

## ŠSSF Position Paper: “Interprofessional collaboration in Pharmacy Education: towards better health outcomes”

*Students’ Section of the Slovenian Pharmaceutical Society (ŠSSF) is the national association representing numerous pharmacy students in Slovenia. ŠSSF recognizes the importance of interprofessional collaboration between pharmacists and other healthcare providers for ensuring better health outcomes for our patients.*

The term ‘[One health](#)’ was first used in 2003, and since then, the importance of cross-disciplinary approaches has increased significantly. With the rise of personalized medicine, the threat of pandemics, and other healthcare challenges, it is becoming clear that collaborative care is the best course of action if we want to continue making progress and improving care quality. ŠSSF acknowledges that it is important to start connecting with other healthcare professionals early in our careers. It gives us an insight into their capabilities and ideas on how to include them best in patient treatment plans. With that in mind, we organize projects in collaboration with students from other faculties and organizations, where we focus on different health conditions and try to tackle them from various viewpoints. Our faculty also gives us the opportunity to get to know other professionals with guest lecturers presenting their area of expertise (e.g., a specialist in radiology giving a lecture about radiotherapeutics at our Pharmaceutical Chemistry III course and Clinical Pharmacy, where we mostly have hosting lecturers from other faculties).

Close interprofessional collaboration is mainly present between doctors and clinical pharmacists. There are 2.5 specialists of clinical pharmacy per 100 000 people in Slovenia (data from [Farmaceutski vestnik](#), page 13). This occupation is relatively new in our country; the first clinical pharmacist was employed directly at the clinical department in 2016. Consequently, doctors are not used to working with them and can not fully use their knowledge in a hospital environment. ŠSSF recognizes that one of our most significant challenges is educating physicians about our expertise and giving them insight into improving and elevating treatment plans. Pharmacists possess in-depth knowledge about medications and can improve the pharmacotherapy of patients, especially of those who take several different medications with many possible interactions and contraindications. Communication skills should be introduced to healthcare students in soft skills training led by specialists with different healthcare backgrounds.

We should aim for seamless care in the healthcare system. Patients have to have an uninterrupted supply of medicines and pharmaceutical treatment in the transition between different healthcare system levels.

To do our part, ŠSSF is working with an international team and preparing a Sub-Regions Project called Working with others, where the mentioned topic will be discussed. The main goal is to prepare the call for action in our environment and raise awareness about the topic in the eyes of the stakeholders (university, healthcare associations, government).

In the end, we want to say once more that interprofessional collaboration between healthcare workers is absolutely crucial to achieve the most beneficial treatment for the patient.