

This newsletter provides information about the education pathway for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians employed as part of the NHS England Primary Care Network (PCN) Contract Directed Enhanced Service (DES) Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme. The *Primary care pharmacy education pathway* (PCPEP) builds on the previous CPPE extended education pathways and aligns with the NHS Long Term Plan and the PCN Contract DES.

Newsletter 1, which can be downloaded from our **website**, has more background information about the pathway and how to enrol.

If you have any queries about the pathway that are not answered on our website, please email: **primarycare@cppe.ac.uk**

In this newsletter

- Update on the pathway
- Pharmacy technician focus
- Support sessions
 - Podcast – feature on the role of pharmacy technicians
 - Alumni achievement
- Experience of a clinical pharmacist working in a PCN – pharmacy technician focus
- IP training
- Support initiative within a PCN
- Clinical supervisor corner
 - Is training mandatory?
 - Training dates
- PCPEP employer webinar dates

Update on the pathway

Cohort 8 begins

At the beginning of the month, the 8th cohort of PCPEP started their training. Learner and Canvas induction webinars began on 1 September for the 790 pharmacy professionals officially starting.

Would applications be accepted for applicants who have been offered a PCN role but have not yet started in post, eg, working out notice?

We often have queries from employers and learners about starting the pathway before beginning a new PCN job. If pharmacy professionals are starting their job within one month of the cohort's start date, they can enrol, if there are available places. For example, if pharmacy professionals start during September, they could enrol for the cohort starting at the beginning of September. As the pathway is a vocational training programme, pharmacy professionals starting the job any later than the end of the month should apply for the subsequent cohort. There is learning they can do before starting the pathway. Please email **primarycare@cppe.ac.uk** for more details.

As part of the enrolment process, applicants must upload a completed CPPE proof of employment form signed by their new employer. If the new employer is happy to sign this form while the pharmacy professional is working out their notice, the pharmacy professional can enrol. The form can be downloaded from the CPPE website.

Pharmacy technician focus

Support sessions

In July, we set up a monthly pharmacy technician drop in via Zoom for pharmacy technicians on the pathway. We initiated these sessions after becoming aware that the role of the pharmacy technician in the GP practice is very different from hospital or community pharmacy settings. In most cases, there are no established processes in place for pharmacy technicians, and feedback from learners and education supervisors showed that some pharmacy technicians were having difficulties managing employer expectations of what they could or couldn't do. The sessions were well received, with around 60 pharmacy technicians attending. For those unable to attend, we shared a summary of discussions in a pharmacy technician forum on Canvas. We also received great feedback from these monthly sessions. The session provides an area to network, share ideas, discuss aspects of the pathway, and discuss tasks and roles in the practice. The session is a place for pharmacy technicians to also feed back any concerns they have, which has led to further support being offered.

Primary care knowledge boost podcast – feature on the role of pharmacy technicians

Pharmacy technician Laura Butroid, on Cohort 7 of the pathway, was featured in the latest episode of the *Primary care knowledge boost* podcast. The podcast is hosted by Dr Lisa Adams and Dr Sara MacDermott. Over the 20-minute interview with Laura, they gained an insight into the varied roles of pharmacy technicians and how this differs from the roles of the pharmacist. Laura showcased pharmacy technicians and the huge contribution they can make to primary care. Click [here](#) to listen to the podcast.

Gold CCG award, Pharmacy Congress Award and pending article for pharmacy technicians

Mira Makhecha is a pharmacy technician who studied through the CPPE *Medicines optimisation in care homes training pathway*.

“My name is Mira Makhecha, and I am a pharmacy technician working as an education supervisor for CPPE, alongside working in a PCN and CCG. In my previous role with the CCG, I completed the Medicine optimisation in care homes (MOCH) education pathway, which provided me with great opportunities to learn and develop a vast range of skills, particularly my clinical and leadership skills. Additionally, my time on the MOCH pathway allowed me to discover my passion for working closely with care homes to provide a holistic patient-centred approach. The MOCH pathway gave me great exposure and insight into how healthcare professionals from many different teams work collaboratively to deliver the best care for patients. I have since been able to pursue my interest in care homes further by working closely with multi-disciplinary teams.

My quality improvement project while on the MOCH pathway was implementing proxy access (online ordering of medication) in care homes in Surrey. This project has helped to enhance patient safety by introducing a robust audit trail, consequently reducing errors and medical waste. The implementation of proxy access across various care homes has proved to be a very valuable networking/learning opportunity.

A notable experience I had during my work with care homes was when I was able to put what I had learnt from the MOCH pathway into practice. I was able to play an essential role in ensuring that a recently transferred palliative care patient, from hospital to care home, did not end up back in the hospital, where the patient did not want to spend his last few days. I spent several hours resolving various issues which were not really my responsibility. Thus, I was able to form a valuable connection with the patient when discussing conducting a medication review. I ensured that end of life medicines were organised for the patient, for which the patient and their family were very grateful for. The patient was able to have a

comfortable last few days before passing away. As a result, I was awarded a Gold Award for Going an Extra Mile by Surrey Heartlands. I was also nominated and awarded as Pharmacy Professional of The Month from the Clinical Pharmacy Congress.

My journey from a MOCH learner to a CPPE education supervisor has been a truly valuable experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to sharing my knowledge and experience on what I have learnt with other health care professionals and CPPE learners.”

Experience of a clinical pharmacist working in a PCN – pharmacy technician focus

Dr Bilkis Islam-Ali (Lead Clinical Pharmacist, GPS Healthcare) who successfully applied for exemption from the CPPE pathway describes her experience in Solihull’s five PCNs. She is also an education supervisor for CPPE and will be sharing her knowledge and experiences in the blogs in this newsletter.

“I have been a pharmacist for 24 years and worked in various sectors including community, hospital, research, medicines information, NHS Direct and more recently primary care. I enjoy having a patient-facing role, but my strength is training and the development of others.

My PCN team has a diverse background (care home, CCG, hospital, community), and between us, we have a unique set of skills. This means our clinicians and patients receive the best support from us and are in very capable hands. Our role is far reaching and includes medication reviews, long term condition management, enquiry answering, clinical safety work, training peers and leading on projects such as the General Practice CPCS referral pathway.

We have been recruited as part of the PCN Contract DES Additional Roles and Reimbursement Scheme. All pharmacy professionals are enrolled on CPPE’s training pathway commissioned by HEE which aligns with the NHS Long term Plan. There is a specific vision in mind: to be patient-facing, foster MDT working, lead on person-centred medicines optimisation and clinical networking.

A new emerging staff group within PCNs are pharmacy technicians. Having worked with many excellent colleagues in previous roles, I can see the huge benefit they will bring to our teams and presents an exciting opportunity to discuss using appropriate skill mix. Activities that pharmacy technicians are already doing include medicines reconciliation, patient safety work, audits and actioning MHRA alerts. However, the role is aspirational so they could progress to medication reviews with appropriate skilling up (supported by CPPE’s education pathway) and clinical supervision.”

Independent prescribing (IP) training

It is fantastic that we have very keen pharmacists who think they can start a new job, throw themselves into multiple courses (including IP) and begin the training pathway all at once. However, this can be a recipe for burnout, resignation and stress. We don’t want to quell any enthusiasm, but learners should redirect this into getting the most out of the comprehensive CPPE pathway. There is plenty pharmacists can do without

being an IP, and we describe these in the *Pathway and role progression handbook* which is available to download from our website: www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/pathway-handbooks

We receive a lot of questions about completing IP training early in the pathway. Although we have covered this in previous newsletters, we've included a quote from a pharmacist (PCPEP Cohort 1) to highlight the issue below:

"I 100 percent advise everyone to complete the PCPEP course before enrolling on an IP course. Right up until the end of the PCPEP course I was learning valuable information that I used in my IP course, so to complete the PCPEP course first is extremely beneficial. Also, it would have been impossible to do both at the same time. This is mainly because the IP course is very time consuming! Working and IP course is a lot to do as it is, without finishing the PCPEP course as well. You want to be able to give all your effort to both courses and not split it between them."

We strongly advise learners to apply for IP training at the end of their pathway. For those whose pathway finishes around the same time that IP courses start, it is important to ensure that learners have completed the pathway first before moving on to IP. For example:

- finish pathway October – start IP January
- finish pathway Feb – start IP, March/April/May (depending on which university they apply to).

Support initiative within a PCN

If you have a new pharmacy professional in your PCN, one initiative that work well is allowing learners to shadow each other in telephone consultations, and critique/compare what they highlight in the conversation (obviously, the usual consent processes apply). This has been so popular that pharmacy professionals in the South Central PCN have created their own 'learning with peers' regular bi-monthly activities.

Clinical Supervisor Corner

Clinical Supervisor training - is this mandatory?

We appreciate that we have a range of clinical supervisors, from experienced GP trainers to those who have never supervised anyone before. No matter how experienced you are, clinical supervision on this pathway is a new role, so we recommend **all** clinical supervisors complete our training.

The two 1.5-hour online workshops help clinical supervisors understand the pathway, following on from the national pathway information webinars. In the training, we explore their role in supervision and the competency and capability of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, which will help manage expectations of what the pharmacy professional can and can't do. The second session is an assessor standardisation using a bespoke consultation observation tool.

All details, including booking links and keycodes can be found on the *Clinical supervisor* pages on the CPPE website: www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/clinical-supervisor

Upcoming dates are listed below.

Clinical supervisor online workshop 1	Thursday 16 September 12:30 – 2:00pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Wednesday 22 September 12:30 – 2:00pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Monday 27 September 7:00 – 8:30pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 1	Monday 4 October 7:00 – 8:30pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Thursday 14 October 12:30 – 2:00pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Tuesday 19 October 7:00 – 8.30pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 1	Wednesday 10 November 12:30 – 2:00pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Monday 15 November 7:00 – 8:30pm
Clinical supervisor online workshop 2	Thursday 18 November 12:30 – 2:00pm

Pathway information webinar for employers

This is a webinar for employers, clinical supervisors and interested parties outlining the PCPEP pathway. For clinical supervisors, this is in addition to the clinical supervisor training. Although there is a small bit of repetition, we advise all employers, clinical supervisors and interested parties to attend one of these or listen to a recording to get the basic information about the pathway.

They all run from 1:00 – 2:00pm. To register for an upcoming date, click on the link in the table below.

Date	Registration link
Thursday 14 October	cppe.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwsduuspz4sHNT_Dcet0wZAayOafHFXd0gl
Tuesday 9 November	cppe.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqf-2srj0qG9OkpdC7XrCwh_TQuUL5720N

If you are unable to make either of these dates, then a recording of a previous webinar is available. Please email: emma.wright@cppe.ac.uk

How to contact us

If you have any queries about the pathway, you can contact primarycare@cppe.ac.uk

Please also visit our website to find the **Frequently asked questions** documents for learners and employers, as well as the dedicated clinical supervisor pages and the pathway handbooks.