

Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme 2025

Guidance for contractors



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Aim of the programme

The Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme will support the growth and transformation of the community pharmacy workforce by funding a cohort of pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (PTPTs) employed in a community pharmacy.

The key drivers for developing the pharmacy technician workforce in community pharmacy are supported by the following policies and national initiatives:

- The Government's plan to reform the NHS through the 10 Year Health Plan, focusing on 3 strategic shifts, moving care from hospital to community, from sickness to prevention and from analogue to digital.
- The [Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care](#) outlined ambitions to expand the oral contraception and blood pressure services in community pharmacy, coupled with HMRC's confirmation that services provided by pharmacy technicians are exempt from VAT.
- NHS England's independent prescribing pathfinder projects: piloting innovative new services and the potential for new roles for the whole pharmacy team.
- Increasing clinical services provided by community pharmacy.
- Change in legislation enabling pharmacy technicians to work under patient group directions (PGDs).
- The need to optimise workforce skill mix so pharmacy technicians can deliver and/or support services through the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) such as smoking cessation and contraception services.

Completion of the 24-month apprenticeship programme will enable PTPTs to register as pharmacy technicians with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

Funding offer

NHS England is offering a financial training contribution of £15,053 per PTPT per year for 2 years.

This is to support sites in developing an employer-led, work-based training programme that meets GPhC initial education and training (IET) [standards for pharmacy technicians](#) and the NHS England [Education Quality Framework](#) (accessed via the National School of Healthcare Science website).

The work-based training programme will be completed alongside the education, training and assessments set by the apprenticeship provider.

This offer is available for new PTPTs only, who are not yet enrolled onto a PTPT training programme. To receive the offer, the PTPT must undertake the [Pharmacy Technician Integrated Apprenticeship](#) (accessed via the Institute for Apprenticeships website).

Payment will be made directly to pharmacy contractors via the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBA) Manage Your Service (MYS) portal to the contractor's account. Other payment methods are not available for this funding offer.

Applications will be capped at two posts per contractor, per NHS England region. The seven [NHS England regions](#) are East of England, London, Midlands, North East and Yorkshire, North West, South East and South West. If you are unsure what region your pharmacy falls under, you can confirm by checking your ODS code on the Data Search and Export website: <https://www.odsdatabsearchandexport.nhs.uk/>.

PTPTs will need to be enrolled onto and have started the apprenticeship training programme by Friday 31 October 2025. Contractors should contact NHS England if there is a recruitment or onboarding delay. Where placements have not been filled by the agreed deadline, NHS England reserves the right to withdraw and re-allocate the post.

Who can apply for this funding?

This funding offer is only available to community pharmacies in England providing services through the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework with an NHSBSA MYS account.

Contractor training responsibilities

The employer is the contractor. By accepting NHS England funding, they agree to support and provide training to an employee who is in a PTPT role, through the Pharmacy Technician (integrated) Apprenticeship Training Programme.

It is the responsibility of the contractor to:

- accept and follow the terms and conditions of the NHS Education Funding Agreement (accessed through the NHS BSA MYS portal)
- recruit and employ the PTPT, completing all the usual employment checks such as right to work in the UK and DBS checks (further information given on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk))
- provide a training contract that lasts at least 24 months
 - contract length will need to be extended if there is an extended break in learning

- please note, additional funding is not available to support extended contracts
- choose an apprenticeship provider to deliver a GPhC-accredited pharmacy technician course/qualification through the Pharmacy Technician (integrated) Apprenticeship
 - the chosen apprenticeship provider must include final accuracy checking of items dispensed by others and medicines reconciliation
- confirm with the apprenticeship provider before starting enrolment that the apprentice meets apprenticeship requirements
- be aware of and adhere to the [apprenticeship funding rules](#)
- provide or delegate supervision in the form of a designated educational supervisor, who must be a registered pharmacist or pharmacy technician
- ensure the designated educational supervisor has capacity to fulfil this role and is released to attend NHS England network meetings, which may be in person or virtually
- agree a training plan and learning contract with the PTPT and apprenticeship provider
- provide progress updates, which will be specified by the NHS England WT&E regional pharmacy team on confirmation of funding
- register the PTPT on the NHSBSA MYS portal to access funding
- update the NHSBSA MYS portal if a PTPT has a break in learning or is withdrawn from programme
- notify NHS England WT&E and the apprenticeship provider if the PTPT is withdrawn or has a break in learning due to unsatisfactory progression, dismissal, resignation, or extended absence
- provide a dedicated full day to study each week; this must be part of their paid employment and in addition to the apprenticeship funding requirements of a minimum of six hours off the job training each week. The study time can be used to complete assignments, attend face-to-face or virtual classes, complete the apprenticeship providers online self-directed learning, etc.

Training provided by the contractor in the workplace

Workplace training delivered by the contractor is in addition to the training delivered by the apprenticeship provider. The apprenticeship provider will have their own learning plan which does not cover the training you must deliver in the workplace.

A requirement of this funding is that you develop an independent training plan of work-based activity. This must include operational and patient-facing experiences that cover the GPhC

IET standards for pharmacy technicians. The training plan should detail all training delivered in the workplace, who is delivering the training and when.

The GPhC IET standards also require PTPTs to have the opportunity to work with the wider multi-professional team, to reflect the necessary knowledge and skills required of the role. This opportunity should also be included within the training plan.

Training should only begin after a workplace induction has been completed.

Training plans

The training plan should be tailored to align with the apprenticeship provider's learning plan while covering local operational experience.

They must be based on the GPhC IET learning outcomes, reflecting modern pharmacy practice and:

- cover the full training period and meet GPhC work experience requirements
- include training objectives for all areas of practice including the final accuracy checking of items dispensed by others and medicines reconciliation
- be current and fit for purpose
 - if you are using or adapting an existing training plan, it must be reviewed to follow funding requirements, and include the date of the review
- specify the area(s) of practice in which the PTPT will be working throughout the training period
- include the name and address of all placement locations where training takes place, even if these are short placements such as half a day
- set out the supervision arrangements for all training
- explain how the PTPT's progress will be monitored, and how they will be assessed
- be laid out chronologically (for example, either weekly or monthly)
- include references to resources, for example NHS England [Education Quality Framework](#), NHS England [Safe Learning Environment charter](#)

You will be required to take part in local monitoring processes as part of the contractual requirements with NHS England. If there are concerns, you may have to provide additional evidence or agree a remedial action plan with NHS England.

PTPT support

The contractor must ensure:

- PTPTs are given a dedicated day each week, throughout the duration of the training programme, to complete learning set by the apprenticeship provider
 - this can contribute towards off-the-job training
- they support the PTPT where there is an extended break in learning
 - this may require an extension to the employment contract to follow apprenticeship funding rules
- health and wellbeing of PTPTs is secured and protected by signposting for advice and support
- the PTPTs have regular documented review meetings, which include discussions around any additional support needed i.e. reasonable adjustments and enable learners in difficulty to be identified and supported at the earliest opportunity
- ensure the PTPT is released to attend NHS England network meetings, which may be in person or virtually

Facilities

The contractor must ensure that there are sufficient facilities for the PTPT to complete their training, and for the designated educational supervisor to support their PTPT. This includes adequate space, access to electronic hardware, software and appropriate internet access.

Supervision

To ensure the practice of a PTPT does not jeopardise patient safety, the GPhC states that supervision must be in place. Supervision responsibilities are stated in the [GPhC's Guidance on tutoring and supervising pharmacy professionals in training](#).

The PTPT must work under the direction of a pharmacist or pharmacy technician to whom the PTPT is directly accountable for not less than 14 hours per week.

Designated educational supervisor

The contractor must ensure that one person is assigned overall responsibility for the supervision and management of the PTPT's educational progress, workplace training and assessments during their entire 2-year training programme – known as the designated educational supervisor (ES).

They must be a registered pharmacy professional with appropriate experience, knowledge, and capacity to support the PTPT throughout the duration of their training programme.

The ES should work collaboratively with other members of the team delivering training to ensure the overall training programme meets the GPhC's standards, to monitor the PTPT's progress throughout the training programme, and seek feedback for review meetings and appraisals, and final-sign-off.

It is expected that the PTPT will meet their ES at least once a month to ensure holistic care, review progress and provide support to the PTPT.

Other responsibilities include:

- creating a 2-year training plan with set quarterly objectives
- supporting the PTPT to ensure an optimal learning experience
- supervising the PTPT's practice
- providing regular feedback based on own observations and feedback from others
- providing support and guidance to members of the team delivering training
- completing regular progress reviews and associated documentation in line with apprenticeship providers' requirements
- attendance at NHS England WT&E network meetings to engage, develop resources, learn from experience and share good practice
- review and countersign the PTPT's application for registration as a pharmacy technician with the GPhC (through the [myGPhC system](#))

Practice supervisor

During the PTPT's training, they may be overseen and trained by other members of the team, known as practice supervisors (PSs). PTPTs may have more than one PS but will only have one ES.

PSs should be appropriately trained as they will oversee the PTPT's work and provide developmental feedback. They should help the PTPT to identify opportunities for learning within the workplace and will provide supervision on a day-to-day basis.

Education training provision

The contractor must choose an [apprenticeship provider](#) (gov.uk website) that delivers the Level 3 Pharmacy Technician (integrated) Apprenticeship.

Each apprenticeship provider will have their own enrolment process, including entry requirements, assessments, and documentation.

The contractor should confirm with the apprenticeship provider, before beginning enrolment, that the potential PTPT meets the enrolment requirements, including funding requirements such as residency and VISA requirements.

The chosen apprenticeship provider must include final accuracy checking of items dispensed by others and medicines reconciliation within the 2-year training period. It is the responsibility of the contractor to confirm this.

NHS England WT&E Pharmacy regional teams can support identification of an appropriate apprenticeship provider. Contractors may use the National Framework for Pharmacy Apprenticeships managed by Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust or undertake their own procurement exercise.

Apprenticeships

An apprentice is an employed member of staff, with all the benefits of being employed, but who is also given time to study and train in a particular occupation/profession.

The government will fund employers to take on apprentices, paying for their education costs. In return, it is expected that the employer meets the wages, employment on-costs, provides practical on-the-job training, time off to study (minimum of 20% off-the-job training) and support to achieve the apprenticeship standards.

Any employer can access apprenticeship funds for education costs via their apprenticeship levy fund, or by reserving government co-investment funds, or by other organisations transferring some of their levy funds (further information is given on the [Gov.UK website](#)).

Some apprenticeship providers will help employers navigate the apprenticeship funding process. NHS England WT&E can also guide employers through this process.

To employ a PTPT apprentice, an employer must:

- create a digital apprenticeship account.
 - guidance on this can be accessed via the [Skills for Health website](#)
- choose an apprenticeship provider
- recruit the apprentice, ensuring they meet the apprenticeship funding rules

Several useful resources, including infographics and guides, can be accessed via the [Skills for Health website](#).

Apprenticeship funding rules

To access government funds for apprenticeships, apprentices must meet several funding criteria. It is essential you familiarise yourself with the funding requirements before recruiting the PTPT.

Further information on funding rules can be found on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

Application process

Application for funding is through submission of an expression of interest (Eoi). This will be independently evaluated and scored by an evaluation panel consisting of three NHS England WT&E Pharmacy team members in each region.

Each region's evaluation marking will also be sampled by one member of the NHS England WT&E national team to ensure consistency of marking.

To be considered, Eois must score above 40% of the total weighting. Funding contributions will be awarded to the highest scoring Eoi to support the allocation of 75 PTPTs per region. Eois with the next highest score (provided they also meet the 40% threshold) will be placed in reserve.

If a successful contractor is unable to recruit against their awarded funding contribution, this will be re-allocated to the next highest scorer on the reserve list.

Please be aware that you may not receive funding if other applications achieve a higher overall score, and all available places are taken despite your application meeting an evaluation score of 40% or higher.

Completing the Eoi

Only applications submitted through this online Eoi Form will be accepted (the full URL is given below).

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/healtheducationyh/community-pharmacy-application-for-ptpt-training-contribution-2>

The deadline for submission is Sunday 15 June 2025.

Applications from multiple site community pharmacy chains are welcomed but will be capped at two posts per NHS England region and not exceeding fourteen nationally.

Organisations should complete a separate EoI form for each region a PTPT will be based and provide the site Organisation Data Service (ODS) code.

Please refer to appendix A at the end of this document to find a template listing the EoI questions. It is recommended that the template is used to prepare your responses before starting your submission on the online form.

Scoring

There are 7 weighted questions that will be used to identify the strength of the EoI to provide a comparative score.

Please consider how your response demonstrates a clear return on investment for NHS England, while also providing assurance that the pharmacy has the capacity to deliver high-quality training and the necessary level of support. Additionally, explain how your workplace training programme aligns with the GPhC IET standards for pharmacy technicians, and highlight how the training you provide will enrich and enhance the overall learning experience.

The answers provided will be scored from a range of 0-5 across the 7 questions, as below.

0 – Unacceptable

- Bidder fails to provide a response; or the response is of such a poor standard that the question is not answered, or omitted; or the response cannot satisfactorily provide confidence that the bidder can meet the standards required.
- Evidence is unacceptable or non-existent.
- Does not meet the minimum requirements.

1 – Well below expectations

- Poor response, which only partially answers requirement; with major deficiencies or concerns in certain areas with lack of detail or relevant evidence.
- Little relevant data included.
- Does not meet minimum requirements.

2 – Below expectations

- Bidder provides a response that partially satisfies requirement, with useful evidence provided, but response falls short of minimum expectations; with minor deficiencies or concerns in the information provided.
- Does not meet minimum requirements.

3 – Meets expectations

- Bidder provides a response that is acceptable and meets minimum criteria.
- But the response remains basic and could have been expanded upon.

4 – Exceeds expectations

- Bidder provides a response that is comprehensive.
- Response is of a mid-to-high standard that satisfies requirements and exceeds minimum expectations, including extra levels of detail.

5 – Exceeds expectations to the highest level

- Bidder provides an excellent response that is a comprehensive and useful.
- Response is of a high standard which exceeds expectations
- Included is a full description of techniques and measurements employed that, where appropriate, provides a high level of detail.

Criteria, weighting and scoring guidance

Please refer to pages 9-12 of the [GPhC IET standards for pharmacy technicians 2017](#) for the learning outcomes linked to the questions.

Evaluation criteria	Weighting	Eol guidance – question response should demonstrate:
Person-centred care Professionalism Professional knowledge and skills Collaboration	10% for each domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the range of training activities you will deliver in the workplace by the PTPT over the two-year period to meet the GPhC IET standards. Explain how, as the employer, you will support their development through these activities, building on the knowledge and skills gained from their education provider, to help them progress toward autonomous practice as a pharmacy technician. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an overview of the local training plan to show how, when and where these will be covered. • Training activities should be tailored to the pharmacy site and reflect the services provided.

<p>Provide details of how the PTPT will be supported by your organisation to successfully complete their training.</p>	<p>25%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A culture of continuous learning, where giving and receiving constructive feedback is encouraged and routine. • What health and wellbeing support do you offer? • How will you support the study element of the PTPT programme e.g. study time allocation, IT equipment and space to study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this include progress reviews? If so, the frequency? • What other methods will you be using to meet the NHS England Education Quality Framework? • Provide an example of how you identify and support trainees that are at risk of not completing training courses (examples can include any trainee from the wider pharmacy workforce)
<p>What does your organisation have in place to ensure all staff, including PTPTs, are treated fairly, with equity, consistency, dignity and respect?</p>	<p>15%</p>	<p>There is a clear governance process to ensure concerns are raised and actions taken where necessary without fear of negative consequence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What EDI initiatives are in place to ensure the PTPT and ES are supported • How is this made available to all staff?
<p>Provide an explanation of the planned educational and practice supervision that will be in place.</p> <p>If you or the pharmacy are new to training, what steps will be taken to equip you or the pharmacy for the role as a training site?</p>	<p>20%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What structure is in place to aid learning and development at the pharmacy • What capacity is there within the pharmacy to ensure the PTPT will have access to a supervisor throughout their entire 2-year programme? • Who will be supervising the PTPT at different times within their training programme?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What experience or training do they have that meet the PTPT educational supervision requirements?
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What next

We will be holding a series of virtual stakeholder meetings to provide more information on the programme including the application process and how to access apprenticeship funding.

If you have any questions, please email your regional NHE England WT&E pharmacy team:

- East of England: england.wtepharmacy.eoe@nhs.net
- London: england.wtepharmacy.london@nhs.net
- Midlands: england.wtepharmacy.mids@nhs.net
- North East and Yorkshire: england.WTEpharmacy.ney@nhs.net
- North West: england.WTEpharmacy.nw@nhs.net
- South East: england.wtepharmacyse@nhs.net
- South West: england.WTEpharmacy.sw@nhs.net

Timeline

Monday 19 May 2025	Eol window opens to receive submissions
Sunday 15 June 2025	Eol window closes
June/July 2025	Evaluation of Eol submissions
w/c 21 July 2025	Notification of outcome emailed to pharmacy contractors
July/August 2025	Regional programme stakeholder meetings for successful pharmacy contractors
31 October 2025	Deadline for all PTPTs to be recruited and enrolled onto apprenticeship programme

Appendix A: Template for expressions of interest

This template lists all the questions in the EoI. We recommend you use this template to prepare and save responses for your submission and then copy them into the online form.

It is important that your EoI submission reflects the training and support that you as the employer will be delivering. We recommend that you do not use artificial intelligence or copy content from education providers training programmes / websites to complete your application.

Please note, that the questions in sections 2 and 3 have a maximum word limit.

<p>Introduction</p> <p>You will have to confirm you have read the Contractor Guidance before proceeding with your submission. You will also be asked to confirm if you attended one of the virtual meetings delivered by NHS England to launch the programme. If you did not attend, we ask that you share why to help us improve future events.</p>	
<p>Section 1 – Community pharmacy details</p>	
<p>The questions in this section should be repeated if requesting funding for more than one site.</p>	
<p>Which NHS England region will your PTPT based in?</p> <p>If you are unsure what region a pharmacy falls under, search the ODS code on the Data Search and Export website: https://www.odsdatabaseandexport.nhs.uk/</p>	<p>Select from drop down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East of England • London • Midlands • North East and Yorkshire • North West • South East • South West
<p>Which ICB is this pharmacy’s commissioner?</p>	<p>Select from drop down</p>
<p>Community pharmacy name and address including post code</p>	
<p>ODS code</p>	
<p>How many PTPTs are you requesting funding for this pharmacy branch/site?</p>	

<p>Section 2 – Training plan overview</p> <p>Describe the range of training activities you will deliver in the workplace by the PTPT over the two-year period to meet each of the four domains of the GPhC IET standards. Explain how, as the employer, you will support their development through these activities, building on the knowledge and skills gained from their education provider, to help them progress toward autonomous practice as a pharmacy technician.</p>	
Person centred care	
Professionalism	
Professional knowledge and skills	
Collaboration	
<p>Section 3 – Trainee support</p>	
Provide details of how the PTPT(s) will be supported by your organisation to successfully complete their training.	Max word count 700
What does your organisation have in place to ensure all staff, including PTPT(s), are treated fairly, with equity, consistency, dignity and respect?	Max character count 500
<p>Provide an explanation of the planned educational and practice supervision in place, demonstrating that you have capacity to support the PTPT, especially if you have other trainees within the workplace who require supervision e.g. Foundation Trainee Pharmacist.</p> <p>Include details of relevant education and training experience and additional information that may support learning experiences for the PTPT(s)</p> <p>If you or the pharmacy are new to training, what steps will be taken to equip you or the pharmacy for the role as a training site</p>	Max character count 500
<p>Declarations</p> <p>I declare that:</p>	

- the information I've provided is written in my own words and is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and truthful.
- I consent to NHS England Workforce, Training and Education Pharmacy Team contacting me to verify the information I have provided.
- each designated educational supervisor will be directly responsible for the PTPT(s) for not less than 14 hours per week and:
 - will be based at the same site as the PTPT(s)
 - have the appropriate skills, qualifications and competencies for their role
 - understand how to meet the needs of the individual PTPT(s)
 - be aware of the guidance for supervising pharmacy professionals in training from the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)
- the PTPT(s) will be provided with a dedicated full day out per week to attend college/ lessons and complete learning and assessments set by the training provider that is part of their paid employment throughout the 24-month training period
- the PTPT(s) and their designated educational supervisor will both have access to adequate IT (Information Technology) and access to a protected space to complete knowledge learning, reviews and assessments for duration of the training programme
- if any significant changes to the training arrangements are planned, I will notify NHS England Workforce, Training and Education Pharmacy teams. This could include a break in learning (maternity/paternity or long-term sickness over 4 weeks), or change to base training site or change of educational supervisor)
- if there is a lack of capacity to deliver training (because of long-term absence of a designated educational supervisor for example), I will develop and agree an action plan to enable the PTPT(s) to meet the learning outcomes and registration requirements
- I will pay for any additional training costs incurred
- the PTPT(s), and their designated educational supervisor, will be supported in their learning and to manage their own health and wellbeing
- designated educational supervisors are familiar with, understand and are up to date with the curricula of the PTPT(s) they are supporting. They also understand their role in the context of PTPT programmes and career pathways, enhancing their ability to support PTPT progression
- practice supervisors are supported to understand the education, training and any other support needs of their PTPT(s)
- PTPTs and ESs will be released to attend NHS England PTPT programme related meetings, which may be in person or virtually