Useful apps for pharmacy

Educational solutions for the NHS pharmacy workforce
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Welcome to this guide to useful apps for pharmacy
The Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) has developed this guide as part of a series of learning and support resources for personal development.

Learning with CPPE

About CPPE
CPPE offers a wide range of learning opportunities for the pharmacy workforce. We are based in the University of Manchester’s School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and are funded by the Department of Health to provide continuing education for practising pharmacists and pharmacy technicians providing NHS services in England.

CPPE guides
We have developed a series of guides within our learning portfolio to advise you and support your learning in many different areas. Each guide covers a range of approaches to help you develop and apply key skills and techniques to your own practice.

Many of the guides provide toolkits to help you to document and plan your development, while others demonstrate pharmacy-specific situations to help you put your learning into context. Some of them recommend that you work with a mentor to support you in your development.

Our full portfolio of guides is online at http://www.cppe.ac.uk/guides.
About this guide to useful apps for pharmacy

The purpose of this guide is to support pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in their practice by highlighting some useful health apps for them to use themselves or to direct patients to.

What are apps?

(Click on the hyperlinks to read Wikipedia definitions of each term.) Mobile phone and tablet computer apps are software applications, usually designed to run on smartphones (eg, iPhone, BlackBerry and tablet computers such as iPads).

Some apps are free; others cost money (usually from a few pence to several pounds). They are downloaded from a website via an iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry or Android phone, but sometimes they can be downloaded to less mobile computers such as a laptops, or even to desktops.

Mobile apps were originally intended for productivity (email, calendar and contact databases, etc.) but public demand has caused rapid expansion into other areas, such as mobile games, GPS and location-based services. Today, there are numerous apps for services, including health.

In August 2011, the health secretary, Andrew Lansley, called for new ideas for health apps to help patients make informed decisions about their care. He also asked people to vote on their favourite existing health app. The deadline for submissions has now passed, but you can read about some of the ideas at http://mapsandapps.dh.gov.uk/.

Apps can be downloaded directly to your device and also to your PC from the appropriate websites. For example:

- Android https://market.android.com/apps
- BlackBerry http://uk.blackberry.com/services/appworld/
- iPhone and iPad http://www.apple.com/uk/itunes/

The user guide for your device will suggest sources for your apps, but you can search the internet for other websites that supply apps.
Apps for the pharmacy team and your patients

We have put together a list of apps that we think will be useful for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in their practice. Some are sources of information, some can be used during consultations with patients and some are handy for signposting to advice on healthy lifestyles and self-care.

The list is by no means exhaustive; new apps are being developed and introduced all the time. The aim of this guide is simply to bring this relatively new source of readily available information to your attention and highlight some existing examples.

Many of the descriptions in this guide are taken from iTunes and in some cases you will find more detail on iTunes. Some of the apps have been recommended by CPPE tutors but none of them are endorsed by CPPE.

The apps listed are free or are relatively cheap to download – apart from the latest full version of the British National Formulary (BNF) (see Table 1). Not all the apps listed in this guide are available on all platforms – for example, some are available for iPhone but not iPad.

We have arranged the apps we found as follows:

Table 1  Information sources for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians
Table 2  Healthy lifestyle apps for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and patients
Table 3  Self-care apps for patients
Table 1 – Information sources for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians
Here is a range of apps that, as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician, you may find useful in your practice. Most of them are free but some have a charge.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="BNF Icon" /></td>
<td><strong>BNF £2.49</strong>&lt;br&gt;This app connects you to the current online editions of the <em>BNF</em> and <em>BNF</em> for children. It does not download the content to your device.</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="BNF Icon" /></td>
<td><strong>British National Formulary 62 (Medhand) £29.99</strong>&lt;br&gt;This essential reference provides up-to-date, practical guidance on prescribing, dispensing and administering medicines. This application is downloaded on to your device and it securely enables instant and uninterrupted access wherever you are as it does not rely on a network connection while in use. The application is a single edition only; to stay updated it is recommended that you purchase the forthcoming editions as they are revised twice yearly. The next edition (<em>BNF 63</em>) is expected to be released in April 2012.</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="SIGN Icon" /></td>
<td><strong>SIGN guidelines Free</strong>&lt;br&gt;SIGN (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network) recommendations are now available on the move with this new app.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Medscape Icon" /></td>
<td><strong>Medscape Free</strong>&lt;br&gt;This app is packed with useful information on drugs (including over-the-counter and herbal medications), conditions and procedures. Another great thing about this app is its interaction checker. You can put in a list of medications and it will list all the possible interactions it has in its system – but it is not completely foolproof. Its drug reference also contains some IV compatibilities which are not available in the Micromedex app (see below). It is available for iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, Blackberry and Android.</td>
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# Mobile phone apps – a CPPE guide

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<th>App</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Micromedex Drug Information Free</strong></td>
<td>All the Micromedex DrugPoints® information crammed on your phone. The only section available in the online version that it does not have is IV compatibility. Another bonus is that you do not have to be connected to the internet to access its information. It is elegant and intuitive. It uses US drug names but, if you have used US pharmacology texts or other versions of Micromedex in the past, then this is easy to adapt to.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Top 200 drugs £1.99</strong></td>
<td>This application offers information about the most popular prescription medication.</td>
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<td><strong>Pharmacy CPE Free</strong></td>
<td>For iPhone. <em>Pharmacy Times</em> mobile helps keep busy pharmacists up to date on the latest continuing education lessons, web exclusives and highlights from the monthly publication.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pharmacy Times Free</strong></td>
<td>For iPad. <em>Pharmacy Times</em> offers relevant, clinical information for pharmacists that they can use in their daily practice, covering a wide range of topics. These include over-the-counter and prescribed product news, key articles on disease conditions, patient education guides, drug diversion and abuse, coagulation counselling, legal issues, and pharmacy trends and news. Continuing education is also offered with free lessons available on current clinical topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NHS News £1.49</strong></td>
<td>NHS News is an advanced newsfeed reader for iPhone and iPod Touch. It has a built-in library of around 200 RSS feeds dealing with a variety of medical topics in the UK, including: NHS Choices, Health and Social Care Info Centre, NHS Networks, Current Awareness Service, <em>Health Service Journal</em>, Department of Health, NHS Confederation, MIMS, Royal College of Nursing, Health Information Resources, National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, National electronic Library for Medicines, and NHS Health Information Resources.</td>
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<td><strong>New England Journal of Medicine Free (for a limited time)</strong></td>
<td>This is a great free app for squeezing some CPD activities in while commuting. You get access to journal articles that have been made available online in the past seven days, images of medical conditions, weekly audio summaries and a selection of four full-text audio reads of <em>Clinical Practice</em> articles, streamed to your phone (internet connection required) and videos (though most of these are medical).</td>
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UK_Hotline-New Free
This app provides up-to-date information on medical research reported on by popular newspapers.

Health Facts Free
Best health facts at your finger tips! This app gives you thousands of interesting health facts, smart health tips, and relevant medical statistics. Learn useful facts on diet, exercise, food, nutrition, beauty, drugs, men's health, women's health and much more. You can easily email these facts and, if you have an iPhone running iOS 4.0 or later, send them by text. You can paste your favorite health facts into Facebook or Twitter by tapping the clipboard.

Medical Facts+ Free
This app features lots of medical facts, including symptoms, descriptions of diseases, pregnancy advice and explanations of medical terms.

CliniCal Free
CliniCal, by UBM Medica, is a medical calculator app with 132 easy-to-use formulas and scoring tools for GPs and healthcare professionals. Incorporating fast data input and instantaneous clear clinical recommendations, CliniCal can help with those daily patient questions and tricky diagnosis.

Adult Drug Calculations UK Free
Use this 40-minute app to learn the formulae to calculate and administer drugs for adults, practise your skills and see how well you're doing.

Mediquations £2.99
Mediquations is easy to navigate, has over 229 calculators and scoring tools and gives you important extra information (such as how the results were calculated) and references so you don't have to blindly trust the calculator. You can even review the references for the calculators in Pubmed. It makes it easy to calculate important information, such as renal function, opioid equivalence and steroid equivalence. A negative point is that this app uses US drug and trade names – an example of this is the 'acetaminophen overdose n-acetylcysteine' and the 'Tylenol® toxicity nomogram' – both calculators for paracetamol overdose and treatment.
**UK Clinical Trials Gateway Free**
This is for patients, carers, clinicians, academics, researchers, pharmaceutical professionals and students interested in clinical trials registered in the UK. You can filter your trial search, and the information includes what the listed trials are about and the recruitment status of the trial. There is also a feedback section to help UKCTG improve the app.

**HIV iChart Free**
Use this application to search for potential drug-drug interactions between anti-HIV drugs and other medications a HIV-positive patient may be taking.

**Paediatric Emergency Drugs £1.99**
Recently featured in the *British Medical Journal*, *The Lancet* and on ITV News. The Paediatric Emergency Drugs (Paeds Drugs) app combines years of clinical experience in the care of critically ill children with hand-held technology. The app uses formulas designed and developed by the team at the South Thames Retrieval Service and Paediatric Intensive Care Unit of the Evelina Children's Hospital, Guy's and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust, London.

**Open CME Free**
Open CME is a service that provides physicians with an unparalleled, always-at-hand choice of medical education from the world’s most highly regarded academic institutions, medical societies and thought-leading educators.

**St John Ambulance First Aid Free**
Every year, nearly 150,000 people die in England and Wales in situations where first aid could have given them a chance to live. St John Ambulance is determined that no one should die because they needed first aid and did not get it. This app includes the latest first aid advice and protocols for dealing with emergency situations. It is simple to follow with illustrated guides and voice instructions.

**Meningitis Signs and Symptoms Free**
This app includes the common signs and symptoms of meningitis, what to do if you suspect meningitis, a ‘test your knowledge’ quiz, along with everything you need to know about the disease and how you can get support if you have experienced meningitis.
# Mobile phone apps – a CPPE guide

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<th><strong>Cancer Signs and Symptoms Free</strong></th>
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<td>Cancer Research UK is the world’s leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research. Our groundbreaking work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has seen survival rates double in the last 40 years. But more than one in three of us will get cancer at some point in our lives. Our research, entirely funded by the public, is critical to ensuring more people beat it. Our signs and symptoms app is designed to highlight some of the possible symptoms of cancer. When cancer is found at an early stage, treatment is often easier and more likely to be successful. So finding cancer sooner rather than later can make a real difference.</td>
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<th><strong>Prognosis: Your Diagnosis Free</strong></th>
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<td>A US medical app to help you get the gist of a clinical case study in two to three minutes. The first and only free iPhone game that lets you investigate, deduce and diagnose complex clinical cases within minutes with our fun, interactive cartoon-style narrative. Prognosis is specially designed for doctors, medical students and nurses, and each case helps you to learn or recall two or three key clinical points that can be applied in your practice. The content is modelled on real-life patients, has been checked by a panel of expert medical specialists and is based on current management guidelines. A new case is added every weekend. You do not need to update your app – a ‘badge’ over the icon will let you know when the case is ready.</td>
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<th><strong>A Level Exams Tutor – Biology and Chemistry Free</strong></th>
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<td>Want to revise what you learned at A Level? With over 600 unique multiple-choice test questions, Examstutor apps are designed to help with A Level exam revision. Instant feedback for each question helps you identify the correct response to questions you get wrong. This reinforces your understanding of key topics.</td>
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Table 2 – Healthy lifestyle apps for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and patients

Healthy living advice should be part of everyday life in a pharmacy – you can use these apps to help your patients during an over-the-counter consultation, in a medicines use review or in a new medicine service consultation. You can also signpost your patients to them to help them practise a healthy lifestyle.

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| ![NHS BMI healthy weight calculator and tracker](https://example.com/nhs-bmi-icon) | **NHS BMI healthy weight calculator and tracker (NHS Choices) Free**  
This is the official NHS app for measuring body mass index (BMI). It works for adults and children and is the only calculator that uses the Department of Health’s official measurement system. Use it to:  
- measure and track you and your family’s BMI over time  
- set weight loss goals and get tips and advice  
- do quick BMI calculations for others and share via text or email.  
**Key features:**  
- Performs BMI calculation for adults and children over two years old.  
- Tracker functionality allows you to view weight and BMI change over time.  
- Multiple user profiles – great for managing the whole family’s BMI together.  
- Performs the same calculation for children as the National Child Measurement Programme.  
- Quick calculation function – allowing you to perform a one-off calculation for a friend or patient, with the ability to share the results via text or email.  
- A helpful tip each time you enter a new weight.  
- Advice and information – whether you are underweight, a healthy weight, or overweight.  
- Reminders can be set to prompt you to track your latest weight.  
- Goal-setting functionality to help motivate you towards a healthy weight.  
- Guide area featuring health information and advice, real stories, video and podcasts.  
- Information on how BMI is calculated.  
- Ability to password-protect individual user profiles. |
| ![BMI Calculator](https://example.com/bmi-calculator-icon) | **BMI Calculator Free**  
BMI Calculator is a free application for iPhone and iPod Touch. You can easily calculate your BMI. |


http://www.cppe.ac.uk/guides
## NHS Drinks Tracker (NHS Choices) Free
Use the official NHS Drinks Tracker to quickly calculate your drink units, keep track of your drinking and get personalised feedback. A great app if you want to cut down on your drinking. The app is fast, accurate and simple to use.

**Key features:**
- Calculate the units in your drinks.
- Track your drinking over weeks and months.
- Get personalised feedback on your drinking.
- Find local NHS alcohol services.

## AlcoApp £0.69
A high quality app which produces a graph of how your level of alcohol changes with time after drink and food. Great fun in bars and a good educational tool. Uses all accepted formulas to account for known variables. Includes a huge selection of common beers, spirits and cocktails with measures set up for UK, US, and Europe.

## NHS Quit Smoking (NHS Choices) Free
Use the official NHS Quit Smoking app to help you successfully stop smoking. It provides you with a daily message to support you during the first 30 days of stopping, plus instant tips and facts at any time. The real-time counter displays the minutes, hours and days you have been smoke-free and keeps track of the money saved. A great app if you want to successfully stop smoking. The app is fast, accurate and simple to use.

**Key features:**
- Daily messages to support and motivate.
- Instant tips from other smokers who have successfully stopped.
- Facts to show the benefits of staying smoke-free.
- Real-time counter to show the time since you stopped.
- Links to real-life stories, features and videos.
- Direct line to the NHS smoking helpline.

## Instant Heart Rate by Azumio £0.69
Instant heart rate uses your iPhone’s camera to detect the pulse in your fingertip. It measures your heart rate instantly and you can see every heartbeat on the monitor.
### Table 3 – Self-care apps for patients
You can suggest these apps such as these to your patients to help them manage their own conditions.

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| ![NHS Self Care Toolkit](image) | **NHS Self Care Toolkit** *Free*  
This self-management toolkit is a simple information booklet that could provide some handy tips and skills to support people in managing their own health and conditions. |
| ![NHS local](image) | **NHS local** *Free*  
The NHS local iPhone and iPad app can help you find NHS services, such as GPs or hospitals, across England and, if you are in the West Midlands, you can access the latest health news from the region. Using stories written by NHS local’s specialist team of producers, the app has the latest on issues that will affect you and your health. The stories are updated regularly every working day. The ‘Near Me’ functionality on the app means that you can always find the closest NHS service to you, wherever you and your iPhone are in England. The app produces a series of results flagged on a map based on your location and the category selected using the scroll bar at the bottom of the screen. Once you are happy with your choice, the app offers you a phone number to call your selected service. |
| ![NHS Direct](image) | **NHS Direct** *Free*  
The NHS Direct app allows users in England to check their symptoms when feeling unwell. You can get an assessment, information about your condition and advice on how to look after yourself.  
Using 3G or a Wi-Fi connection, simply work through a clinically tested health assessment tool by selecting your symptoms and answering some short questions about how you’re feeling. Once you’ve finished, you will instantly receive advice on the best course of action and, if you can look after yourself at home, the app will tell you how.  
**Key features:**  
- Health assessment on the move.  
- A comprehensive range of symptom checkers.  
- Personalised guides to looking after yourself.  
- Option to save advice to your device. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Wellnote Free</strong></th>
<th>Wellnote has been developed by Professor Ara Darzi and a team of doctors from Imperial College Healthcare and Imperial College London. The app empowers users to take more control over their health and allows them to rate the quality of care they receive.</th>
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| **Key features:** | • *Find Services* – see all your local healthcare providers (currently available in England only)  
• *Ratings* – see Wellnote users’ ratings of the care and service they receive  
• *My History* – store your comprehensive medical history in one easy-to-access place  
• *My Medications* – record all the medications you take and set reminders  
• *Health News* – keep updated with the latest health news stories |
<p>| <strong>RxmindMe Prescription/Medicine reminder and Pill Tracker Free</strong> | This app uses multitasking to alert you every time you need to take a medicine. It allows you to enter all your medicines, set up reminders and track when you have taken them. |
| <strong>Pillboxie Free</strong> | Pillboxie is easy to use and lets you manage your medicines visually. You can schedule your reminders as easily as dropping a tablet into a pot. |
| <strong>Cures A-Z Free</strong> | Cures A-Z (US) is a free comprehensive medicine specialist. Cures A-Z shows you how to combine the best of natural and prescription therapies to live your life in optimal health. Health conditions ranging from A to Z and their treatments are presented in easy to understand language. Backed by thousands of research studies, it’s a powerful, practical, science-based health resource. Cures A-Z also teaches you about nutrition – vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, their benefits, and the recommended dose of each needed for optimal health. |</p>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pollen Forecast UK by Clarityn Free</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarityn’s Pollen Forecast app (© Merck Sharp &amp; Dohme Limited 2011). Use your iPhone’s camera and GPS feature to see the pollen count around you animated in 3D. The app offers easy access to the pollen forecast (supplied by the Met Office) for the current and following day, as well as information and advice on dealing with your allergy.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key features:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Animated, local 3D pollen count.</td>
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<td>• Local and national pollen and weather forecasting.</td>
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<td>• Current and following day’s pollen forecast.</td>
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<td>• Allergy help, advice and information.</td>
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<td><strong>HayfeverRelief £1.49</strong></td>
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<td>A quick and easy guide to help you repel the onset of hay fever, without the need for medication. This book provides a step-by-step guide to helping combat hay fever and its effects. It does this by allowing you to use your own mental abilities to neutralise the effect of pollen and other hay fever inducing agents. It uses the resources that you already have within you to help you overcome the debilitating effects that hay fever can induce. No medication is involved, as the success of the process is purely down to you following the mental steps outlined in the book.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diabetes UK Tracker Free</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The official Diabetes UK app, Diabetes UK Tracker, is designed to be quick and simple to use, taking the chore out of logging your daily levels to help you effectively manage your diabetes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IBPTouch – Blood Pressure Tracking and Reporting £0.69</strong></td>
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<td>This app for iPhone or iPod Touch users has an easy-to-use interface so that you can enter blood pressure readings then chart their ups and downs. Readings are stamped with date and time on entry and can be emailed to a doctor.</td>
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<td><strong>Period Tracker Deluxe £1.49</strong></td>
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<td>For women who are planning to conceive a baby, want to avoid a pregnancy or wish to know when their next period is due. This app calculates monthly cycles with the information you have given it and can even provide a delivery date from calculations it has made based on your monthly cycles.</td>
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References


Contacting CPPE

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Fax: 0161 778 4030

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