

15 December 2021

Dear Colleague,

Re: Pharmacy Integration Programme: Education and training developments

Following the announcement of further investment in primary care pharmacist and pharmacy technician professional development last month, we are writing to share information about emerging offers and how we plan to work with our partners.

In November 2021, we announced that NHS England and NHS Improvement is investing up to £15.9m to support the expansion of frontline pharmacy professionals in primary care over the next four years, to meet the needs of patients and local communities.

Pharmacist and pharmacy technician roles have evolved significantly in response to rapid changes in healthcare and pharmacy practice and there is a growing demand in the NHS for clinical, patient-facing, accountable practitioners across all sectors.

This investment is an exciting opportunity for existing registered pharmacy professionals to access further clinical training, including independent prescribing and clinical skills. Such training will help pharmacy professionals thrive in integrated multi-professional teams across community and primary care settings.

These developments, along with wider reform of pharmacy education and training, respond to identified workforce need, supporting the need for a flexible, integrated, multi-professional workforce, capable of confident, joined-up patient care.

Programme offers

An introduction to the Pharmacy Integration Programme offers is provided below. This builds on the education and training programmes we delivered between 2017-2021 and on the [evaluation of these programmes](#) conducted by the Centre for Pharmacy Workforce Studies and their partner ICF.

These comprise further development opportunities for the pharmacy workforce, to ensure that pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and their teams are better equipped to support wider healthcare delivery and provide effective care to patients.

Please share this information with your colleagues, members and networks.

1. New portfolio recognition route and improved access to accredited courses for pharmacy professionals working in primary care:

Health Education England will work with partners and key stakeholders to identify post-registration pharmacy training offers and portfolio recognition processes within primary

care. Mapping these against existing practice portfolio recognition and development pathways will lead to:

- A formal portfolio recognition route for pharmacists contributing to primary care services in general practice.
- Expanded access to accredited training for pharmacy technicians contributing to primary care services in general practice.

The aim is to ensure that pharmacy professionals have the right post-registration training to enable confident, safe working and career development across sectors.

These new processes will enable pharmacy professionals to enhance their practice in their current jobs and improve mobility between sectors.

2. Independent prescribing:

Funded independent prescribing training will be available for pharmacists contributing to primary care, including community pharmacy clinical services, from early 2022. Health Education England will work with accredited training providers, employers and pharmacists to establish course capacity and system interest.

Increasing access to independent prescribing will boost NHS clinical capacity and pharmacists' career satisfaction.

3. Extending and expanding clinical examination skills training for community pharmacists:

Such training equips pharmacists to gather clinical information to support the resolution of minor illness symptoms, medication issues, improve history taking, deliver self-care advice and treatment for patients presenting to community pharmacies, and engage with other emerging clinical service developments.

Health Education England will work with partners and stakeholders to map current clinical examination training models against existing professional frameworks. This will help inform further provision of training to support the delivery of clinical consultations in community pharmacy, physical assessment, shared decision making and clinical reasoning.

The aim is to give community pharmacists more confidence to gather clinical information and participate in a range of emerging NHS clinical services.

4. Increasing access to educational, prescribing, and clinical supervisors for pharmacy professionals working and training across primary care:

Health Education England recognises that access to clinical, education and restorative supervision is a key challenge facing the multi-professional clinical workforce. Through this programme, interventions will be developed and tested with key stakeholders and user groups to consider how access to high quality supervision will be maintained and expanded, proportionate to workforce growth.

The aim is to support the pharmacy workforce with the required capacity and capability for the effective clinical and educational supervisors of learners.

Next steps with our partners

We are working with stakeholders across sectors to share information about the Pharmacy Integration Programme and how we can work together to develop the offers. Initial discussions are underway in forums across community pharmacy and primary care – thank you for your support and constructive feedback to date. A key question on which we are keen to hear feedback is:

What further engagement would be helpful on an ongoing basis?

These discussions are supporting us in the process of initiating procurement for independent prescribing and clinical skills training provision. We will share more information on timescales as soon as we can.

In early 2022 we will also share more information on the development of new cross-sector portfolio recognition routes and improved access to accredited courses for pharmacy professionals working in primary care, and supervision for learners. We will also share news of Health Education England's emerging multi-professional supervision programme. These interventions will improve supervision capacity, access and leadership development, across sectors.

To get in touch with us, including to share any additional feedback on how we can best engage with our partners and key stakeholders, please email: pharmacyteam@hee.nhs.uk

You can also find the latest information on the [Health Education England website](#).

Best regards



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