



**Your Community Pharmacist:** the health professional you see most often

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21 October 2011

Alasdair McIntosh

National Manager

Pharmacy Industry Training Organisation

Sent via e-mail to: [alasdair@pito.org.nz](mailto:alasdair@pito.org.nz)

Dear Alasdair

**RE: REVIEW OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR PHARMACY ASSISTANTS AND TECHNICIANS**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the above qualifications.

The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc) (the Guild) is a national membership organisation representing community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and advocate for the business interests of community pharmacy.

The Guild supports the proposed qualifications model. The proposed model provides flexibility and choices for support staff which is suited to the needs of pharmacy businesses in the changing environment. It is important to ensure that the training and qualifications of pharmacy assistants and technicians best prepare them for their jobs now and in the future. Qualifications for pharmacy support staff should be relevant to what their positions actually require them to do in practice, while providing opportunities to enhance and extend learning as the demands of the sector change.

We understand that there has been concern in the past that not all pharmacists have been considered by the providers to be capable of supervising pharmacy support staff. The Guild believes that all registered pharmacists are able to professionally supervise pharmacy staff.

The Guild has received feedback from members that courses undertaken via the Open Polytechnic seem to have long turnaround periods for the marking of assignments (up to

a month), and that there have been delays in the arrival of course materials, and concerning correspondence with students and supervisors. This can particularly impact on provincial and rural pharmacies, whose staff are more likely to undertake distance learning than face-to-face alternatives, due to their geographical location. The Guild recommends that all courses, both those taught by distance and face-to-face, provide clear guidance to students as to expected turnaround and delivery timeframes, and notify students should delays be expected.

Thank you for taking the time to read our feedback. If you have any questions about our feedback, please contact Guild Policy Advisor, Jasmine Freemantle, at [jasmine.freemantle@pgnz.org.nz](mailto:jasmine.freemantle@pgnz.org.nz) or 04 802 8205.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Annabel Young". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**Annabel Young**

Chief Executive