

Upskilling the Early Careers Pharmacy Workforce – a coordinated approach



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Introduction



Nationally and within the South East (SE), there is a priority to support Early Careers (EC) pharmacy professionals in meeting the requirements of the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists (IETP) reform, as outlined in the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan.¹ As pharmacy professionals are currently not included in the NHSE Continuing Professional Development (CPD) funding offer,² NHSE SE Pharmacy Workforce, Training and Education allocated non-recurrent funding for EC pharmacy workforce to enhance their skillset supporting service transformation and readiness for expanded clinical and supervisory roles.

Aim



To scope the training needs for early careers pharmacy professionals across all pharmacy sectors in the SE, prioritising funding allocations for upskilling and development in line with service needs and transformation priorities.

Methodology



The SE Pharmacy workforce leads (PWLs) designed an MS Form to scope the EC training needs and provision of this funding.

Stakeholders across all sectors within each Integrated Care System (ICS) were requested to rank and highlight training opportunities to support EC pharmacy workforce development, maximising resources for value-based care in line with Integrated Care Board (ICB) clinical priorities.

The EC funding will be allocated to priority areas for upskilling to enhance service provision and meet the needs of our diverse populations.

The governance for this process is overseen by each ICB Chief Pharmacist in collaboration with the ICB PWLs.

Ethical approval was not required as this was not a research project.

Results



- ✓ The group **analysed the data to identify the top EC training priorities for each ICS**. These were shared with individual system pharmacy groups via their governance processes.
- ✓ Common themes included **taught postgraduate courses, bespoke and general upskilling clinical topics** such as physical assessment skills and **patient group directions** and non-clinical topics such as **leadership**.
- ✓ **A list of funded training courses was developed** to signpost stakeholders' opportunities already available. This included a generic list of funded courses for the region and adapted accordingly with local training opportunities.

Discussion and Conclusion



The scoping survey highlighted similar EC pharmacy workforce development needs. It demonstrated a lack of awareness of funded training opportunities that are already available.

Collaboration is key to utilising funding proportionately. However, there is still a need for system-specific upskilling in line with services, priorities, and ways of working. This coordinated approach ensures a 'done once and well' strategy with a clear communication and implementation plan.

This demonstrates the strength of collaborative and proactive working relationships between pharmacy workforce leads across the region, ultimately benefiting the workforce and the populations and patients we serve.

Success will be measured through several key indicators:

1. Stakeholder Feedback to assess the perceived value and impact of the funded training and development programmes.
2. Skill Development to evaluate the improvement in specific skills and competencies such as physical assessment skills.
3. Service Improvement to monitor changes in service delivery and patient outcomes that can be attributed to the enhanced skills and roles of pharmacy professionals.
4. Follow-up Survey Results to measure ongoing needs, ensuring that the funding continues to align with their development priorities.