

## Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role learning programme

### Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

This document contains the questions most frequently asked about this programme.

- [Background](#)
- [Enrolment](#)
- [e-course](#)
- [Learning needs analysis \(LNA\)](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [Supervision and support](#)
- [Miscellaneous](#)

### Background

#### Why has CPPE developed this pharmacy technician programme?

The scope of practice for pharmacy technicians is expanding to enable the NHS to meet the needs of the growing population. This means that the NHS needs pharmacy technicians who are working in community pharmacy to be able to deliver safe and efficient clinical and patient facing services as part of the multidisciplinary healthcare team.

NHS England commissioned CPPE to develop and deliver the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme. It is designed to help community pharmacy technicians and those working in the Health and Justice sector to develop the skills and confidence to support the delivery of effective clinical services in community pharmacy.

#### What is the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme?

*Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme is a four-month long structured development programme which supports pharmacy technicians working in community pharmacy to develop and demonstrate confidence and competence in delivering services. It also advances pharmacy technicians' roles.

The programme aims to build on pharmacy technicians' initial education and training in order to advance the community pharmacy technician role and widen the skill mix in the community pharmacy team, which will increase patient access to clinical services.

The programme is fully funded by NHS England and takes a blended learning approach. It offers a mix of online learning, face-to-face and online workshops, workplace-based practice and peer support sessions.

At the start of the programme, pharmacy technicians will complete a learning needs analysis, discuss it with a CPPE education supervisor and then form a personal action plan.

### **How will the learning programme help me demonstrate that I have the competence to deliver services?**

The CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme will support pharmacy technicians to demonstrate readiness to deliver clinical services by enabling them to:

- apply the essential knowledge and skills required to deliver highly effective clinical services
- apply relevant clinical therapeutics to person-centred consultations
- use appropriate clinical assessment skills in practice
- develop their skills as a reflective practitioner and apply these to practice, particularly when new services are introduced.

### **Enrolment**

#### **Who is eligible to join the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme?**

The CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role programme* is for community pharmacy technicians who are working or locuming in a community pharmacy setting or a dispensing doctor's dispensary, and pharmacy technicians working in the Health and Justice sector.

#### **Who is not eligible to apply?**

Pharmacy technicians who are working in a hospital or primary care setting are not eligible to apply.

#### **How do I apply for a place on the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme?**

To apply for the programme, you must complete an application form on the CPPE website. In the application form you must confirm:

- you are an eligible pharmacy technician
- where you work
- you have access to a pharmacist or other healthcare professional who is able to observe and sign off your clinical assessment skills in practice
- you agree to attend the mandatory clinical assessment skills face-to-face workshop **and** the reflective practice workshop.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will receive two emails from CPPE, one confirming your place on the programme and the other inviting you to register on the Canvas course. Please check your junk folder if you don't receive this email 24 hours after submitting your application. If you still can't find the email, please contact: [info@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:info@cppe.ac.uk)

Once you have been accepted onto the programme, you will be assigned a CPPE education supervisor, who will contact you to arrange an online meeting.

### **When does the next cohort of the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme launch?**

There are no cohorts. Learners can sign up at any time and work through the programme at a self-directed pace.

The programme started in September 2023 and we currently have funding to enrol learners up to 31 March 2025.

Dates for the programme's face-to-face clinical assessment skills days are available each term at different venues across England. The online reflective practice workshops also run regularly.

### **Do I need to pay for the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme?**

No, the four-month long programme is funded by NHS England, but your employer will need to agree to provide you with the time off for the workshops and fund your travel expenses.

### **Why can't I apply for the CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme if I am not currently in employment in a community pharmacy?**

The CPPE *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme is a workplace-based vocational training programme. This means that you need to be working in a pharmacy technician role in community pharmacy or the Health and Justice sector to apply the learning to your practice, complete clinical assessment skills in practice and be signed off under direct supervision of a pharmacist or other suitable healthcare professional.

### **What learning is available from CPPE for pharmacy technicians who are not eligible for the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme?**

Recommended learning can be found on the CPPE website, on our [Pharmacy technician gateway](#) and [the pharmacy technician section](#) of our careers resources. You can find a variety of resources that will help you develop a range of knowledge, skills and behaviours on each page.

We also have several programmes that can support pharmacy technicians who are changing their sector of practice:

1. [Preparing for community pharmacy practice e-course](#)

The aim of this e-course, developed in collaboration with Health Education England, is to build the confidence and competence of pharmacy professionals who are starting to work in community practice for the first time. This includes pharmacy technicians who have just qualified and those moving into community pharmacy from another sector.

To help you reflect on your confidence and competence, you will work through the *Preparing for community pharmacy* self-assessment framework. Completing the self-assessment framework at the start of the programme helps you to identify the key topics you need to learn more about, in order to develop your knowledge and skills in preparation for starting practice.

## 2. [Preparing to work in a primary care network or GP practice e-course](#)

This e-course aims to prepare pharmacy professionals for working in general practice or a primary care network (PCN). You will learn about others' experiences in these settings and be supported to identify your development needs. The e-course is split into two sections. The first section provides background to the roles and signposts to relevant information and resources that can support you when you are considering applying for a role in a PCN or GP practice. In the second section, you will complete the self-assessment framework and use this to inform your learning needs.

## 3. [Primary care essentials e-course](#)

The aim of this e-course is to introduce the fundamentals of new roles in primary care. This e-course will cover NHS structure and primary care and offer an introduction to local general practice and care homes, medicines optimisation, medication review, prescribing and repeat prescribing, prescribing data, clinical information technology systems, audits, evidence-based use of medicines, working with the multidisciplinary team and person-centred professionalism.

## 4. [Primary care pharmacy education pathway](#)

If you already work in primary care you are eligible for the Primary care pharmacy education pathway, either because you are funded by the Primary Care Network additional role reimbursement scheme or because you can apply for one of the spare places made available each cohort to non-PCN funded pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

## 5. [Orientation to hospital pharmacy e-course](#)

The aim of this e-course, developed in collaboration with Health Education England London and South East Pharmacy, is to support pharmacy professionals who are new to hospital pharmacy practice. It helps them to identify their learning needs to ensure they feel confident and capable when they start working in the hospital environment.

### **Is this course different from the other e-course, [Pharmacy technicians: enhancing your professional practice](#)?**

The [Pharmacy technicians: enhancing your professional practice](#) also supports the development of pharmacy technicians, but is different to the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme.

The differences are listed below:

<b>Programme element</b>	<b><i>Pharmacy technicians: enhancing your professional practice</i></b>	<b><i>Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role</i></b>
<b>Main aim</b>	This e-course is to support you to recognise how your skills, knowledge, understanding and professional behaviours have developed since your initial training and allows you to provide safe and effective care to the people you serve.	This programme is a standalone course but also builds on the <i>enhancing your professional practice e-course</i> by helping pharmacy technicians to develop their skills and confidence further to deliver effective new and existing clinical services in community pharmacy and the Health and Justice sector.
<b>Audience</b>	Pharmacy technicians from any sector	Community pharmacy technicians only
<b>Format</b>	e-course only	e-course, linked workshops, education supervisor support, assessment, online support webinars

## **e-course**

### **What is Canvas?**

Canvas is the online platform that will be your virtual classroom for the e-course component of this training programme.

### **How do I access the e-course in Canvas?**

When your application for the programme is accepted you will receive two emails, one confirming your successful enrolment onto the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme, and the other with an invitation to register on the Canvas course. This invitation will usually arrive within 24 hours of your successful application.

### **Why haven't I received an invitation to Canvas?**

There are two reasons why you may not have received a Canvas invitation:

- If you have already completed a CPPE online course with a Canvas login, you will not be assigned a new username and password. Log in to Canvas and there will be a banner inviting you to the *Community pharmacy technician: enhancing your role* programme. Once you accept this, the course will be visible under the Courses menu. Alternatively, you can log in to the CPPE website and go to your learning record. Look for the *Community pharmacy advancing your role e-course* and access it that way.

- If you have not previously enrolled onto a CPPE online course and have not received the invitation email, check your 'junk' or 'spam' folder for the email. If you are still having issues, please contact us via [info@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:info@cppe.ac.uk).

### **In what order should I study the e-course?**

The e-course is designed to be completed in sequence from unit one to unit six. However, it may be necessary for you to complete unit four out of sequence, because this unit must be completed before you attend the clinical assessment skills workshop. You will discuss this at your meeting with your CPPE education supervisor and make a plan to fit your learning to an appropriate timetable.

### **Learning needs analysis (LNA)**

#### **Why do I have to complete a learning needs analysis?**

Many pharmacy technicians working in community pharmacy will have already completed additional learning and development after the initial education and training required to be listed on the GPhC register of pharmacy technicians. Pharmacy technicians have different levels of experience and competence. Our learning needs analysis supports you in reflecting on your knowledge and skills.

You will rate yourself against the course competencies to identify your personal learning needs. You will then have a discussion with your CPPE education supervisor about your learning needs, and the supervisor will help you select the areas of the programme to prioritise.

### **Workshops**

#### **Which workshops do I have to attend as part of the programme?**

The two compulsory workshops included in the programme are:

- A full day face-to-face workshop on clinical assessment skills
- A two-hour evening online workshop on reflection which will be at the end of the programme

There are also optional monthly online peer support sessions that we encourage you to attend to get the most out of the programme. These will be held at different times of the day to support as many pharmacy technicians to attend as possible. The dates are shared on the Canvas e-course *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role*.

#### **Where will the face to face workshops be held?**

The workshops are held at different venues across England. The workshops have a mixture of community and primary care pharmacy technicians and we arrange the venues based on how many people in an area are booked on this course and the primary care pharmacy education pathway. The dates and venues for the workshops are available on [our website](#) about two months before the start of each term.

## **How do I book the workshops?**

Bookings for the workshops are made through our website, and the keycodes (passwords) you will need will be available on Canvas once you enrol on the programme.

## **What happens if the workshop I want to attend is fully booked?**

Workshop places are assigned on a first-come first-served basis. We encourage you to book early for the best chance of securing a place on your preferred workshop. If your preferred workshop is not available, you will need to select another venue from the list of workshops available on the website. If you cannot attend any of the available dates, please discuss this with your education supervisor as you may be able to extend your programme.

## **What happens if I can no longer attend my booked workshop?**

Attendance at the workshops is a compulsory part of this programme. If you can no longer attend your booked workshop, you must cancel your place through your learning record on the CPPE website. This will allow you to avoid cancellation charges and then rebook for another date.

## **Supervision and support**

### **What support will I receive during the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme?**

You will be allocated a CPPE education supervisor who will contact you to arrange an online meeting of 40 minutes to discuss your learning needs.

It is important that you prepare for the meeting by completing your learning needs analysis in advance of the meeting. You will find details of how to complete the learning needs analysis on Canvas.

As well as the learning needs analysis discussion, your CPPE education supervisor will confirm all of the course requirements, help you to book onto workshops and show you how to navigate the Canvas platform.

You will also use an online progress tracker that is linked to your CPPE profile. This tracker will display your progress through the course. If you enable the CPPE viewer tool, your employer will be able to check the tracker too. Your CPPE education supervisor will explain how to enable your CPPE viewer and explain about the progress tracker in your meeting.

There are also optional monthly peer support sessions for networking with other community pharmacy technicians. These are facilitated by CPPE tutors, who ensure the sessions remain a safe learning environment for you to share ideas and experiences and to receive support.

Ideally, you should have workplace support, which includes access to a pharmacist or other healthcare professional who is able to observe and sign off your clinical assessment skills in practice. If this is not possible in your particular branch or place of work, then you will need

to arrange suitable alternative arrangements to enable effective observation of your clinical skills. Please discuss this with your education supervisor.

### **Can I pause the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* learning programme if my circumstances change?**

This is a self-directed course. If you need to take a break from engaging with the learning (for example, maternity leave, parental leave, illness) the programme will be available for you to return to at a later date.

If you need to pause your progress through the programme, please discuss this with your education supervisor or email [info@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:info@cppe.ac.uk).

### **What happens if I change employment?**

You can continue with the *Community pharmacy technician: advancing your role* programme if you continue to work or locum in England, provided you are based in a community pharmacy or Health and Justice setting.

If you are going to leave community pharmacy for another pharmacy sector soon, we advise that you try to complete the clinical assessment unit (unit 4) before you leave your community role. Unit 4 contains workplace-based activities, and you will need workplace support to complete them. It may then be possible for you to complete the programme. If you are unable to complete unit 4 in your community pharmacy role, you will not be able to continue with the programme.

If you move to a PCN ARRS funded role, you would be required to complete the Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway (PCPEP).

If you need to withdraw from the programme, please discuss this with your education supervisor or email [info@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:info@cppe.ac.uk).

### **Do I need personal indemnity insurance?**

CPPE is not an insurance provider, nor is it an expert in this field, and cannot advise on individual cases. Pharmacy professionals have a responsibility to have a professional indemnity arrangement in place, as required by the General Pharmaceutical Council. This may be in addition to an employer's policy, so you should check your employer's arrangements. In all cases, it is up to you and your employer to decide if adequate cover is in place, and you should take legal advice if you are unsure. Pharmacy insurance companies have in-house solicitors who can advise on any extra cover you may need. We do not recommend any particular insurance provider; however, the Pharmacy Defence Association is one of a number of providers and [has some useful advice](#) on its website about personal indemnity insurance

### **Any other questions**

**What do I do if my question is not answered in this document?**



If you have any other questions which are not answered in this FAQ document, please email: [info@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:info@cppe.ac.uk)

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**Reviewed by Bianca Glavin**