

# Improving oral communication in pharmacy education through interdisciplinary research

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A major criterion for the registration of pharmacists in Australia is a demonstrated ability to communicate effectively in diverse professional interactions. Development of professional communication skills is, therefore, an integral part of the undergraduate program in the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree at the University of South Australia. Recent evaluations of the pharmacy program have indicated that a significant number of students have difficulty in reaching the required communication standards, particularly students with English as a second language. When Language and Academic Skills (LAS) advisers work with students to develop their oral communication skills, they need insights into the disciplinary expectations. Collaboration between lecturers and LAS advisers not only satisfies this need, but also offers opportunities for reciprocal exchange of discipline specific expertise. An interdisciplinary research project was undertaken using a framework developed by Roberts and Sarangi (1999). This collaboration resulted in beneficial staff development, resource development and enhanced outcomes for students.

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