

15 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



Quality Care
Pharmacy Program

An initiative of The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Supporting Excellence in Pharmacy

THE EXPERTS



As the medicines experts, pharmacists know that medicines can be life-saving but if not used correctly, or if mistakes are made in the process of supplying medicines to patients, the result can be life threatening. The physical environment in which pharmacists operate can have an impact on ensuring the patient gets the right medicines, in the right dose, at the right time and for the right reasons. It is for this reason that the pharmacy profession is committed to quality assurance.

In the Australian community pharmacy system, the quality assurance mechanism is called the Quality Care Pharmacy Program (QCPP) which in 2013 celebrates 15 years of success. QCPP was developed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Quality assurance, in its broadest sense, is any action taken to prevent quality problems from occurring. In practice, this means devising systems for carrying out tasks which directly affect quality. QCPP does more than that. It is about creating a proactive process in pharmacy which commits all staff to continually improve their offer to the Australian public. It is about creating a culture of excellence.

We have come a long way in 15 years. We were the first country in the world to have a pharmacy-wide quality assurance process in place. I can proudly say as one of the founders of the program we did not foresee that we would reach a point in 2013 where over 90% of pharmacies are accredited against the QCPP Standard, which is now recognised as an

Australian Standard. We did not foresee that the programs would be a prerequisite to a number of Federal Government professional program initiatives.

There is significant rigour in the Program to give comfort to the Australian public that their pharmacy performs to the highest standards. Every two years independent external assessors visit the pharmacy and inspect the premises and ensure systems, processes and records are in place.

The requirements are constantly upgraded and if new professional services funded by the Federal Government are offered by the pharmacy, the pharmacy has to meet the relevant standards.

I congratulate my pharmacy colleagues who have embraced the goals of the Program and continue to apply its standards. I thank them, all QCPP staff, and the Guild staff who have worked tirelessly to advocate for the patient benefits of QCPP accreditation.

Aristotle the famous Greek philosopher, scientist, and educator put it best when he said, 'Quality is not an act, it is a habit.' I am proud of the good habits my profession has embraced, allowing us to maximise health outcomes for our patients. ■

Kos Sclavos

National President
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

GENESIS AND PROGRESS

The vision for the Quality Care Pharmacy Program remains: to continually enhance the professional and business practices in community pharmacy to deliver optimal health outcomes. By increasing the number of accredited pharmacies in Australia, QCPP aims to ensure that more and more community pharmacies provide quality professional services and customer care.

The genesis of QCPP arose from a decline in retail business within community pharmacy and consumer data showing an inconsistency of service standards and retail offering across community pharmacy. Pharmacy needed to 'lift its game' and the Guild realised the importance of ensuring the future viability of pharmacy in an environment of ever-increasing competition. During the early stages of the development project, the Guild decided to expand the business model to also include professional practice standards. QCPP therefore became a whole of business operation model, which at the time was a world first.

The aim was to develop a quality assurance program dedicated to raising the standards of service to the public, improving health outcomes, as well as improving profitability of the sector.

The high accreditation rates that QCPP enjoys are critical for the Guild and pharmacy to advocate on behalf of the profession: that we can deliver health care services to the Australian public to an assured level of quality. This doesn't mean that all pharmacies have to offer services in exactly the same way. But what it does mean is that there is a quality management system that includes the same basic operational requirements in every accredited pharmacy.

As of 2011, QCPP was recognised as Australian Standard 85000:2011—quality management system for pharmacies in Australia. The Guild is accredited by Standards Australia as a Standards Development Organisation, and QCPP is accredited by JAS-ANZ (Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand) as a conformity assessment body.

The QCPP Requirements Manual outlines QCPP evidence requirements including policies, procedures and templates.

The latest manual, which was the 3rd revision of the manual, was distributed to all accredited pharmacies in June 2011. It incorporates the requirements of the Australian Standard, and also accommodates reporting and record keeping obligations as part of the Pharmacy Practice Incentives (PPIs) in the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement. The introduction of PPI payments represented an exciting shift in incentivising accreditation within a quality framework, with payment of PPIs linked to the delivery of a specific service to the quality Standard.

In celebrating the Quality Care Pharmacy Program's birthday in 2013, it has been fascinating to look back over the past 15 years, and see the development over time of the Program. Whilst many things have changed, the basic principles of providing support and guidance on professional health services and pharmacy business operations have remained. ■

Paul Sinclair

Chair, Quality Assurance and Standards Committee
National Councillor
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Andrew Matthews

National Director
Quality Assurance and Standards
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

By constantly raising the requirements expected of pharmacies by QCPP, pharmacy has evolved and adapted to the changing needs and expectations of the Australian health consumer.



'When starting our new pharmacy, one of our passions was to ensure that our quality of care to our patients is of the highest standard. QCPP was instrumental in implementing the processes and procedures to ensure that such a high standard is achieved everytime.'

Pottsville Beach Pharmacy, NSW



STREAMLINING EXCELLENCE

QCPP is not just about policies, procedures and processes; it is also about incorporating these into the day-to-day management and operation of the pharmacy. Importantly QCPP assesses that the pharmacy is using these tools and have records to prove it.

Long-term accredited pharmacies have grown with QCPP and acknowledge that QCPP has assisted their pharmacy to develop over time, improved their business and enhanced their customer service.

The QCPP Requirements Manual is a comprehensive resource, written by pharmacists for pharmacists, and contains valuable templates and procedures to assist in the operation of an excellent pharmacy. The annual Pharmacy of the Year award recognises the very best pharmacies who innovate whilst maintaining the core requirements of QCPP excellence. ■





'QCPP has helped formalise standards and procedures that we were probably already doing. However, as a whole we have benefited enormously, recognising the need for pharmacy to have a minimal high standard for service provision.'

Brighton Pharmacy, QLD



CONTINUING EXCELLENCE



The Quality Care Pharmacy Program provides a structure for improving pharmacy businesses and bring immediate benefits. However, because customers' needs change and business evolves, QCPP must become part of a pharmacy's everyday processes.

All systems, however great, need rethinking or reinforcement and change. QCPP encourages pharmacies to measure and monitor their operations on a regular basis.

Continuous Quality Improvement is a term that describes the process of reviewing and improving existing processes in consistent way. This is the key to the success of QCPP.

The requirements and supporting tools are constantly reviewed and adapted to ensure they meet the needs of community pharmacy and continue to encourage the development of new innovative services.

The Requirements Manual is more than a reference to the Quality Care Standard. QCPP provides a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and templates designed to assist pharmacy businesses to run smoothly.

Pharmacies are provided continued support through our QCPP Experts, based at the local Guild branch. ■



EXCELLENT CUSTOMER CARE

QCPP helps pharmacies to identify customers' expectations and to understand their needs. QCPP also supports training for pharmacy staff so that customers consistently receive the best advice and the best product or service.

One of the initiatives within QCPP is the Mystery Shopper Program, with data used over many years to demonstrate how pharmacy adds value to the provision of over-the-counter medicines. By using a large number of test scenarios that involve direct product requests, symptom-based requests and 'blended' requests, the Mystery Shopper Program correlates with the real-life interactions consumers have with pharmacy staff.

The Mystery Shopper database now holds over 31,000 mystery shop cases, and this data has been crucial in retaining the existing *Pharmacy Medicines* and *Pharmacist Only Medicines* schedules. ■

'We were struggling to streamline all our processes and have found the templates very valuable. Nothing is ever a waste of time in QCPP as it is all helping to make our pharmacy a safer place and our services much more efficient.'

Health Information Pharmacy
Brimbank, VIC



EMPOWERING TEAMS

The QCPP templates and procedures help to outline how a pharmacy operates and gives the pharmacy team a clear picture of the needs of the business.

This means staff will have more confidence to make appropriate decisions and take on more advanced tasks. The skills and experience gained through managing QCPP mean staff are receiving professional development that will greatly benefit their careers.

Implementing a quality assurance program, such as QCPP provides great experience and opportunities. It's a good way to kick start a career in quality improvement, either in pharmacy or in the business world. ■

By being involved in QCPP, staff can improve skills and understanding of business processes, such as:

- Writing procedures and policies
- Occupational health and safety
- Stock management
- Human resources
- Customer service
- Working in a team

'Policies and procedures are the best way to ensure that each staff member understands expectations and their role in the pharmacy, and how it all meshes together for a cohesive, effective, functioning pharmacy.'

Pottsville Beach Pharmacy, NSW



A DRIVER FOR PROFESSIONAL PROGRESSION

Community pharmacy is a trusted health destination. We're the highest use health care service, accessed by 94% of Australians, and with the highest satisfaction rate at 89%¹. Over 400,000 Australians visit a pharmacy every week, and there are more than 300 million individual visits to pharmacies every year. Our network of over 5,300 community pharmacies in metropolitan, regional and rural/remote areas of Australia ensures the delivery of medicines and other vital health services to all Australians. The majority of these pharmacies are accredited to the Quality Care Pharmacy Standard.

Where there is solid support and strength in an organisation, profession or industry, it is because it has been built on strong foundations. The Quality Care Pharmacy Program is one of the foundation building blocks that underpins the pharmacy profession.

Over the past 15 years, by constantly raising the requirements expected of pharmacies by QCPP, pharmacy has evolved and adapted to the changing needs and expectations of the Australian health consumer.

The model of community pharmacy now reflects the changing focus of pharmacy practice from that of product supply (dispensing of medicines) to a more comprehensive 'whole of health' approach incorporating more extensive professional services. QCPP has supported the expansion of these professional services by providing resources to ensure a consistent and systematic approach to their delivery.

This is just one example of how QCPP changes in response to the future needs of the profession and the community, and guides pharmacy through this change management. This has been our approach since the program's inception 15 years ago. For example, in 2004 QCPP mandated that every accredited community pharmacy has a QCPP compliant refrigerator. This refrigerator must be Cold Chain Test Centre certified every two years prior to assessment. By having confidence in the cold chain of temperature sensitive products, consumers can be assured that their vaccine/insulin/injectable has been stored and supplied as intended by the manufacturer.

In 2008, QCPP introduced mandatory S2/S3 training for all pharmacy assistant staff to ensure core knowledge in the supply and handling of over-the-counter medicines. In 2010, we strengthened this further and introduced mandatory refresher training of pharmacy assistant staff to ensure they were annually updating their knowledge of these restricted medicines. The QCPP Mystery Shopper Program has subsequently demonstrated that these changes have led to improvements in the handling of these medicines, and that pharmacy adds value to the provision of these important medicines.

Whilst the third revision of the QCPP Requirements Manual was released in 2011, there have been regular updates to the requirements to accommodate professional developments and practice changes.

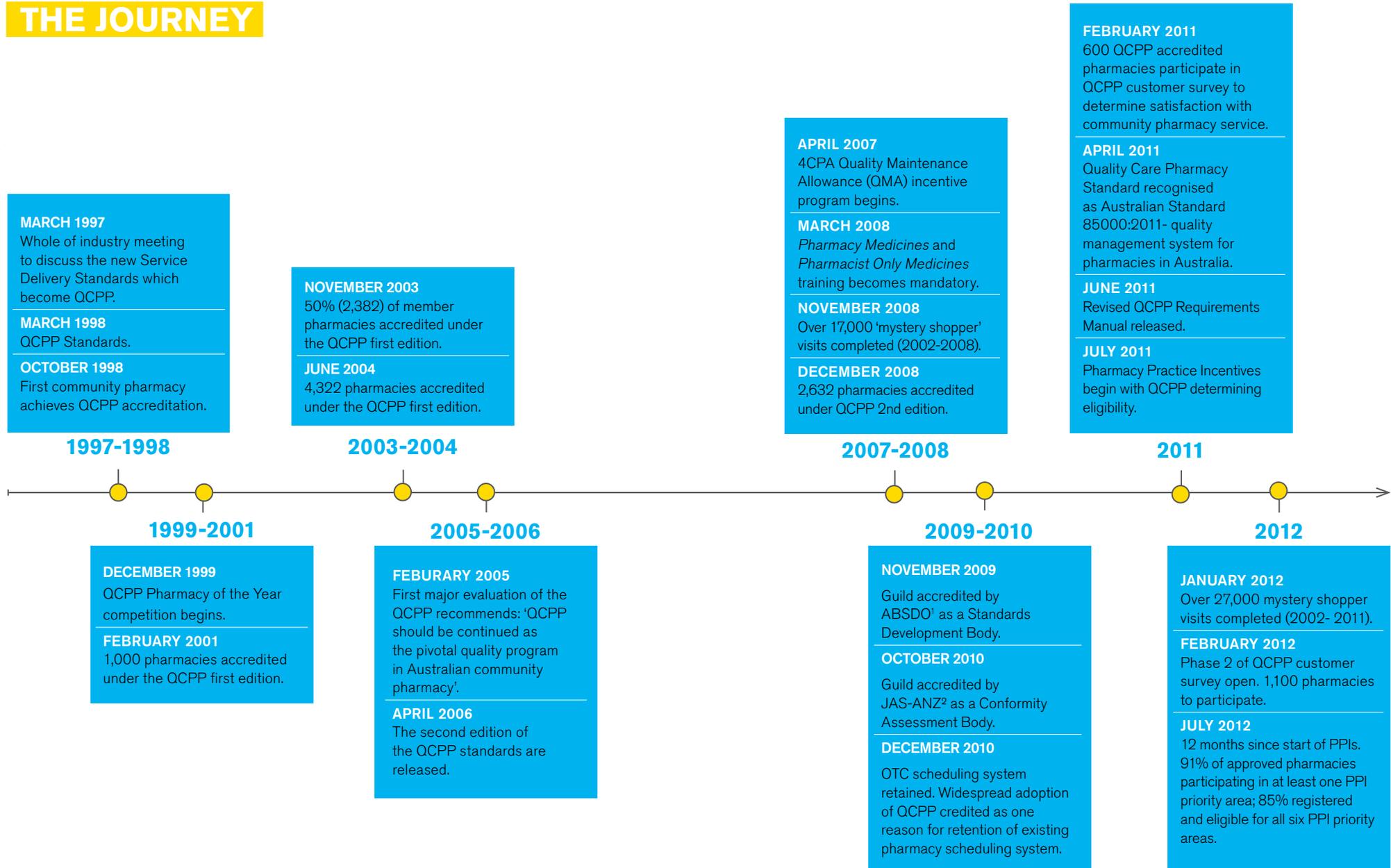
By end 2012, we had added in new resources to support pharmacies to offer vaccination services, absence from work certificates and in-pharmacy medicine reviews. A comprehensive revision of the Quality Care Pharmacy Standard is due for release in 2015.

QCPP has a proud history of supporting the evolution of community pharmacy. Through the guidance and support of the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, community pharmacy will continue to evolve and adapt to the ever increasing health needs of the Australian consumer. This is the future of pharmacy and the future of the Quality Care Pharmacy Program. ■

1. Menzies-Nous Australian Health Survey report Oct 2012. Available at: <http://apo.org.au/research/menzies-nous-australian-health-survey-2012>

Since QCPP began in 1998, over 90% of Australian pharmacies have received accreditation under the Quality Care Pharmacy Standard.

THE HISTORY OF QCPP: THE JOURNEY



1. ABSDO: Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations
2. JAS-ANZ: Joint Accreditation System for Australia and New Zealand



'QCPP led the world 15 years ago in being the first country-wide pharmacy accreditation system. In 2013 we continue to lead the world by adapting and evolving QCPP, but the focus on the patient and community engagement remains.'

Kos Sclavos



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