Introduction from Sue Ambler, Head of Education and Training

Welcome to the first edition of Health Education England’s pharmacy education reform newsletter. Our role is to support the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public of England by ensuring that the pharmacy workforce of today and tomorrow has the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours, at the right time and in the right place.

As a trained pharmacist, I know how important Health Education England’s work is to the continued delivery of the high standards expected of our healthcare service. We want to ensure that not only will pharmacists of the future be better prepared to meet the increasing demands placed on them but that the process to get them there is streamlined and efficient.

As we move towards working in multidisciplinary teams, we want to support development of our current workforce whilst striving for positive change in how we educate and train the future of the profession. This newsletter provides the latest updates on our work, and outlines our vision for the future.

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E-portfolio and pharmacy competency panels

From trainee pre-registration pharmacists feedback, and from our own experience, we recognise the current paper based portfolio system’s in need of reform. We are currently investigating whether an e-portfolio system could provide a recording system which is portable, flexible, paperless and easily accessible that also ensures the authenticity of the work submitted. We also want to ensure that the system allows tutors to track their trainee’s progress and provide support when needed.

To test the feasibility, we are conducting an initial e-portfolio discovery phase, involving over 100 pre-registration pharmacist students across hospital and community pharmacy. A proportion of these pre-registration pharmacist students will have their e-portfolio submitted to a pharmacist competency panel for a final assessment, chaired by senior pharmacists. This will allow us to test the process and whether it adequately supports tutors and trainees, helping to standardise the training received.

Independent prescribing

Being an independent prescriber allows a pharmacist to make more proactive clinical decisions for the patient. To support this, we are commissioning courses throughout the country.

Access to these courses is always popular, so if you are interested, we would always recommend early enquiries and timely applications. To find out more information on how to apply, contact your local office.

Pre-registration tutor training

Last year, our programme board, run jointly with the Department of Health, agreed that pre-registration pharmacist tutors needed to be better supported across a range of practice settings. In order to see how training for tutors can be accessed across the wider pharmacy workforce, pilots have been established across 7 of our local offices.

An evaluation is also being performed to identify the impact of the training routes delivered by the pilots.

We will use this evidence to inform the options for supporting tutors going forward and to refine how training is accessed.

Workplace based assessments

Work Based Assessments or supervised learning events are increasingly being adopted across pharmacy practice, presenting opportunities to underpin pre-registration pharmacist training. Keele University supported by HEE have embarked on a new and exciting piece of research to determine the design, feasibility and viability of these potential tools. See the CPD4ALL website for further information.

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Recruitment and selection
From 2017, Oriel will be used by applicants to apply to all hospital pre-registration training posts and for community posts for community employers who wish to opt in, allowing one system to be used for recruiting to posts across all sectors of pharmacy. Through Oriel, applicants will be able to apply, book interview slots and be sent offers/relevant communications via one system.

Advanced clinical practice
Many pharmacists, along with other professions such as nursing and allied health professions practise at an advanced level of clinical practice. They have developed the skills and knowledge to allow them to take on advanced roles and scope of practice caring for patients. We are undertaking work to deliver a single, nationally agreed definition for advanced clinical practice including Pharmacy and a clear career pathway into and within the role.

Through the development of a competencies framework we want to ensure that there is national consistency that can be understood by colleagues, employers and patients. This will provide current and future guidance and principles for those working or wishing to work at an advanced level of practice.

Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education
The Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE)’s website offers a wide range of opportunities and resources to all pharmacists and the pharmacy workforce.

CPPE currently supports clinical pharmacists as part of the NHS England phase 1 general practice programme comprising of induction blocks, study days, education and clinical supervision, assessment stages and self-directed learning. Other learning and development work streams include:

- Providing training on consultation skills for pharmacy practice with learning resources on supporting consultations with children, people living with mental health issues, people with dementia and physical disabilities.

- Releasing new learning programmes including a self-study programme on learning disability and the role of pharmacy and a series of eighty national events on epilepsy using our focal point format.

- Supporting roll out of Summary Care Records implementation in community pharmacy through online learning (26,000 pharmacy professionals have accessed it) and online assessment connected to access of SCR via NHS Digital.

More information can be found at on their website.

Stay in touch
Contact us via email or stay up to date via our website.

Or come and see us at the Clinical Pharmacy Congress on 12 and 13 May 2017 at the Excel London.

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