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Introduction

Pharmacists are increasingly expected to deliver advanced care for patients with complex needs. Clinical supervision for pharmacists progressing to advanced practice is inconsistent across the profession. This study evaluated the feasibility and impact of a pilot preceptorship programme for pharmacists working towards advanced practice.

Aim

To evaluate the feasibility and impact of a pilot 16-week preceptorship programme for pharmacists working towards the advanced career stage.

Methods

Mixed-methods feasibility and impact study aligned with outcomes 2.1-2.3 of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Core Advanced Curriculum.

Four preceptor-preceptee dyads (8 individuals) participated. Feasibility was assessed using planned vs delivered joint clinics and review meetings.

Semi-structured interviews explored barriers/enablers to full preceptorship programme implementation. Data were analysed using the COM-B model (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation–Behaviour). A purposive sample of completing participants and senior managers (8 participants) was interviewed; informed consent obtained; ethical approval granted.

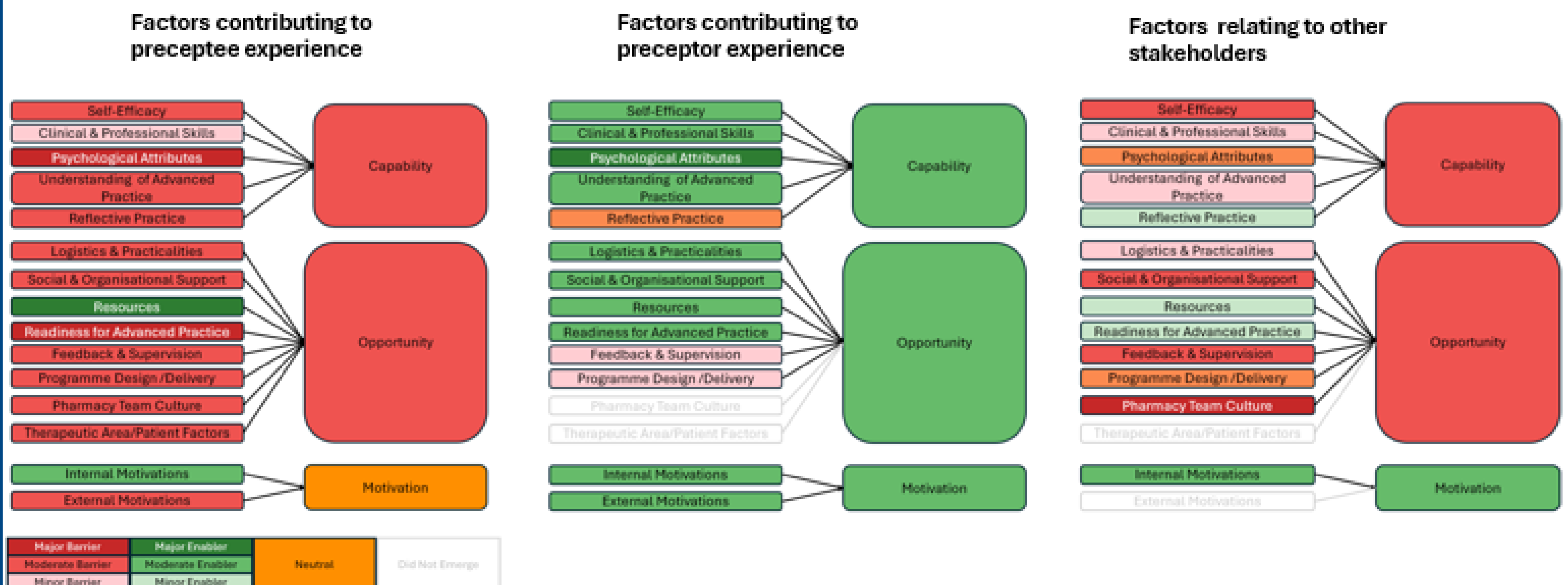
Results

Feasibility: Implementation was incomplete, with 14/60 planned joint clinical sessions (23%) and 3/12 review meetings (25%) delivered by the three completing dyads.

Impact: Preceptees who completed the programme self-reported increased confidence and competence in some RPS Core Advanced outcomes, with perceived improvements in clinical decision-making and patient-facing activity.

Qualitative findings: Barriers and enablers mapped to the COM-B model (Figure 1). Capability and opportunity factors, particularly at the preceptee level, were the main influences on programme implementation

Figure 1 – Barriers and enablers influencing implementation of pilot preceptorship programme for pharmacists working towards the advanced career stage



Conclusion

The pilot preceptorship programme showed potential to support development of advanced practice, but implementation was incomplete. Key barriers: workloads, lack of protected time and organisational support. System-level changes are needed to create environments that enable pharmacists to engage fully in advanced practice development.