

Individual and System Readiness

Preparing yourself to prepare for change

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the interconnectedness between individual and systems resilience
2. Identify institutional and employment factors that can support personal readiness for change
3. Create an individualized readiness plan that integrates both organizational requirements and personal planning strategies

Introduction

Pharmacists are required to 'be ready' for system-level change more than ever. Changing work environments, disruption of daily routines, and the need to upskill in technology are just three ways that the profession was challenged over the last two years. Despite the admirable collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic by pharmacists around the world, individuals faced increasing professional pressures that were compounded by changes in personal circumstances. In many cases, the considerations imposed by the 'system' were the major culprits for increased stress, burnout, and depletion of individual resilience.

The learning and reflection activities in this module will help to equip pharmacists with the abilities to recognize system factors that lead to resilience depletion and to create personalized readiness plans for discussion with their employers and peers.

Activity 1: Slide Presentation and Overview

Activity 2: 'The Importance of Readiness and Preparation' - Podcast Recording

Activity 3: What does systems readiness look like in your sphere? - Reflective Exercises

Part 1:

**'We are moving to pandemic-level conditions in 48 hrs.
Please ensure you are ready to provide service.'**

After completing the previous components of this module, participants should have a better idea of what factors and strategies to consider when it comes to preparing an environment/system conducive to swift response to any emergency. This activity is designed to apply the learning and create a plan to help participants prepare for future shifts in practice conditions as 'announced' above!

Complete the following table as your own 'personal readiness' plan:

Domain	Factors	Personal Readiness Strategies	Organization Support Required
Family	<i>e.g. childcare, elder care, homeschooling</i>		
Space & Equipment	<i>e.g. home office space for uninterrupted work, proper lighting and space for virtual teaching/recording, proper seating/desk, glare screen, etc.</i>		
Time	<i>e.g. scheduling conflicts with home life</i>		
Technology	<i>e.g. connectivity, devices, enough bandwidth for multiple devices to access internet services</i>		
Other			

Part 2:

System-level change requires a collective effort across all members of an organization, including leaders, managers, and employees. It also requires understanding of the specific circumstance others may face that could be different than our own. Using your personal readiness plan above, reflect on the following examples and modify your plan based on the scenarios provided.

- Scenario 1:** You are a community pharmacist. You live with a partner and three children. Two of your children are in primary school and will now be virtually learning online. The third child is much younger and will no longer be able to attend daycare. Your employer now requires you to work 12 hour shifts 3 days a week, rather than the usual 8 hours shifts 5 days a week, to help meet demand. Your partner is an accountant and can work from home. What are factors you would need to build into your plan considering the above situation? What questions would you need answered? How would this change your plan? What system factors (i.e. other than your individual decisions/actions) could be modified to support you in your work?
- Scenario 2:** Consider Scenario 1, but with the change that your partner is now an Emergency Personnel with unpredictable working hours (i.e. shift may change every few days). How would this impact your plan? What system factors could be modified to support you in your work?
- Scenario 3:** Revisit your own personal readiness plan. How would it be impacted if you had an elderly parent who could no longer receive daily home care during these pandemic conditions? What system factors could be modified to support you in your work?
- Scenario 4:** As part of this announcement, you are able to complete your work virtually from home. You live rurally, however, and your internet connections is not consistent/dependable. You keep getting 'cut off' from meetings and commonly have connection 'outages'. What are some factors you would need to consider for your plan? What system factors could be modified to support you in your work?

Part 2: (continued)

In each of the above scenarios, a slight change in situation is provided to think through various factors that may impact people in an organization/team to perform their work with ease during any emergency situation. As a conclusion to this exercise, please consider the following questions to take back to your team and create an emergency plan collectively:

1. What are the perspectives we have in our team? (i.e. parents, elder caregivers, individuals living far distances from the office, etc.)
2. What perspectives are missing? (e.g. Do all members of the leadership team have children? Are their children very young, independent, or various ages? Does everyone have a similar social support system to call on others for help if needed?)
3. What are the assumptions being made about individuals' abilities and resources to be able to shift immediately into a work-from-home situation?
4. How do we develop resilient processes to challenge assumptions and build on changing scenarios? (e.g. Creating a document for team members to input challenges and resources needed on a weekly basis to understand how we can respond and resolve any emerging issues)?
5. How do we elevate issues that need response from leadership not only for our team members, but end users of our system (i.e. students, patients, etc.)?

References and Further Reading

Austin Z, Gregory P. Resilience in the time of pandemic: the experience of community pharmacists during COVID-19. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy* 2021;17:1867-1875. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7260564/>

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