

Early Career Framework for Community Pharmacists in Scotland

Scottish Government in circular PCA(P) 2020 (16)¹ indicated the intention to establish a National Community Pharmacy Early Career Framework. This framework would bring together the National Post-Registration Foundation Training Programme for newly qualified pharmacists currently provided by NES and the Independent Prescriber course, creating a simple pathway to maximise the pharmacists' expertise in medicines and, with the introduction of the new NHS Scotland Pharmacy First Plus service, the opportunity for pharmacists to further enhance patients' care.

Community Pharmacy Scotland (CPS) and the Scottish Government (SG) have agreed to provide funding to support the establishment of the National Community Pharmacy Early Career Framework. This funding will be made available in the form of a monthly grant to contractors who provide the support, detailed in the agreement, to each of their employed pharmacists undertaking the National Post-Registration Foundation Training Programme.

The Post-Registration Foundation Training Programme is an experiential learning programme designed to develop confidence in pharmacy practice specific to Scotland, building on the skills and resilience established during undergraduate and pre-registration training years. This initial stage of the early career framework will include progress to Independent Prescribing qualification. The Post-Registration Foundation Training Programme will require the newly qualified pharmacists to work with their Educational Supervisor (previously tutor) to identify and undertake learning opportunities and evidence competence within the workplace. The Independent Prescribing qualification is currently delivered by the two Schools of Pharmacy in Scotland². The Independent Prescribing qualification will require a Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP) e.g. qualified and practising pharmacist prescriber who meets the GPhC criteria³.

Who can apply for the Post-Registration Foundation Training Programme?

There will be up to 180 places made available each September, starting in September 2021. Intakes will consist of pre-registration pharmacists qualifying in the summer of each year who are then ***employed as a Pharmacist by an NHS community pharmacy contractor, in Scotland, in a permanent role.***

What is the training grant?

Contractors supporting their pharmacists through the programme will be eligible for a £1000 pcm training grant for each pharmacist on the programme. Each Foundation pharmacist will require an Educational Supervisor (Tutor) and both will need protected time to complete the programme requirements, with backfill funded by the associated training grant. The training grant will come with a Programme Delivery Agreement (PDA).

What are the benefits of the Post-Registration Foundation Programme to the Pharmacist in training?

- Provides support for newly qualified pharmacists early in their career
- Helps develop confidence in areas of pharmacy practice
- Helps develop resilience
- Aims to ensure that pharmacists in training develop a systematic approach to problem solving and decision making
- Enables pharmacists to experience a variety of situations, learn from reflection and improve their practice
- Provides a clear career pathway
- The Independent Prescribing qualification releases the potential of community pharmacists as medicine experts

- Increases job satisfaction
- Supports progression to Advanced Practice programmes

What are the benefits of the Post-Registration Foundation Programme to the employer?

- Increased job satisfaction and support early in their career as a pharmacist will lead to improved retention of pharmacists within community pharmacy
- Provides a clear career pathway
- Enables an increased range of services provided from community pharmacies in line with the vision for community pharmacy in Scotland

Details of the programme and support provided to all Post-Registration Foundation pharmacists and Educational Supervisors (Tutors) by NES can be found on the [NES website](#) or on the [Turas Learn pages](#).

Further information can be provided by Fiona McMillan Principal Lead fiona.mcmillan@nhs.scot or Gillian Allison Senior Educator gillian.allison@nhs.scot.

N.B. We are aware of the significant changes to IET which are planned by the GPhC and are involved in these discussions. There will undoubtedly be an impact on this career framework in time, but the consensus view is to carry on as planned, keeping an eye on national developments and adjusting our course as appropriate.

1. <https://www.cps.scot/media/3696/circular-pca-p-2020-16-national-career-pathway-and-introduction-of-a-common-clinical-conditions-independent-prescribing-servi.pdf>
2. Schools of Pharmacy in Scotland (IP courses)

[The Robert Gordon University](#)

[The University of Strathclyde](#)

3. <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/sites/default/files/document/standards-for-the-education-and-training-of-pharmacist-independent-prescribers-january-19.pdf>