



## APTUK position statement on the Home Office Earned Settlement Consultation and the Skilled Worker Route for Pharmacy Technicians

### The Home Office's current Earned Settlement consultation and the proposed changes to settlement timelines for Skilled Workers.

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Pharmacy technicians are regulated, patient-facing healthcare professionals who deliver essential services across community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, GP practices, integrated care systems and wider NHS pathways. Their role is critical to delivering safe, effective, and accessible care for patients, and their contribution is central to achieving the ambitions of the national 10 year health plan, particularly in relation to improving access to primary care, reducing avoidable health inequalities, and supporting sustainable workforce models across the health system.

The consultation proposes extending the qualifying period for settlement from the current five years to ten or even fifteen years for many medium-skilled occupations, including pharmacy technicians. APTUK has significant concerns that this change presents a material workforce risk for the pharmacy sector.

Pharmacy technicians on Skilled Worker visas make a sustained, long-term contribution to public service delivery. However, they are unlikely to meet higher income thresholds that allow accelerated settlement in other sectors. Extending settlement requirements would:

- **Undermine efforts to recruit and retain skilled pharmacy technicians at a time of acute workforce pressure**
- **Increase turnover and recruitment costs for employers across all pharmacy settings**
- **Reduce continuity of care for patients and communities**
- **Create incentives for skilled individuals to leave the sector for roles with more favourable settlement pathways**

This would have direct consequences not only for pharmacy employers, but most importantly for patient access to safe, essential healthcare services.

APTUK therefore supports the retention of a five-year settlement route for pharmacy technicians, either through:

Designation as a specified public service occupation, or an equivalent earned-reduction mechanism that recognises their ongoing public service contribution

We believe this approach is necessary to protect the stability of the pharmacy workforce, safeguard patient access to care, and ensure the long-term sustainability of pharmacy services across the UK.

APTUK stands ready to continue working with employers, professional bodies, and government to ensure that immigration policy supports rather than undermines the future of the pharmacy technician profession and the vital care our members provide.

Kind regards

Amy Laflin – APTUK President

On behalf of the APTUK Executive Committee