear to the patient, so that the patient is facilitated to make informed decisions and choices
4. Must ensure the patient has all the necessary information required and you must check the patient has correctly understood it
5. Should work to overcome any communication challenges and adapt your communication style or methods to meet the needs of each individual patient
6. Must work to communicate effectively with your colleagues and other healthcare professionals
7. Must respect patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality and ensure all staff maintain those rights, except where disclosure is legally required

1. Must listen to the patient and respect their views about their health

- Common complaint – “Healthcare Professionals don’t listen to me”
- Focus on development of Patient Consultation Skills





## 2. Must seek all relevant and available information required to assess the patient's needs

- Gathering information phase of Pharmacy Consultation\*
- Establishes the presenting complaint
- Establishes the patient's medication history
- Establishes how long the patient has been taking medication for
- Establishes the patient's current/past medical conditions
- Establishes if the patient has any allergies
- Asks about the patient's lifestyle where relevant (alcohol intake, diet, smoking...etc.)
- Asks about the history of the present condition/presenting concerns
- Elicits the patient's understanding/experience of their current problem

• \* Standardised Pharmacy Interactions, IIOB Practice Review Process.

[https://iiop.ie/sites/default/files/20170321\\_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions\\_v6.2.pdf](https://iiop.ie/sites/default/files/20170321_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions_v6.2.pdf), accessed 31/0:



3. Must provide information in a way that is clear to the patient, so that the patient is facilitated to make informed decisions and choices

- PPC feedback –“Poor communication may have contributed to certain matters escalating to formal complaints.”
- Generic medicines
- Refusal to dispense an emergency supply of a POM in the absence of a Rx.



### 3. Must provide information in a way that is clear to the patient, so that the patient is facilitated to make informed decisions and choices



The PPC noted a number of complaints considered in 2018 related to the refusal to supply pharmacy only medicines such as Solpadeine, Nurofen Plus or cough bottles.



Patients raised complaints with regard to the manner in which they say they were dealt with at the pharmacy.



PPC advice: it is important that pharmacists communicate the reasons for their decision not to supply the medicines clearly and respectfully to the patient and relevant advice should be provided which includes referring the patient to another healthcare professional or service as appropriate.



4. Must ensure the patient has all the necessary information required and you must check the patient has correctly understood it

Competency 2: Management strategies and follow up\*

- \* Standardised Pharmacy Interactions, IOP Practice Review Process.

[https://iop.ie/sites/default/files/20170321\\_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions\\_v6.2.pdf](https://iop.ie/sites/default/files/20170321_Standardised%20Pharmacy%20Interactions_v6.2.pdf), accessed 31/01/20..

5. Should work to overcome any communication challenges and adapt your communication style or methods to meet the needs of each individual patient

- Must adapt your communication style based on the presenting patient.
- Many EU or 3<sup>rd</sup> country nationals presenting in pharmacies with a significant language barrier.
- Remain professional, be clear and concise, and use language that the patient will understand.



6. Must work  
to  
communicate  
effectively with  
your colleagues  
and other  
healthcare  
professionals

FTP example 1:

- Supply of High-Tech medication in the absence of a prescription (11 times).
- Pharmacy failed to contact patient's GP or Consultant during a 14-month period.
- Many failings in this incident.



## 6. Must work to communicate effectively with your colleagues and other healthcare professionals

- FTP Example 2
- Capecitabine (Xeloda<sup>®</sup>) 1800mg p.o. b.i.d x 14/7 on, then one week off. Repeat cycles every 21 days for 8 cycles.
- Patient had been supplied with an incorrect quantity of Xeloda<sup>®</sup>, on two separate occasions and that the medicine supplied was labelled with an incorrect dose on two separate occasions.
- This happened despite a hospital pharmacist highlighting the errors that had been made between dispensing 1 & 2.
- Poor communication was highlighted during the Inquiry as a key factor.



7. Must respect patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality and ensure all staff maintain those rights, except where disclosure is legally required

Data protection in Ireland is legislated by the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") (25 May 2018) and the Data Protection Act 2018

Healthmail – phasing out of non-secure webmail

Have all staff been trained on data protection?

Have all staff signed a confidentiality agreement?

Have you a record of all staff training?



7. Must respect patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality and ensure all staff maintain those rights, except where disclosure is legally required

- Do you have clear procedures in place to allow patients/customers to have access to their personal data on request?
- A patient has the right to ask a pharmacy to transfer their personal data i.e. PMR, to another pharmacy and the pharmacy must comply.
- Issues around DISCLOSURE
  - Patient's PMR to hospital healthcare professional
  - Consultant prescription & patient's GP
  - Disclosure of child's PMR to an estranged parent

## Key learnings for pharmacists

- 1.** A complaints procedure should be in place in every pharmacy and all pharmacists and members of staff should be trained on how to handle a situation whereby a patient raises a concern or wishes to complain.
- 2.** Pharmacists and other members of staff should be mindful of how they interact with patients especially about sensitive or personal issues. Where at all possible the patient should be given the option of using the consultation area to discuss health matters or concerns in private



**Thank you**  
**Any questions?**

