

# Pharmacists in GP Practice

## An Evaluation of the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Education and Training Programme for a New Career Pathway

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### Background

Scottish Government funded 140 whole time equivalent pharmacists employed to work in general practice between 2015-18 in NHS Scotland Health Boards. NHS Education Scotland (NES) Pharmacy was tasked with providing educational support for these pharmacists.

A learning pathway was developed including e-learning resources, national webinars, completion of an advanced practice competency and capability framework and national multi-professional face to face training events. Event delivery was based on a bespoke training needs analysis and these were delivered as a residential 2 day event with a follow up day at 6 months (Bootcamp -T1&T2,T3).

### Aim

To assess the training needs and educational support provision for pharmacists newly employed to work in general practices across Scotland.

### Methods

Data was collected via:

- pre event delegate reflection forms recording anxieties, professionally satisfying work activities and actual work undertaken to date
- online evaluation questionnaires post training events assessing satisfaction with content and format of training and additional training needs. Self-scored competence in the role and dealing with patients. Confidence working within the GP team and management skills were also assessed
- follow up online questionnaire assessing developing practice at 12 months

Statistical analysis (Wilcoxin) compared scores over time. Qualitative content analysis was applied to reflection forms. Predictors of self-assessed competence in the role and experience, demographics and training variables were explored through ordinal logistic regression.

### Outcomes

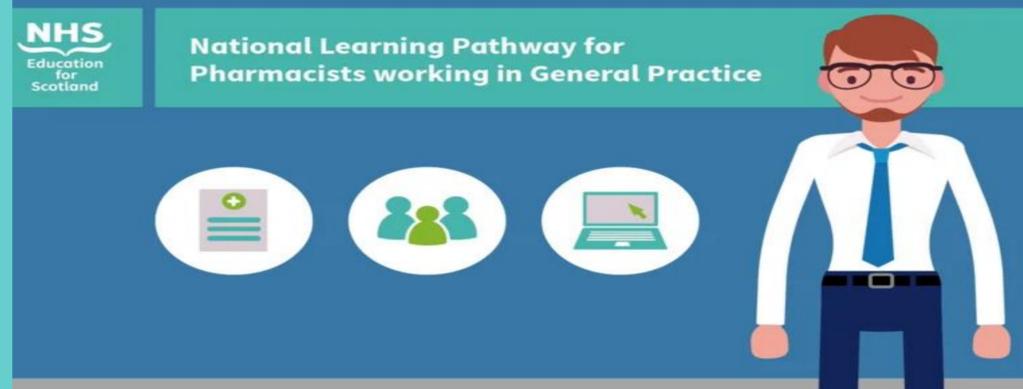
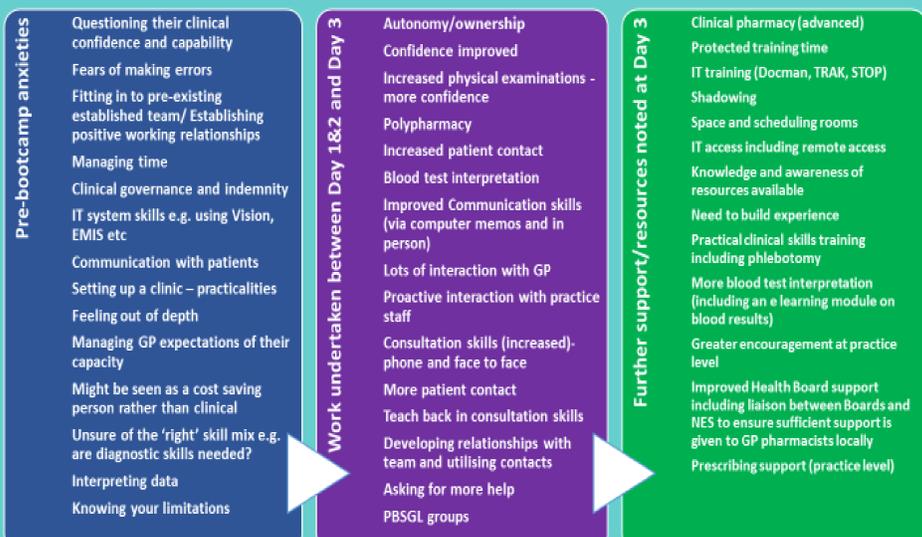
131 of 135 pharmacists completed T1&T2, T3 training evaluation questionnaires (97%) over three cohorts. Format and content of training was well received. Three main themes from content analysis:

- Clinical and consultation skills
- Teamwork and support
- Management and systems

Clinical and consultation skills were most frequently identified as professionally satisfying however management and systems dominated the job role at this point. The diagram below presents the support needs during the learning pathway.

Future training topics identified included more blood test interpretation, clinical cases studies and clinical and consultation skills. Involvement of experienced prescribing pharmacists as well as GPs, practice managers and nurse practitioners was valued.

Support Needs identified during The Learning Pathway issues below in order with most frequent at the top



### Development of Competence and Confidence

There were significant increases in competence in role (p=0.006); dealing with patients (p=0.007), confidence working with GP team (p=0.016) and management (p=0.007) for cohort 1 at 12 months.

There were significant increases for cohorts 2 & 3 across all four questions between T1&2 and 12 months as displayed in the table below.

	Comparison of T1-T2 and T3 p value	Comparison of T1-T2 and 12 months p value
<i>How competent do you feel undertaking your role within General Practice on a day to day basis?</i>		
Cohort 1		0.003*
Cohort 2	0.006*	<0.001*
Cohort 3	0.038*	<0.001*
<i>How confident do you feel working with other members of the general practice healthcare team?</i>		
Cohort 1		0.016
Cohort 2	0.093	<0.001*
Cohort 3	0.983	<0.001*
<i>How competent do you feel in dealing with patients in General Practice?</i>		
Cohort 1		0.007*
Cohort 2	0.367	0.003*
Cohort 3	1.0	<0.001*
<i>How confident do you feel in your day to day management skills within general practice?</i>		
Cohort 1		0.007*
Cohort 2	0.358	0.002*
Cohort 3	0.125	<0.001*

### Direct quotes from open questions explained the increased competence

Experience, bootcamps, Independent Prescribing course, increased clinical knowledge

Attending training events, peer interaction, competency framework, 1:1 meetings with line manager

### Predictors of Self-Assessed Competence (Logistic Regression)

Rated scores to the question "How competent do you feel undertaking your role within general practice on a day to day basis" was used in the regression model.

- Age groups 1 (20-29years) and 2 (30-39years) rated themselves significantly less competent than those over 50 years.
- Qualified Independent Prescribers (IP) or those undertaking the IP course, rated themselves significantly more competent than those with no IP qualification or training.
- Those who received Health Board training and support by T3 rated themselves significantly more competent than those with no Health Board training/support.

### Conclusion

- Early, active support from Health Boards and GP practices enabled pharmacists to grasp general practice management and systems at an early stage. This allowed focus on clinical and communication tasks.
- Being an Independent Prescriber (or working towards this) is essential for the development of competence in this role for pharmacists.