

PROMOTING PHARMACY AS A CAREER IN SUSSEX

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INTRODUCTION

The NHS long term workforce plan emphasises the need to expand the pharmacy workforce to address the expected shortfall of NHS staff by 2036/37. To grow the workforce, we need to educate future generations of the career opportunities available in pharmacy.

We need to act now to prevent workforce shortages in the future.

A survey conducted locally showed that **95% of pharmacy technicians 'fell into the role'** as they were not aware it was a potential career path. Likewise feedback from students included the belief that **"you need a degree to work in pharmacy"**.

RESULTS

The results of the baseline survey concluded that career promotion had happened previously to varying degrees across Sussex. It highlighted the need for:

- Event attendance co-ordination
- Sussex wide resources
- Better engagement with West Sussex.

19 staff members attended events
6 Pharmacists
6 Pharmacy Technicians
7 Trainees

All resources will be shared by both local councils with all educational institutes across Sussex for schools to utilise.

"The children engaged well, and the teachers loved it."

53%

Of career event invites **attended**.
30 16
invites attended

"Good attendance and opportunity to promote careers in Sussex"

63%

Increase in interest of T-level students

"Positive engagement, students felt well informed"

The project has been presented at several forums increasing awareness of NHS Ambassadors.

METHOD

A multi-organisational, multi-sector Sussex Pharmacy Careers Network has been created to support the promotion of pharmacy careers. The group is responsible for:



Establishing a baseline of pharmacy-related career events by surveying educational leads, identifying institutions involved, and highlighting any geographical gaps.



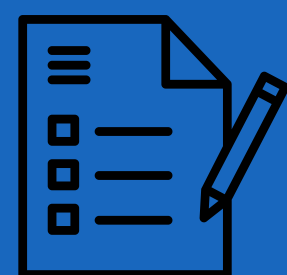
Developing a digital platform to host and distribute a variety of pharmacy career resources, including leaflets, posters, and activity packs.



Working with educational institutions to assess the need for careers resources and work experience opportunities.

inspiring the future

Encouraging pharmacy professionals to participate in events as part of their CPD and become NHS Ambassadors.



Tracking event attendance and undertake post-event evaluation to ensure fair representation and capturing engagement data.



Incorporating career event participation into pharmacy trainees' educational plans.

Since formation of the Sussex Pharmacy Careers Network in January 2025:



Sussex Pharmacy webpage created to host career resources.

Resources created include:

- Sussex Pharmacy Leaflet
- Pharmacy posters for schools & colleges.
- Activity packs

DISCUSSION

The results demonstrate a balanced involvement across professional roles and reflects moderate engagement with career events across Sussex. They suggest there are opportunities to improve participation rates in the future.

It is impossible, at this stage, to evaluate the impact on workforce numbers of the future but we can continue to capture our engagement data. We will re survey the educational leads in Autumn 2025 to measure our engagement for the 2024/25 academic year. Results will be compared to baseline data to assess engagement changes and formulate a strategy for the 25/26 academic year and beyond.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE:

- Increase awareness of pharmacy roles and the different entry requirements providing a greater understanding of the profession.
- Encourage more people to work in pharmacy, reducing the predicted workforce gap.
- Career promotion to become part of business as usual for all organisations.

REFERENCES

NHS England. NHS Long Term Workforce Plan [Internet]. 2023 Jun 30 [cited 2025 Mar 27]. Available from: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-2/>