**Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway**

[*Investment and Evolution: A five-year framework for GP contract reform to implement the NHS Long Term Plan*](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/gp-contract-2019.pdf) commits to grow general practice capacity through funding new multi-disciplinary roles. Under the contract, funding is made available to Primary Care Networks (PCNs) through a new Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme to recruit up to an additional 20,000 full time equivalent (FTE) posts across five specific roles, over the next five years. This reimbursement is available through a Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service (DES). Clinical pharmacists are one of the five new additional roles identified alongside physician associates, physiotherapists, community paramedics and social prescribing link workers.

Clinical pharmacists deployed in PCNs are expected to take part in the fully funded training to ensure their competence and confidence to consult directly with patients, working in a multi-professional team. This training will support them in their roles working across a PCN footprint, develop their skills, and promote pharmacy’s integration into the wider NHS multidisciplinary healthcare team. Health Education England (HEE) on behalf of NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has asked the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) to review and revise the *Clinical pharmacists in General Practice* and *Medicines optimisation in care homes* education pathways to provide primary care pharmacy training for clinical pharmacists working in PCNs, through a similar 18-month workplace-based model. The pathway has been renamed the Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway (PCPEP).

**Who is the training pathway for?**

The training is for either clinical pharmacists remaining on the Clinical Pharmacists in General Practice scheme, or those recruited through the Network Contract DES to work in GP practices across a PCN. The Network Contract DES supports the transfer of clinical Pharmacists on the Clinical Pharmacists in General Practice (CPGP) Scheme to work across PCNs and in this scenario, clinical pharmacists transferring to PCNs can remain on their existing CPGP training pathway by [applying for exemption to PCPEP through CPPE](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/exemptions).

The PCPEP training and Independent Prescribing training is funded by NHS England for clinical pharmacists working in PCNs, and will at the take approximately 2 years to complete (please refer to the section below for more details). Due to this, there are some limits on the access to this training:

1. clinical pharmacists providing short term cover will not be eligible to participate in this training offer; and
2. clinical pharmacists working in PCNs as part of a temporary arrangement between the employing organisation and the PCN will not be eligible to participate in this training offer.

**How long is the training and what does it cover?**

The training pathway is an 18-month workplace-based model, with the first learner cohort starting in September 2019. Find out more on the [CPPE website](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/pcpep-training-pathway). In addition, clinical pharmacists taking part in the Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway will be expected to complete independent prescribing (IP) training, if not already done so.This IP training will take 6 months to complete in addition to the 18 months required of the training pathway.

Over the 18-month training pathway, clinical pharmacists will need to attend 28 days of face to face events (approximately 1.5 days per month) and work through online and other learning in their own time for between 20 to 30 days over the 18 months which will vary depending on their learning style and prior knowledge and skills.

**How can clinical pharmacists access the training offer?**

To access the training, please visit the [CPPE website](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/pcpep-training-pathway). There are currently three learning cohorts for clinical pharmacists being recruited in this financial year; September 2019, January 2020 and April/May 2020. If learners miss the cut-off for a cohort there is plenty of learning they can do before the next cohort officially starts.

During the application process learners will be asked to download a form for their employer to sign. They will then upload the form to the website when the application is submitted, along with an up-to-date CV. This CV will be stored securely and be viewable by the education supervisor to help the learning needs analysis. CPPE will check the application and, after approval, the learner will receive emails with various welcome documents and a link to the virtual online learning environment, Canvas. An education supervisor will get in touch with the learner within approximately two weeks to arrange an induction meeting.

**Can a clinical pharmacist can be exempt from completing the training?**

All clinical pharmacists employed through the Network Contract DES or the Clinical Pharmacists in General Practice scheme will take part in the training if they have not already completed (or are already enrolled on) a CPPE extended pathway. However, clinical pharmacists will have a range of prior experience, training and qualifications, which may lead to exemption from some modules in the pathway. Please refer to the guidance developed by CPPE with NHSE&I and HEE in relation to equivalent learning exemptions. The document is on the [CPPE website](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/exemptions).

**Clinical pharmacist’s responsibility/commitment to the training**

1. The clinical pharmacist will need to commit to 28 days of learning time for the 18-month pathway regardless of the number of days per week they are working in the role, and regardless of whether the clinical pharmacist has been made exempt from certain modules in the pathway (there are additional clinical days that can be accessed). This is not pro rata. This is, on average 1.5 days of paid study leave per month. Please note that clinical pharmacists undertaking IP training will need additional protected time to complete this training requirement.
2. In addition to face-to-face learning, the pharmacist must commit to 20-30 days of self-directed learning in their own time over the 18 months (will vary depending on prior knowledge, experience and their learning style). On average, this is equivalent to 1.5 days of study in their own time per month. The IP training will also include additional self-directed learning.

**What is the employer responsible for?**

1. The employer must agree to give the learner 28 days of protected time for the pathway regardless of the number of days per week they are working in the role, and regardless of whether the clinical pharmacist has been made exempt from certain modules in the pathway (there are additional clinical days that can be accessed). This is not pro rata. This is, on average 1.5 days of paid study leave per month. Please note that pharmacists undertaking IP training will need additional protected time to complete this training requirement.
2. The employer is responsible for ensuring that appropriate clinical supervision is in place; within a GP practice, a GP should be providing clinical supervision, and less experienced clinical pharmacists are also supported by senior clinical pharmacists. There will be a handbook for clinical supervisors on the [CPPE website](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/pcpep-training-pathway) which will explain the role and training. There is no extra payment for clinical supervision.
3. Employers are also responsible for covering the learner’s travel and other incidental expenses associated with the training.
4. If the pharmacists on the training pathway are not directly employed by GP practices, their employers should also facilitate and enable the learners to make links with the local GP practices to access to patient records and prescribing systems relevant to the learner’s role, e.g. in the care home environment. This is subject to permissions from GPs, patients/carers and local governance arrangements. Clinical pharmacists will also benefit from being able to work with other organisations for the benefit of patients (e.g. hospitals, mental health trusts) for their personal and professional development.

**How will a learner’s training be supervised?**

CPPE will provide education supervision and clinical mentorship to learners and ensure that supervisory arrangements strongly support the educational and practical elements of the training. At the start of training, CPPE education supervisors will undertake a learning needs analysis for newly recruited pharmacists so that prior learning and experience can be considered when developing the personal development plan.

Education supervisors will be pharmacy professionals with the appropriate skills and experience. Clinical mentors will be pharmacists with relevant skills and experience. They will be available to pharmacy professionals requiring additional support.

While some pharmacists will have additional postgraduate qualifications, the content of those may not align fully with the outcomes required of a practice or PCN pharmacist. There will be no need to repeat education, but NHSE&I needs to be assured that the clinical pharmacists are competent and capable, e.g. a person may need to revisit learning (not repeat a qualification) and develop a plan and portfolio to build skills, competence and capabilities.

CPPE will work in partnership with employers to ensure strong alignment of clinical and educational supervision and will work with HEE locally to provide training for clinical supervisors.

As described in the previous section, employers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate clinical supervision is in place and that less experienced clinical pharmacists are supported by senior clinical pharmacists.

**Will clinical pharmacists on the pathway also have access to funded IP training?**

Pharmacists who are part of and engaged with the Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway have access to fully funded IP training which is in addition to the CPPE training pathway. HEE has commissioned specific IP training providers for this programme. Pharmacists whose salaries are being supported by PCN additional role funding, and employers must support clinical pharmacists to in undertaking this training.

**Further information and contact details**

Please refer to the NHSE&I website for information about [Clinical Pharmacists in General Practice](https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/workforce/building-the-general-practice-workforce/cp-gp/), as well as to the [Network Contract DES Specification](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/network-contract-des-specification-2019-20-v1.pdf) (specifically 4.5.15) and [guidance relating to the Network Contract DES](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/network-contract-des-guidance-2019-20-v2.pdf).

Information about clinical pharmacists and the Network Contract DES is also on the [NHSE&I website](https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/investment/gp-contract/briefing-on-clinical-pharmacists-and-the-network-contract-des/).

More information about the *Primary care pharmacy education pathway*, including FAQs, can be found on the [CPPE website](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/career/pcpep/pcpep-training-pathway) or by emailing [primarycare@cppe.ac.uk](mailto:carehomes@cppe.ac.uk)

Any queries relating to the training pathway eligibility criteria should be referred to [england.clinicalpharmacistenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:england.clinicalpharmacistenquiries@nhs.net).

More information about [Independent Prescribing](https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/Comms/Digital/EXMqhPrMQiVFrMsRlOVhwPwB_Z_AOVjTcL9EfZgm9Zuuqw?rtime=_a8WKwZL10g) training is on the Health Education England website.

For more information about primary care workforce development opportunities, please contact [primarycare@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:primarycare@hee.nhs.uk).

Several other national training offers are available for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. Find out more on the [HEE website](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/pharmacy/pharmacy-training).