25 September 2026 (#14)

## Have you seen the latest Pharmacy News bulletin from WT&E?

**This edition includes key updates on pharmacy technician training and foundation year support.**

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**Wednesday 23 September 2026**

In this issue:


**Welcome from the Pharmacy Deans**

1. The Pharmacist Enhanced Practice Pathway Pilot is open!
2. Welcome to the 2026/27 Foundation Trainee Pharmacist cohort

3. First cohort of Pharmacist independent prescribers joins the register
4. NETS 2025 results and NETS 2026 launch
5. 824 Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship places awarded across England
6. Independent Prescribing training: funded places available
7. Teach and Treat 2026/27 - driving pharmacy transformation
8. New Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Standards approved
9. Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey 2026 now open
10. Inclusive leadership educator resources

## Welcome from the Pharmacy Deans

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the autumn edition of the NHS England Pharmacy Newsletter.

Thank you to employers, training providers, educators and supervisors for your continued support of pharmacy education and workforce development.



Together, we have reached a landmark moment as the first cohort of Foundation Trainee Pharmacists trained under the 2021 standards joins the GPhC register as pharmacists and independent prescribers.

We also welcome the 2026/27 Foundation Trainee Pharmacist cohort and all new trainees entering the profession.

Attention now turns to the next phase of reform; the new initial education and training standards for pharmacy technicians, which will strengthen professional capability, make better use of skill mix and support high-quality patient care.

This edition highlights key workforce development initiatives, including the Pharmacist Enhanced Practice Pathway pilot, Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme, Teach and Treat Programme, funded independent

prescribing courses, and forthcoming workforce and education surveys. We also showcase a new inclusive leadership resource to support positive learning cultures.

As we look ahead, we remain excited by the opportunities these developments bring for patients, learners and the wider profession. Thank you for your continued partnership, dedication and leadership in helping to build a skilled, confident and compassionate pharmacy workforce for the future.

With best wishes,

Atif Shamim – Pharmacy Dean, London

On behalf of all the Pharmacy Deans: Jane Brown, Leanne Clews, Paul Duell, David Gibson, Nick Haddington, Kat Hall and Atif Shamim

# 1. The Pharmacist Enhanced Practice Pathway Pilot is open!

Applications are now open for the Pharmacist Enhanced Practice Pathway (PEPP), a new NHS England-funded pilot designed to support newly qualified pharmacist prescribers as they transition into practice.

Developed in collaboration with NHS England, the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the pathway provides structured learning, educational supervision, workplace development opportunities and an e-portfolio aligned to the enhanced curriculum.

The pilot is open to pharmacists who join the register as independent prescribers and provide NHS services in any sector. A total of 1,200 places are available across two cohorts.

CPPE is responsible for delivering the educational content and managing applications. If you or colleagues are eligible, visit the CPPE website to find out more and apply.

# 2. Welcome to the 2026/27 Foundation Trainee Pharmacist cohort



A warm welcome to the 2026/27 cohort of foundation trainee pharmacists as they begin the next stage of their professional journey.

The NHS England Foundation Trainee Pharmacist Programme provides structured workplace training, supported by designated supervisors, a mandatory core training course, an NHS England e-portfolio and a practice-based assessment strategy, to help trainees develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for registration.

We encourage all trainees to check our website to familiarise themselves with the programme requirements, available learning resources and support services, before they start. We wish the 2026/27 cohort every success and look forward to supporting them throughout their foundation training year.

## 3. First cohort of pharmacist independent prescribers joins the register

We would like to celebrate the 2025/26 cohort of foundation trainee pharmacists as they join the register and begin their careers as pharmacists.

For the first time, graduates who completed their training under the General Pharmaceutical Council's 2021 Standards for the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists will enter the register as independent prescribers.

This marks a significant milestone for the pharmacy profession, and we congratulate these pioneering pharmacists on their achievement.

We would also like to thank employers, Designated Supervisors and Designated Prescribing Practitioners across the country who have supported this cohort throughout their foundation training year. Your commitment has been instrumental in helping them reach this milestone.

## 4. NETS 2025 results and NETS 2026 launch

Thank you to everyone who took part in the National Education and Training Survey (NETS) 2025. Strong response rates helped provide valuable feedback on the quality of education and training experiences across healthcare learning environments.

NETS 2026 is expected to open in autumn 2026. We encourage all eligible learners and educators to take part and help shape the future of healthcare education and training.

Find out more on the NHS England website.

## 5. 824 Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship places awarded across England



We are pleased to announce that 824 places have now been awarded through the Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme 2026, representing a significant investment in developing the future pharmacy technician workforce and strengthening capacity within community pharmacy teams.

Community pharmacy contractors across England are now recruiting and enrolling pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (PTPTs) onto GPhC-approved qualifications. We would like to thank all participating contractors for their commitment to supporting the next generation of registered pharmacy technicians.

A reminder that all PTPTs must be enrolled with an approved course or qualification provider by 30 September 2026. We look forward to sharing further updates as the programme progresses.

## 6. Independent Prescribing Training: funded places available

Applications for NHS England-funded independent prescribing courses are open for cohorts starting up to March 2027.

Pharmacists from all sectors, including community pharmacy and locum pharmacists, are encouraged to take advantage of this fully funded opportunity to gain their independent prescribing qualification.

View the list of approved course providers on the Approved Suppliers List.

Don’t miss out. Check your eligibility and apply now.

## 7. Teach and Treat 2026/27 - driving pharmacy transformation



The Teach and Treat programme builds on successful regional pilot projects, with bids for 2026/27 currently under evaluation.

The programme supports community pharmacists to undertake independent prescribing training in supervised clinical learning environments, while increasing access to Designated Prescribing Practitioners (DPPs) and developing sustainable supervision capacity for the future.

Working through regional delivery partners, Teach and Treat aims to strengthen the community pharmacy workforce, expand independent prescribing capacity, and support the development of new clinical roles. The programme will also help improve patient access to care by creating lasting prescribing and supervision infrastructure across local healthcare systems.

## 8. New Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Standards approved

The review of the Initial Education and Training (IET) standards for pharmacy technicians has reached an important milestone, with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) approving new standards following a public consultation that attracted more than 880 responses.

Key changes include raising the minimum qualification level from Level 3 to Level 4, making final accuracy checking a core competency for all trainees, introducing a science entry requirement, and retaining the minimum two-year training period.

Following stakeholder feedback, implementation has been extended to autumn 2029 to allow time for apprenticeship development and provider transition. NHS England has contributed throughout the review process to help ensure the new standards support patient care, professional development and a sustainable workforce pipeline.

Find out more on the GPhC website.

## 9. Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey 2026 now open




The Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey 2026 opened to all NHS community pharmacy contractors on 14 September 2026.

Commissioned by NHS England and delivered by the NHS Business Services Authority, the survey is an important part of the community pharmacy regulatory framework and plays a vital role in informing workforce planning and future investment decisions.

NHS England would like to thank pharmacy contractors for continuing to provide accurate and consistent workforce data. Results from the 2025 survey were published in May 2026.

The 2026 data will be collected via an online survey which can be accessed by logging into the NHSBSA's Manage Your Service (MYS) portal. For help with submissions, contact the NHSBSA at pharmacysupport@nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

Find out more about the survey on NHS England's website.

## 10. Inclusive leadership educator resources

Commissioned by the NHS England National Workforce Training and Education Directorate EDI Team and led by the University of the West of England Bristol, two free one-hour learning resources have been designed to support clinical leaders and educators.

Developed through national collaboration with clinical leaders and informed by subject expertise, lived experience and inclusive learning design, the online resources will enable understanding of workforce inequalities and develop inclusive leadership practice that supports equity, wellbeing and high-quality care. Access the resources via the NHS learning hub.

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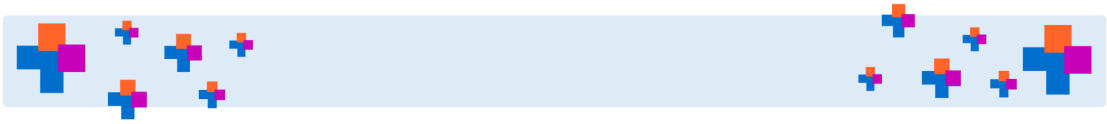
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**Community Pharmacy Birmingham & Solihull**

Representing community pharmacy contractors across Birmingham and Solihull in partnership with the NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board and nationally with Community Pharmacy England.

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