

Consultant pharmacist guidance

Contents

- Our work [1]
- Online learning [2]
- Health careers [3]
- News, blogs and events [4]
- About [5]
- Covid-19 [6]
- Complaints [7]

The title 'Consultant Pharmacist' was formally recognised by the NHS in 2005 in the Department of Health document 'Guidance for the Development of Consultant Pharmacist Posts' and was applicable to the NHS in England only. This updated guidance is being published, initially, on behalf of the NHS in England, Northern Ireland and Wales with an aspiration for further roll out to encompass all countries of the United Kingdom.

Since the publication of the guidance, consultant pharmacists have had a significant impact, leading on the development of national guidelines and policies and publishing research in a wide range of fields as well as delivering high-quality patient-centered care.

Changes occurring in healthcare delivery across the UK, and in the pharmacy profession, require an increase in this essential clinical and professional resource to support transformation and drive further improvements in patient care. A key driver is the focus on integrated care, delivered closer to people's homes, by an increased number of pharmacy professionals working in clinical roles, often in new settings. These new roles will require the support of consultant pharmacists that work across a healthcare system where they can maximise the impact of their expertise to improve the care of the population.

Treatments and treatment decisions are becoming increasingly complex and the development of multidisciplinary teams in community settings means the NHS is in greater need of the expertise of pharmacy professionals, including consultant level expertise for those providing the most complex care.

Consultant pharmacists also have an important role to play in the training and mentoring of pharmacy professionals as well as supporting broader workforce development to meet service needs.

In order to meet the challenges highlighted above, widespread access to clinical expertise and leadership will be required. To date, the growth of posts has generally been in response to local needs, the availability of staff and focused in secondary care rather than through a strategic approach to population health needs. New guidance will support the further development of consultant posts, creating roles that attract and retain those with the highest level of clinical expertise.

Summary of changes to the guidance

The new guidance has been developed by a short life working group with membership from across the NHS

in the UK. Working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, Health Education and Improvement Wales, and the Department of Health in Northern Ireland it reflects the changes that are occurring in healthcare delivery across the UK.

The existing post-approval requirements have been updated with a greater focus on system-wide working, additional guidance has been provided on what constitutes consultant pharmacist practice and a requirement for individuals to undergo a credentialing process in order to undertake a consultant pharmacist role has been introduced. The new guidance also supports robust assurance processes for potential employers and post holders.

Implementation of the new guidance

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society will take on the role of approving consultant pharmacists' posts on behalf of the NHS in England and Wales and the Department of Health in Northern Ireland. A consultant pharmacist curriculum and the credentialing programme have also been created. More information can be found on their website [8]. Existing consultant pharmacist posts that were approved through the previous processes will not be expected to be re-approved.

Related Documents

- Consultant Pharmacist Guidance (.pdf) 619.63 KB [9]
- Canllawiau i Fferyllwyr Ymgynghorol (.pdf) 610 KB [10]

[Return to the top of the page.](#)

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Links

[1] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work>

[2] <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>

[4] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/news-blogs-events>

[5] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/about>

[6] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/covid-19>

[7] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/complaints>

[8] <https://www.rpharms.com/development/credentialing/consultant/consultant-pharmacist-credentialing#how>

[9]

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Consultant%20Pharmacist%20Guidance%20Final%20Jan2020>

[10]

[https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Consultant%20pharmacy%20guidance%20welsh%20version%](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Consultant%20pharmacy%20guidance%20welsh%20version%20)