

# PTJ

Journal of the Association  
of Pharmacy Technicians  
United Kingdom

Post  
Conference  
Edition



## Celebrating Success

- Annual Awards
- Conference Specialist Sessions: updates
- Meet Your Members





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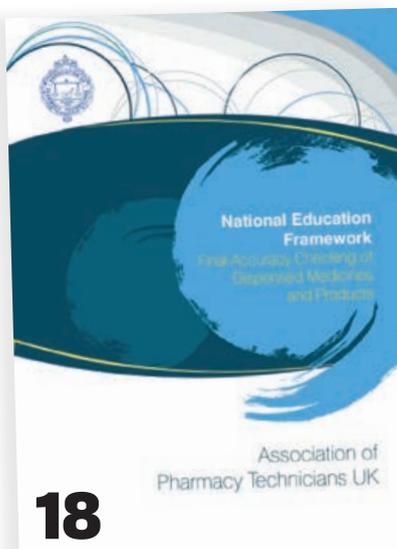
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KAY MORGAN FAPharmT – Editor  
editor@aptuk.org

# Association of Excellence

**Welcome to this BUMPER edition of the PTJ. The clocks went back recently, and nights are getting darker, hopefully you will have had your flu vaccination in preparation for the winter season that is almost upon us. Page 27 provides information on Cold and Flu and how you can access new short and to the point training resources.**

This post conference edition contains updates from some of the plenary and specialist sessions so whether you attended conference or not there should be new information for you. Conference articles start how the conference ended with a taster of the results from the Membership Survey, more information will be available via Social Media and in future PTJs so watch this space.

Liz celebrates at conference with the many award winners and gives tips on how you can nominate for 2020. It's never too early to start thinking about the work you are doing and how it can be celebrated and shared. Ellen tells us how she is keen to ensure we share at a national level. She explains the importance of the UK in the Association, it's just as important as the pharmacy technician title in the middle of our A-PT-UK. So much so there are new home countries national officers to introduce you to on pages 28/29. We look forward to hearing updates from them in future editions.

So much was packed into the 1-hour specialist sessions at conference. You can tell by the summaries throughout the edition given by the national officers who chaired sessions and supported speakers, a busy few days for all involved. But there was still time to celebrate success at the award ceremony. Our worthy award winners are featured in this edition, not only who and what was won, Andrea has provided valuable information on why the awards were won. This should help anyone considering nominating colleagues or themselves in the future you never know where this might lead to. On p42 Alethea, a 2018

award winner shares the work she has been involved in since winning a year ago.

The bursary award winners have been feeding back and sharing their experiences and encouraging you all to attend next year's conferences. Yes conferences, read Liz Fidler's address for some exciting news and save the dates for 2020. The bursary award articles all give very different and personal views on conference. A first timer PTPT reminds us of the professional standards and provides her account of how the conference helps us all meet the standards and how we can use the evidence for revalidation. A branch committee member nominated by her branch has taken back information for the branch AGM and celebrating pharmacy technician day. They give thanks to our sponsors and those who hosted stands and submitted posters for the conference, you have all inspired the bursary winners and I'm sure the attendees at the event. Check out the webpage, member's section for conference presentations, posters and photos.

There is still space in this double issue for other members to describe their advanced practice roles. We have tried a new format of a Meet the Member Q+A. Please let us know if you would like to see more of this type of feature. The PTJ is your journal and we would like to know what you want, so please do get in touch with your feedback either directly or via your branches.

Branches also feature, Kate Preston gives information on the new technical services branch, and Kent share a novel way of increasing coverage over remote and rural areas. If you have any other suggestions, please submit articles for future editions. Timelines for 2020 editions are printed below, the editorial team are available to help and guide you if required. You can contact us by email or you may have seen editor has a new twitter account @EditorAPTUK1.

So grab yourself a cuppa and get comfortable we have lots of interesting articles, news and photos for you.

## Legal Disclaimer

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## PTJ 2019/20 Timeline

Edition	Copy deadline
Spring 2020	24th February 2020
Summer 2020	19th June 2020
Autumn 2020	11th September 2020

Follow all activities of APTUK on social media: Twitter - @APTUK1  
Facebook - APTUK.ORG  
Keep up with all the news and info on APTUK's 2019 conference and awards by using the twitter hashtag #APTUK19

## Author and reviewer guidelines

Full instructions are available online at [www.aptuk.org](http://www.aptuk.org). Articles must be submitted electronically to [editor@aptuk.org](mailto:editor@aptuk.org). Authors are required to transfer copyright in their work to the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK.

Subscription available on request. For more information contact [membership@aptuk.org](mailto:membership@aptuk.org)



**LIZ FIDLER FAPharmT – APTUK President**  
[president@aptuk.org](mailto:president@aptuk.org)

## President's Address

**Reflecting on an amazing conference and the wonderful atmosphere has almost left me wordless! But you will be pleased to read that's not the case for others, as the quality and quantity of articles flooding into APTUK have meant we are pleased to offer our members a DOUBLE issue.**

One issue just isn't enough to showcase the work undertaken by pharmacy technicians (PTs)!

So please settle down to read all the amazing updates and enjoy all that it means to belong to a truly wonderful profession. There were so many posters and sessions highlighting innovative practice, I truly believe that it would be impossible to pick a favourite. Please do point non-member PTs and healthcare professionals in the direction of the PTJ, it's a great place to spread innovative practice and champion the role.

If you were unable to attend conference this year, I hope this journal provides you with the information to encourage attendance at one of our national events next year! I would encourage you to share with employers and link into your appraisals and development plans now, so that you can secure funding. Of course, I am hopeful that APTUK can offer some bursary places, but I was overwhelmed by how many PTs self-fund to attend the only pharmacy technician conference run for PTs by PTs!

Having said that we had our largest attendance by those who cannot be members. This is truly encouraging and a reflection that everyone really does want to know more about our profession and what we can add.

Also, I must thank again delegates who attended from Iceland and New Zealand – winners of the longest commute!

### Dates for your diary

Having listened to feedback from the membership analysis survey, APTUK will be providing 3 opportunities in the next financial year for you to engage with us and celebrate the profession's innovative critical practice contributions. So please pencil these dates below into your diaries and let non-members know as we will be running an event to showcase what we are about at Clinical Pharmacy Congress.

- **4th April 2020 – Membership Business Meeting (members only) and Showcase event** – FREE for members £48 for non-members (refundable upon joining, membership criteria must be met) – London venue.

- **5th and 6th June 2020 – APTUK Pharmacy Technician Conference at Clinical Pharmacy Congress** – Excel Centre, London – FREE for all to attend.
- **12th and 13th November 2020 to be confirmed – 64th APTUK Annual Conference and Awards Dinner** – Birmingham, £tbc. Look out for a fresh programme of events not to be missed....

All these events will provide current updates on key policy and strategy PLUS have innovative pharmacy technician leaders deliver sessions linked to their areas of specialist practice.



### Recognition, Recognition, Recognition

My absolute highlight of conference is the Awards Dinner. Nobody knows how to celebrate success with peers than pharmacy technicians! My heartfelt congratulations to all those who were nominated or received awards on the night, be proud and let everyone know...

It's never too early to start thinking about awards and recognition for your work for nomination in 2020. Please note that you can nominate yourself and you shouldn't shy away from doing so! My tip is to make sure you apply for the correct category and check the criteria. I hope that we are recognising and celebrating you or a colleague's success in November 2020.

The next PTJ edition will be in Spring 2020, I look forward to updating you on some more outcomes that we as your professional leadership body have led on your behalf.

I hope you enjoyed celebrating Pharmacy Technician Day 2019, I am looking forward to 2020 the year of the pharmacy technician....

**Very best wishes**  
**Liz**



ELLEN WILLIAMS FAPharmT – Vice President APTUK  
[vicepresident@aptuk.org](mailto:vicepresident@aptuk.org)

## Putting the UK into APTUK!

**The last time you were asked to learn a new skill, implement a new system or roll out a new service to meet the needs of your organisation, local healthcare system or NHS policy/recommendations etc; did you stop to consider how this change or development might be being implemented in one of the other Home Countries across the UK? Was there a point where you might have considered if this had been tried anywhere else across the UK? Was there anything you could learn from lessons learned across the borders?**

Wherever you work in the United Kingdom, your focus is inevitably going to be on the workforce needs of your home country. So how can we, as the Professional Leadership Body for pharmacy technicians, ensure that any professional developments across our workforce benefit from an understanding of innovation and initiatives being delivered in each of the Home Countries and that any developments that APTUK lead on are truly representative of the profession across all sectors and across the whole of the UK?

### How do we ensure the UK is represented in APTUK?

The APTUK Partners Engagement Group (PEG) has evolved from our former APTUK Advisory Group.

This group consists of senior representatives from key stakeholders and partner organisations across all sectors of pharmacy and from across all the Home Countries.

Each member of the group provides specific expertise which ensures all APTUK workstreams are relevant across the sectors and reflect current UK wide national pharmacy policy and practice.

To ensure the outputs of any workstreams continue to meet the agreed objectives, the Partners Engagement Group supports any APTUK projects through the nomination of representatives for more focussed task and finish groups.

All outputs of any agreed APTUK workstreams are then presented to the group for discussion and approval that they reflect the needs of the pharmacy technician workforce across the sectors and across the UK.

Overall governance of any education initiatives is provided through APTUK membership of the national Education Governance Oversight Board. This

provides an additional strategic opportunity to ensure that pharmacy technician strategy and policy is embedded.

We have been delighted with the support APTUK have received from the members of this group. With 25 organisations represented around the table it truly does demonstrate a Partners Engagement Group and demonstrates the commitment of so many stakeholders to the development of the pharmacy technician profession and the high regard in which our profession is held.

We are committed to meeting with the group quarterly to ensure that momentum for all of our projects is maintained and to seek regular feedback and support for these workstreams, which include:

- Primary Care Pharmacy Technician National Education Framework (being developed in collaboration with PCPA with support from HEE)
- Foundation Role Analysis and Foundation Practice Framework
- Members survey analysis and actions
- Accuracy Checking Pharmacy Technician National Education Framework (and approval process for training providers)
- Senior pharmacy technician mentoring and coaching programme

A regular update of progress following these meetings will be provided in future editions of your PTJ.

### Home Countries National Officers

In recent years, APTUK had developed Associate roles within the Professional Committee structure for individuals who could represent their Home Countries within some of the workstreams. In order to ensure the voice of pharmacy technicians across each of our Home Countries was truly being heard, during 2019 a decision was made to extend the

scope of these Associate roles and develop them into full National Officer posts.

The benefit of changing these roles to National Officer positions would be seen in those National Officers being offered a seat at the Professional Committee table, therefore being offered greater opportunity to represent the profession from within their respective countries. It also empowers the individual to represent APTUK at meetings or events within their Home Country, providing views and opinions based on a sound knowledge of policy and practice within their country.

Overall, the development of the Home Countries National Officer posts has strengthened the position of the Professional Leadership Body into an Association that can act on behalf of the whole of the UK.

We are delighted that Nicky Nardone (Scotland), Sarah Wilcox (Wales) and Warren Frances (Northern Ireland) have taken up the role of Home Countries National Officers and we will now be working with them to further strengthen their representation through the growth of a network of Home Countries Associates. If you're wondering now 'what about England?', please be assured there is ample representation of English policy and practice throughout the APTUK Board and Professional Committee currently. As Vice President (and a pharmacy technician practicing in England) I am responsible for leading the Home Countries representation workstream; therefore, it was not considered necessary to create a specific National Officer position for England. If and when this situation changes the need will be reviewed.

Look out for updates from your Home Countries National Officers in future editions of your PTJ. You can read their profiles and learn how you can contact them on pages 28/29.

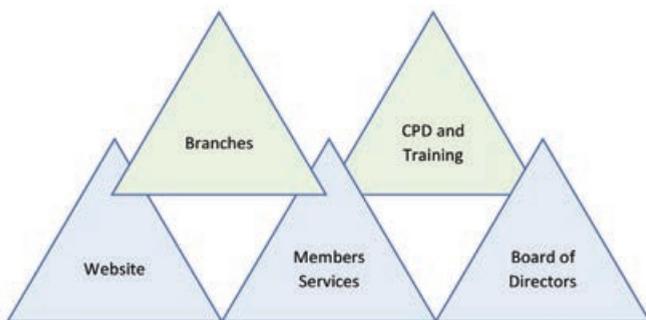
# Your Voice, Our Future - What Happens Next?

## Conference Closing Plenary: Voice of the Member Survey

Between the 17th May and 17th June 2019, the “APTUK Voice of the Member” survey was opened for APTUK pharmacy technician members, GPhC registered, pre-registration pharmacy technicians (PTPT) and non-members to complete. Analysis of the survey results was commissioned by the APTUK Board of Directors to understand and inform what the professional leadership body offer should look like going forwards to increase member engagement.

More than 300 pharmacy technicians responded with their views and experiences, including 233 members. Four focus groups took place to obtain supplementary qualitative data which was analysed along with the open comments of over 100 survey respondents.

Following data analysis, a comprehensive report was presented to the APTUK Board of Directors in September, highlighting five focus areas for improvement:



The Board of Directors have agreed to work on the following priorities immediately:

- Working with our website provider to offer more personalised content
- Improving member communications by sending targeted emails

- Adding membership engagement to the job description for the Director of Communications
- Re-recruiting to the post of National Officer for Media
- Raising the profile of the Board of Directors through social media, website improvements, revised communications strategy

The Board of Directors also committed to the following further work:

- Reviewing the CPD and training offer
- Reviewing the process of nominations for professional awards
- Further research into branches
- Further work on fee structures
- Investigating ways to improve member involvement and feedback

Outcomes of review into branches and fee structure will be presented at the Membership Business Meeting in April 2020 where members will have the opportunity to vote on options.

If you participated in the survey many thanks. If you missed out there will be more opportunities to contribute to shaping your APTUK in future. We will keep you informed!



**GAIL HALL**  
FAPharmT  
APTUK secretary  
secretary@aptuk.org



**LAURA McEWEN-SMITH**  
MAPharmT  
APTUK Member

## Lost & Hope to Find

We have sadly lost contact with a few of our members as they have changed address but continued to pay the fee to APTUK.

If you know any of the people (listed right), please ask them to contact our membership coordinator, Lynn Ali via [membership@aptuk.org](mailto:membership@aptuk.org)

TITLE	FORENAME	SURNAME
Mrs	Carole	Tilbrook
Mrs	June	Dowe
Mrs	Julie	Thomas
Mrs	Julie	Wade
Mrs	Joanne	Martin
Mr	Henry	Mumba
Mrs	Julie	Hunnable-Turner
Mrs	Lynne	Croft (Patrick ?)
Miss	Katherine	Hawkes
Ms	Gladys	Brown
Mrs	Pauline	Walker
	Nicola	Ritchings

# SS1 – Deprescribing: Focus on Safe and Appropriate Deprescribing

Oliver Jones, Education Supervisor at the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE), delivered a specialist session at APTUK Annual Professional Conference focussing on safe and appropriate deprescribing.

**The aim of the session was to discuss how all pharmacy professionals can contribute towards the safe and appropriate deprescribing of medicines.**

## Learning objectives

- Recognise a person-centred approach to deprescribing that considers the patient's perspective and experiences
- Explain the benefits of a collaborative approach involving patients and the multidisciplinary team in the deprescribing process
- Apply a stepwise approach to the process of deprescribing from identification through to reducing or stopping a medicine.



## Introduction

Deprescribing should be a carefully planned process of reducing or stopping medicines that may no longer be of benefit or may be causing harm. Deprescribing should be undertaken whilst working in partnership with the patient and involving the multidisciplinary team. A stepwise approach should be used, offering the option as a trial and gradually reducing the medicine if required, with appropriate monitoring and follow up to assure patient safety.

## Activities

The session started with a myth busting icebreaker, where groups discussed the barriers to deprescribing and potential solutions, considering the perspectives of both patient and healthcare professional. Groups discussed how patients may be reluctant to stop a medicine that they have taken for a while and it would be important to include them by taking a shared decision making approach. It was also discussed that pharmacy professionals may believe that deprescribing is outside of their comfort zone and that there is a lack of guidelines for deprescribing. It is important that pharmacy professionals work within their own level of competency and refer to the prescriber as appropriate.

The groups then went on to discuss a clinical controversy: ***“All pharmacy professionals should be deprescribing”***

Discussions included the different roles and responsibilities of pharmacy professionals in deprescribing and the limitations as to the extent of what a pharmacy professional can do depending on their role, experience and level of knowledge. The differences between a pharmacist and a pharmacy technician, the differences between a newly qualified pharmacy professional and an experienced pharmacy professional were considered. All pharmacy professionals in all care settings can contribute to deprescribing, however deprescribing is classed as a prescribing activity and should be referred to a prescriber

where required. Along with pharmacists, pharmacy technicians are well placed to identify potentially inappropriate medicines that could be considered for deprescribing by the multidisciplinary team.

The final activity was to work through a clinical decision making case study, where a patient's social and medical history was described with a list of medication. The groups were asked to consider each medicine on the list to consider its risks and benefits to either deprescribing or continuation. For those that they thought should be deprescribed, they discussed how they would involve the patient in the decision, the monitoring and follow up that would be required, how to provide a safety net for the patient in case they experience adverse effects from stopping the medicine and the importance of documentation.

## Conclusion

Medicines should be reviewed regularly and the benefits balanced against the risk. Patients should be involved in decisions about their medicines to keep them at the centre of their care. This can be achieved by exploring their ideas, concerns and expectations. Consider the following:

- does the person want the medicine?
- does the person need the medicine?
- is the medicine safe and appropriate for the person at this time?

This specialist session on deprescribing was delivered using a CPPE Optimise programme which is designed to be studied in a group at the workplace or as part of a learning community. If you would like to do the CPPE Optimise programme in full you can order it from the CPPE website <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/1/prescribe-o-01>.

You can use CPPE Optimise programmes to learn with colleagues in a safe environment. The aim is to work through activities that allow learners to test their knowledge, debate controversial topics, make clinical decisions with justification and practice communicating with patients and health care professionals. Any member of the team can use CPPE Optimise programmes to run a small group learning session in your pharmacy at any time. For further information and a full list of topics visit [www.cppe.ac.uk/optimize](http://www.cppe.ac.uk/optimize).



**JOANNE NEVINSON**  
**MPharmT**

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## SS2 – Pharmacy Technicians in Primary Care Leading on Patient Safety and Enhancing Service Provision

**Salmia Khan, General Practice Pharmacy Technician in Surrey and Medicines Optimisation in Care Homes (MOCH) Pharmacy Technician for Guy’s and St Thomas Trust, Chair of the Pharmacy Technician Group Committee with Primary Care Pharmacy Association (PCPA).**

This specialist session by Salmia was well attended by delegates showing the great interest around the developing role of pharmacy technicians in primary care.

Salmia covered the variety of roles pharmacy technicians are leading on in primary care. The guidance and support for pharmacy technicians when preparing for primary care roles either in general practice or care homes. A discussion with delegates followed

with questions on what the future looks like for pharmacy technicians in primary care.

Salmia gave detailed account of current roles for pharmacy technicians among areas covered were:

- clinical audits,
- undertaking medication reviews,
- developing and reviewing medicines management processes in general practice.



**GWEN YALE**  
National Officer Events APTUK  
events@aptuk.org

# APTUK Membership information

### CURRENT FEES

To Join APTUK follow this link  
[www.aptuk.org/about-us/join-aptuk/](http://www.aptuk.org/about-us/join-aptuk/)

The current annual fees are:

**Full £48**

**Associate £14 (for retired members)**

Students are free of charge

**Please ensure you have amended your standing order, direct debits will be updated to any new fees**

### APTUK JOURNAL

Four editions of the journal are printed and posted to all full, fellow and associate members.

Editions are also available electronically via the member’s area on the APTUK website.

All members, including students can access previous and current editions via the member’s only area.

To discuss sharing your work in the journal contact editor@aptuk.org

### YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Please inform Lynn Ali, the Membership Coordinator if you have recently changed any of the following details or not sure if we hold current details:

- Email?
- Address?
- Home or mobile telephone?
- Sector of work?

### APTUK WEBSITE MEMBERS ONLY AREA

Please ensure you have access to the member’s area to receive electronic journals and find details of other benefits of membership.

To request a username and password please contact Lynn Ali, the Membership Coordinator.



Have you heard about the APTUK **Plusone** membership challenge? For further details on how you can get involved visit our website [www.aptuk.org/plus-one-aptuk18-membership-challenge](http://www.aptuk.org/plus-one-aptuk18-membership-challenge)

**Contact details for Lynn Ali – APTUK Membership Coordinator**  
Email: [membership@aptuk.org](mailto:membership@aptuk.org) Answerphone: 0121 632 2025

# 'An Interview With...Meet the Member'



**Name:**  
Jacinta Edgar  
jacinta.edgar@nhs.net

**Current Role:**

- Business Partner at Garstang Medical Practice
- Pharmacy Manager at Kepple Lane Dispensary and Pharmacy
- Board member at the Dispensing Doctor Association

## Highest qualification related to your role:

Accuracy Checking Pharmacy Technician

## Steps you took to get to where you are now:

My pharmacy career started 20 years ago, in a small community pharmacy in my local town. I went on day release to college to gain my pharmacy technician qualification. During this time, I supported the pharmacist with all aspects of the business including management during his holidays. I then made the switch to hospital for a short period but felt this was not the direction I wanted my career to take at that time. Following this, I was successful in a role at our local Primary Care Trust (PCT), as a medicines management technician. This role involved compliance and concordance clinics with patients in practices, which I really enjoyed. The other aspect of the job was to monitor and support practices with prescribing budgets. Through this work we won an NHS Innovations Award for setting up a scheme that involved practices having prescribing support assistants who carried out cost saving work and shared those savings with the practices. Through my role at the PCT, I built fantastic relationships with GPs and practice managers. I took the time to understand practice priorities and workload outside of the priorities of the PCT and I do believe this is why the role of the prescribing support assistants was so successful. The relationships that I built then led to my next role of dispensary manager in 2006 for the two practices in Garstang. Two practices who were both previously dispensing practices individually, were moving into a new purpose-built medical centre and wanted to open a shared onsite dispensary and pharmacy. I was asked to join the team to lead on this on behalf of both practices. During this time, I completed my accuracy checking course. In the years to come, we successfully built our dispensary business and in 2009 opened our 100 hour pharmacy.

My role has changed quite significantly over the past 13 years, from managing a small team of 10 people and the day to day running of a small dispensary to now having the overall responsibility of a 100 hour pharmacy and large dispensary. Another huge change was my work within the GP practice team which has grown over the years. This led to the partners of one of the practices offering me a partnership. I personally believe the reasons behind this was due to the endless effort I have put into integrating the GP practice and the dispensary and pharmacy for the best interest of our patients. I have worked extremely hard to break down those barriers between GPs/nurses with pharmacists/pharmacy technicians over the years and been fortunate to create dual roles not just for myself but others within our team.

In 2017 we decided to merge the two onsite practices. I had never been involved in something of this scale before. The volume of planning required, I imagine, is similar as to what you would expect from a military operation. I am very fortunate to work alongside another business manager within my practice, who had previously been our practice manager. Without her I think this would have taken us 9 years instead of 9 months! During the time working through the merger, my responsibilities and focus had to be split between that and the dispensary and pharmacy. As a partnership across the two practices we tried to share out the workload as best we could. We are now 18 months post merge and every day is still a learning day in my career.

## What was the most challenging part of merging practices/teams/dispensaries?

Bringing the teams together from both practices. Even though they had worked on the same site for many years, the two practices had been running very differently. We decided to take the best elements from both to bring together a new structure moving forward.

## What surprised you the most during the merger process?

The biggest surprise for me was the difference in how the practices functioned and used the clinical systems. This was mainly due to one practice being considerably larger than the other but it required a lot of work to bring those systems together.

## If you could do it all over again, what would you change?

I actually don't think I would change anything massively. None of the partners or staff had been involved in a merger previously and I feel we went on the journey together and learned and adapted things along the way. It was a real team effort.

## What opportunities for pharmacy technicians were created by the merger?

We previously had pharmacy technicians working in a variety of roles in the practices but this gave me a great opportunity to expand on that. I created a medicines management team made up of a pharmacist, pharmacy technician and prescription clerks. This newly formed team would deal with anything





medicine or prescription related. The workflow for the whole practice, including all discharges and nursing home requests also. The role of the pharmacy technician within this team is to deal with all non-repeat prescription requests and queries, hospital letters and discharges and offer support and advice to GPs, practice staff and community staff as well as carry out drug switches and audits for the practice. We are now 18 months on and this team has been so successful the GPs workload for this area has reduced by about 90%.

#### **What do you enjoy most about working in primary care?**

My most enjoyable part is the variety. No two days are the same, either in the surgery, dispensary or pharmacy. This role allows me the opportunity to make a difference to our patients locally and continue to push the boundaries of what pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are capable of.

#### **What would you be doing if you weren't a pharmacy technician?**

I really don't see myself doing anything else. People often ask if I wished I had trained to be a pharmacist, but that just wasn't for me. I am extremely proud to call myself a pharmacy technician and want to continue to show the fantastic work we can achieve within the NHS.

#### **What do you think is the biggest issue currently facing pharmacy technicians?**

I believe our issue still is, and has always been what people perceive our role as. It is quite often seen as someone who dispenses medication with a little more knowledge than the counter staff. We have so much more to offer and I believe we have some fantastic role models out there promoting our profession fantastically.

#### **Who has impressed you most with what they have accomplished?**

I have to say Samantha Quaye, I think she is a true inspiration to our profession with her drive and passion as well as her fantastic shoe collection.

#### **What has been the highlight of your career?**

The highlight has been to develop and grow individuals to become pharmacy technicians and then see how they use that

to make a difference to patients. Our medicines management technician came to our dispensary unqualified and she is now an accuracy checking technician and working directly with the GPs in an invaluable role.

#### **If you were a drug, what drug would you be and why?**

This is my favourite interview question to ask I would be Entonox because I like to make people laugh.

#### **What is something you will never do again?**

I am a firm believer in everything happening for a reason and learning from any mistakes you make.

#### **When people look at you, what do you think they see?**

I would hope they see a hardworking, passionate and caring pharmacy technician.

#### **What's the best piece of advice you have ever received?**

Always take the time to listen. Most of life lessons come from your peers whether personal or professional.

#### **What can you not get right, no matter how many times you try?**

Work – life balance. I have been trying to achieve this for many years but still haven't quite got there.

#### **Where do you usually go when you have time off?**

I love to travel and see the world with my family when time allows but a Sunday morning on the beach with my pug Eddie is my favourite type of relaxation.

#### **What is your top tip for achieving an optimal work-life balance?**

Erm.....I would love to know

#### **What's next?**

It has been a busy year already for our dispensary and pharmacy. We had a BD Rowa Vmax robot installed in January of this year along with a shop fit so we are still settling into our new surroundings. This has been a fantastic addition to our business so our plan is to further develop our already growing services for our patients.



# Primary Care Networks: A Briefing for Pharmacy Teams

Around 1,000 primary care networks (PCNs) will be set up across England by 1 July 2019.

**PCNs will be responsible for delivering joined-up health and social care services through multi-professional teams to patients in the community. This may involve pharmacy professionals from all sectors, working collaboratively. Community pharmacy providers will need to find a way to work more closely with each other locally, to enable PCNs to engage effectively with the sector.**

The vision is for integrated out-of-hospital care for patients. This is set out in the NHS Long Term Plan. The new clinical pharmacists, physiotherapists, paramedics, physician associates and social prescribing link workers will improve access for patients and ensure that patients can see the professional that is most appropriate for their needs. It means PCNs will be able to take further action on serious conditions such as cancer and heart disease as well as doing more to tackle obesity, diabetes and mental ill health, and support older people at home and in care homes.

General practice takes a leading role in PCNs and every PCN must have GP practices at its core, but the PCN concept is wider than general practice and incorporates a range of providers involved in delivering co-ordinated health and social care to patients. This may include community pharmacy, optometrists, dental providers, social care providers, voluntary sector organisations, community services providers and local government.

PCNs will deliver extended hours services as well as NHS Long Term Plan commitments set out in seven new network service requirements; structured medications review and optimisation; enhanced health in care homes; supporting early cancer diagnosis.

Numbers of clinical pharmacists will be expanded and, by 2023/24, a typical PCN of 50,000 patients could choose to have its own team of approximately six whole-time equivalent (WTE) clinical pharmacists. A dedicated team will make it possible to create varied and tailored roles, which will be primarily patient facing and clinical in nature:

- Undertaking structured medication reviews
- Improving medicines optimisation and safety
- Improving antimicrobial stewardship
- Supporting care homes
- Running practice clinics
- Linking in with pharmacist colleagues in other sectors.

Clinical pharmacists in PCNs will be working in a consistent way across the country. The role will operate at the level of a PCN, as part of a multidisciplinary team, and pharmacists will see patients wherever it makes sense. It may be in a patient's own home or in a care home or GP surgery.

As community pharmacy focuses more on its clinical role of managing the minor illness aspects of urgent care; helping to improve safety, outcomes and value from medicines; and supporting patients to prevent ill health, it will need to have strong links with PCN clinical pharmacists. It is also likely that some community pharmacists could be recruited to work in PCN

clinical pharmacist roles.

Integration across the system means that PCNs will have access to specialist advice from hospital and mental health pharmacists who will extend their practice into primary care, including providing consultant pharmacist support. For instance, when reviewing a patient with learning disability who is taking a powerful antipsychotic medicine that is no longer needed, the clinical pharmacist will be able to access specialist colleagues.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) retain responsibility for the primary care prescribing budget and so it is important that PCNs are aware of the prescribing activity and costs for their population. Medicines management teams will have the expertise and knowledge to support efficient prescribing and to help the new multidisciplinary workforce deliver medicines optimisation for patients.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) is working with Health Education England (HEE) to explore workforce demand and supply modelling, and to develop a new NHS People Plan which ensures the NHS has the right people to fulfil the roles needed to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan. An Interim NHS People Plan, which sets out the vision, was published in June 2019; and the full People Plan is due in Autumn 2019. The interim plan includes a summary about The Future Pharmacy Workforce.

The challenge for the pharmacy workforce is ensuring sustainability and consistency across the country, whilst ensuring workforce supply and development, so the NHS has pharmacists and pharmacy technicians where they are needed with the right skills and support. This means the NHS needs a model of education and training that delivers the right pharmacy workforce; one that can adapt to the complex health and care system and respond to technological and data advances and changing patient needs. HEE has carried out a review of the current model of education and training for the pharmacy workforce and its Advancing Pharmacy Education and Training Report will include a range of recommendations based on an analysis of existing evidence and reflecting best practice across the career stages.

The expectation is that PCNs will work collaboratively with others, dependent on the needs of the local population. In many areas these relationships already exist, in others PCNs are currently developing and engagement with pharmacy is likely to take place from July 2019 onwards. For community pharmacy this means working through the local pharmaceutical committee (LPC) which would work with the local medical committees (LMC) to enable and facilitate community pharmacies to develop and negotiate a coherent offer.

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The full publication is available via: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/pcn-briefing-for-pharmacy-teams.pdf>



# APTUK 2019 Bursary Award Winners

## STACEY STANTON MAPharmT

Medicines Optimisation Technician  
HaRD CCG

The Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) 2019 Annual Conference was the first I had attended and wow, I was not disappointed!

After a nervous train journey down, wondering what it would be like, would I know where I was going, who would I spend my days with, who would I talk to, how would my poster presentation go down?! I pulled up outside the Ramada Plaza, Birmingham and was greeted with a friendly smile and a wave from (who I later found out to be) Emily Wardle, the new Director of Communications and Engagement for APTUK and that was the start of what turned out to be a fantastic weekend.

I have come away from the APTUK 2019 Annual Conference with new contacts across the pharmacy world, so much information on the future role of a pharmacy technician within Primary Care Networks that I have been able to share with my colleagues, lots of Continuing Professional Development opportunities and many new friends.

It was a fantastic networking opportunity to meet pharmacy technicians from different sectors and discuss the pieces of work we were involved in and share experiences and learning.

I am very grateful to have been given a bursary place for this year's APTUK 2019 Annual Conference and the opportunity to present a piece of work I have been involved in.

I would highly recommend all pharmacy technicians to submit pieces of work, nominate colleagues and teams for the annual awards and to attend APTUK 2020!

## CHRISTOPHER WATERHOUSE MAPharmT

Senior Pharmacy Technician – Clinical Trials, King's College Hospital  
chriswaterhouse1@nhs.net  
@ChrisPharmTech

I was very pleased and excited to have been awarded a bursary place to attend the APTUK Annual Conference in Birmingham this year. It was a well organised and informative event and it

allowed me the opportunity to network with other colleagues from all over the UK (and Iceland). It was a great platform to learn from one another and share knowledge to develop our profession.

It was great to see the passion and amazing work from pharmacy technicians, not only working to the top of their licence but always pushing the boundaries and shining a light on what a pharmacy technician can do and what they are capable of doing.

The conference itself was very well structured and there were multiple discussions on many different subjects throughout the two days that were supported by some excellent and knowledgeable speakers who delivered thought provoking talks and shared their pharmacy experiences and insights.

The specialist sessions were varied and ranged from pharmacy technicians in primary care, to technical services and gave me the opportunity to engage with others and share ideas of different practise methods.

A particular highlight of mine was a talk delivered by Roy Lilley, Founder of the Academy of Fabulous Stuff, delivered with excellent comic timing but with a clear message: start with the patient and work backwards. This is a practise that I will definitely be following and also advocating to fellow pharmacy technicians and pharmacists.

Another highlight of the conference was the poster exhibition. There were a range of posters on display and it was inspiring to see how much effort my fellow pharmacy technicians had made from the research, to the results and to the presentation of the poster itself! One poster that particularly interested me was that on "Assisted Check of High Risk Medicines" to help reduce errors and the checking workload.

All posters showcased the amazing work being carried out by pharmacy technicians and it was great how passionate everyone was about their projects. I can honestly say that I left feeling empowered and inspired to keep on pushing the boundaries of a pharmacy technician.

After a great first day, we all put our glad rags on and attended the Annual Awards ceremony and the dinner and dance. It was pleasant to be able to mingle amongst each other in a relaxed atmosphere.

This conference allowed me to

acknowledge and recognise the outstanding contributions that pharmacy technicians make and it definitely opened my eyes to what opportunities are out there for me. I will take back what I have learnt from this conference and share these new experiences with my colleagues and definitely encourage them to attend next year as it is such a great experience.

I would like to thank APTUK for funding my bursary place and would encourage all pharmacy technicians to apply.

Thanks for a great conference...I look forward to attending in the future!

## JOY GRANGE MAPharmT

Lead Inpatient Medicines Management Pharmacy Technician, South West London & St Georges Mental Health NHS Trust (Springfield Hospital),  
APTUK London Branch Treasurer  
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#HelloMyNameIs Joy Grange and I am the lead inpatient medicines management pharmacy technician at South West London & St Georges Mental Health NHS Trust based in Tooting, South London (not to be confused with St Georges University Hospital Foundation Trust). Whew! What a mouthful, but I proudly carry the title.

This year I was honoured to be awarded a bursary to attend the Association of Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom (APTUK) Conference 2019 and what an exhilarating, educational and brilliant networking opportunity it was. I hadn't been able to attend over the last few years, so it was nice to come back with a fresh outlook. I learnt so much about what is happening in other pharmacy sectors and how pharmacy technicians' roles are developing as pharmacy professionals in those areas.

The workshops that were delivered were so enlightening and informative, that I was able to do some Continued Professional Development (CPD) on my phone no less! It was truly inspiring to see the passion from pharmacy technicians in learning about other roles and sharing aspects of their own.

To kick us off we had a lovely welcome

and introduction address from Liz Fidler, the president of APTUK and that got us rolling for the upcoming excitement over the next 2 days.

### Plenary Sessions

The keynote speakers for these sessions were well established leading pharmacy professionals relaying to us the updates and positive messages for the profession across the UK. These messages were updates on National Policy for the UK which gave us a brief overview of the National Health Service (NHS) Long Term Plan and how the delivery of medicines and pharmacy related policy would support the Long Term Plan. We heard from Northern Ireland about their health policy relating to medicines optimisation, early findings from the pharmacy workforce review and their ambitions for the pharmacy technician workforce. We also heard from Wales about the long-term vision identified by the Welsh government for the future of pharmacy services in Wales. All of which were very positive messages of improvement for the profession across the UK.

We re-visited the lessons of Gosport and it was humbling to hear about the experiences of patient and patient's relatives over that period of time. I strongly recommend that anyone who hasn't delivered the collaborative General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)/ Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS)/ APTUK presentation on Gosport to their pharmacy team, to do so, if only to generate discussions of reflection and how they can see the lessons of Gosport have changed pharmacy nationally over the years and to see if there is anything else in current practice that could further be improved for the patient's safety & journey.

On the second day our keynote speakers included another host of well-known leading pharmacy professionals who spoke about pharmacy technicians working as part of the primary care multidisciplinary team (MDT) and also the expanding role of pharmacy teams in General Practice, Care Homes and Primary Care Networks. We also heard about the next steps for revalidation which included useful resources and tips on how to complete your peer discussion and reflective account. Go to the GPhC website, it's all there!

### Specialist sessions attended

I attended a few of the specialist sessions which included technical services in the NHS which highlighted the challenges facing the technical services workforce, the external factors which impact the

operations of technical service units locally, the resources available to support staff development within technical services and the most appropriate staff mix to efficiently provide the required services.

I also attended the antibiotic resistance sessions which was a good Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) Optimise session that got me re-pledging as an 'antibiotic guardian' by the end of the session.

Another interesting session attended included developing the clinical role of pharmacy technicians in mental health which was a session of particular interest to me as this is still a relatively new area of practice for myself having worked in an acute trust for the last 10 years before moving to mental health. It was interesting to see the career pathway of one of our leading pharmacy technicians in mental health and the opportunities and challenges that presented themselves along the way.

Lastly but not least I went to the NHS Leadership Academy talk, which had me thinking about what was individually unique about myself. It was a lot harder than I thought to come up with, but at least it got me thinking about my sense of 'real and ideal whole-self'.

There were so many exciting specialist sessions on at the same time, so that when you went to one, you felt you were missing out on the others. I have to say it was a tough call choosing which sessions to go to as they were all so interesting.

### Posters

I particularly enjoyed the poster presentations from different pharmacy sectors which ranged from 'Educational Supervision Training for pharmacy professionals' to 'Assisted checking of high risk medicine's to 'the learning needs of pharmacy technicians working in General Practice' to 'Clinical Prioritisation within Mental Health Services' to 'Utilising GP clinical systems to improve patient safety and appropriate prescribing' and these were to name a few, there so many more. There were 37 poster submissions in total which demonstrated all the amazing projects that pharmacy technicians are doing out there.

### Dinner & The Awards

What a wonderful way to wrap up the first day. It was lovely to see everyone all dressed up in their glad rags having lovely food & wine (still networking) and celebrating pharmacy technician achievements over the year and in some cases many years. It was an opportunity for everyone to feel more relaxed from the

day and to continue networking. It was inspiring to see the awards being won for the different categories such as the best poster, pre-registration pharmacy technician of the year, pharmacy technician of the year, excellence in leadership, the famous branch of the year. New award categories for this year were excellence in pharmacy practice and excellence in pharmacy education and development. Of course, there was the usual friendly rivalry between the Kent branch and London branch where London branch nearly made off with the Kent branch's winning trophy...almost!

There were also the awards for the honorary member and fellowship member.

One of the momentous occasions of the night was seeing Tess Fenn honoured with the fellowship membership award acknowledging the impact that she has had on many as an inspiring, leading pharmacy technician always advocating for our profession, always consistently and tirelessly promoting pharmacy technicians as a profession to all. To see her dedication, persistence and endurance and to know that this has been what she has done for decades was a perfect note to top the evening off with a standing ovation (no less) for Tess and all that she has done for the profession.

What a wonderful evening it was, celebrating the achievements of pharmacy technicians across the UK.

I would definitely recommend the APTUK conference to any pharmacy technician who wants to know more about it. There is just so much energy and pride at this event that you can't help but go away educated, motivated and ready to shout out about pharmacy technicians everywhere!

### SUE JONES

Deputy Chief Pharmacy Technician Operations/Education & Training East Kent Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

### My Bursary at the APTUK 2019 'Leaping into The Future' Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition

I was absolutely delighted to receive a bursary at the APTUK conference this year. I was nominated by my local branch, Kent branch. Without this generous bursary I would have had to self-fund. The bursary places are funded by APTUK and sponsors of the conference. A big thank to you to all of them and Kent Branch for supporting me.

The bursary place allowed me to attend all of the presentations, accommodation for one night and the awards dinner including all complimentary food and drink.

There are numerous benefits of attending the conference. Firstly, its solely dedicated to the profession that I am proud to be part of, and it is open to pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians. Within this setting I have made friendships over the year. It's great to have a catch up at conference and also a boogie!

Educational wise the variety of sessions across all areas of practice is vast. Highlights for me included Lessons from the Gosport Report, The Future Workforce Supply, the annual awards and the poster presentations. I will be sharing my learning at work and at our branch AGM. There were many opportunities for revalidation and reassurance that we are doing them correctly by listening to the Director of Education at the GPhC talking about the next steps for revalidation. I can also use this learning to support others in the workplace worried about their revalidation.

I will also be sharing some of the resources I gathered ready for pharmacy technician day in October. I will be wearing my APTUK polo shirt that were on sale at the conference with pride on this day. Not only did I leave the conference happy, but also inspired thinking of ideas for next year abstracts/posters. I have so many new ideas to take back to work. My to do list has grown!

If you do have the opportunity to attend, I urge you to attend. Also, if you can't attend yourself think about nominating a colleague at work for an

award or a bursary. You will really make their day!

### NICOLA STOCKMAN

@NicStk (twitter)

The APTUK 2019 conference this year was the first APTUK large scale event I have attended, and I was fortunate enough to be granted a bursary place to attend. I made a beeline for the talks that I felt I would gain most from – though some left near-impossible choices for me and on more than one occasion I wished I had a time-turner!

Topics covered included updates to national policy with representatives from Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales; CPPE learning sessions including one on Antibiotic Resistance; a fascinating insight to Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and a multidisciplinary approach to medicines reconciliation in the emergency department. There was also a thought-provoking section on the lessons from Gosport by Duncan Rudkin and an opportunity to attend a session from the NHS Leadership Academy.

In addition to the wonderful sessions and posters on display, the conference allowed me to network, and meet up with previous colleagues, including my assessor from my time as a pre-registration pharmacy technician, the medication safety technician from a previous hospital trust and a former colleague who had travelled all the way from New Zealand to attend! I cannot wait to attend the APTUK 2020 conference, and it was great news that APTUK announced during the conference

that there will be an additional APTUK 2-day conference alongside the Clinical Pharmacy Congress(CPC) 2020! As a side-note, I attended CPC 2019 and I witnessed pharmacy technician sessions that were standing room only – demonstrating both the quality and interest of the sessions that were available!

In our trust (Hampshire Hospitals), I have suggested to the Education and Training team to give our pre-registration pharmacy technicians the option during their induction weeks to sign up to APTUK to see the benefits that APTUK can provide. Furthermore, they are able to attend a day of the conference free of charge! It was amazing to see the different fields and wealth of various experiences and career pathways open to the pharmacy technician profession and will provide an insight to what can be achieved and the benefits of an ongoing APTUK membership. Considering it is 8 short years since mandatory professional registration we have come so far and developed in so many areas of pharmacy already.

I was inspired to see the networks created by the APTUK branches, and it has encouraged me to consider running a Hampshire branch with the colleagues I mentioned earlier! So please get in contact with me if this would be something you would like to join in with.

The take-home message for me from the APTUK 2019 conference was that we cannot work in silos – and actually, with all the opportunities and potential out there, why would we want to?

*More Bursary articles on p36*



### **FREE 1-year Associate Membership of the Institute of Healthcare Management (IHM) for APTUK Members worth over £130!**

APTUK are delighted to be working with the IHM to offer our members an additional membership benefit of a **FREE** 1-year Associate Membership of the IHM. The IHM is the leading management organisation for anyone involved in the management of health and social care.

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This offer is exclusively for APTUK members and the code is valid until 31st January 2020.

To take advantage of this offer please log into the members pages to obtain further information and the access code needed.

**Not an APTUK member? - Join us now and get 1-year free IHM membership as well!**

# SS4 – The Future Workforce Supply: All You Need To Know About T Levels

Delivered by Amanda Shobrook, Workforce Transformation Lead, Health Education England SW and Matt Leedams, Leedams Pharmacy.

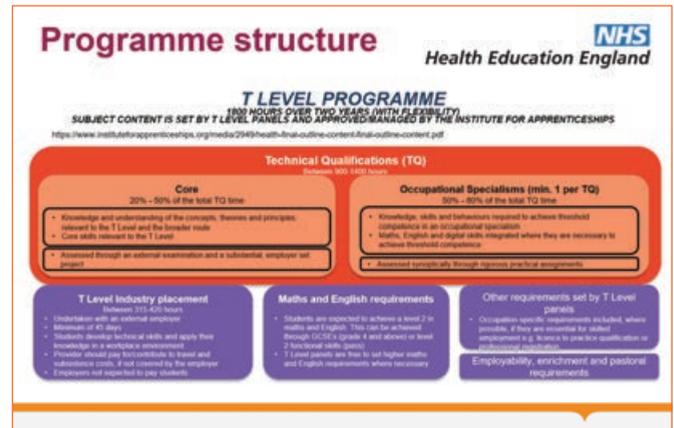
Amanda and Matt led an interesting and informative session on the new 'T Level' qualifications, with plenty of debate and discussion around where they fit in to the education of aspiring pharmacy technicians and how they will help to develop a future workforce.

## Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for the session were:

- What are T Levels?
- Where have they come from?
- How do they fit and what do they include?
- What are industry placements?
- What funding and support is available for employers?
- How will they be useful?

Only a small proportion of the audience were aware of them or their content, so Amanda started the session by outlining exactly what T levels are. She explained that they are 2 year programmes for 16-18 year olds, designed in collaboration with employers to develop the skills that industry needs. They differ from apprenticeships and the ratio of time in college versus time in industry is vastly different with 80% of time on a T level being spent in college.



Discussion was had around the routes to qualification for pharmacy technicians and where the T level might fit in. A lively debate ensued around where T levels might fit in as a Level 3 qualification themselves, but not leading to being able to register as a pharmacy technician without undertaking additional study. As T levels are still in their infancy many questions cannot yet be answered, but through the work of people like Amanda and Matt more of us now understand them. Hopefully they will lead to more people being aware of pharmacy as a career and perhaps even deciding that the exciting world of pharmacy technicians may be one they wish to join.

A level	T Levels	Apprenticeship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• subject based</li> <li>• Delivered by schools and colleges</li> <li>• Purpose: To prepare students for higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical</li> <li>• Taught full time in college</li> <li>• Include an industry placement for a minimum of 45 days.</li> <li>• 80% classroom based</li> <li>• 20% on the job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical</li> <li>• Work based training</li> <li>• Minimum of 12 months</li> <li>• 80% on the job</li> <li>• 20% off the job</li> </ul>

Matt and Amanda then spent some time covering the history of the qualification and where they stemmed from. Following the report of an independent panel on technical education, led by Lord Sainsbury, recommendations were adopted by government and as part of that T levels were established to fill the gaps highlighted in this report. Government have announced up to an additional £500m per year once T levels are fully rolled out.



**Follow all activities of APTUK on social media:**  
**Twitter - @APTUK1 Facebook - APTUK.ORG**  
 Keep up with all the news and information on APTUK's 2019 conference and awards by using the twitter hashtag #APTUK19

## SS5 – New Scottish Vocational Training Foundation Programme for Pharmacy Technicians

The session was hosted by Val Findlay, Chief Pharmacy Technician, NHS Education for Scotland & Arlene Turnbull, Programme Officer, NHS Education for Scotland

Val opened the session by giving background information on the Foundation Framework and the current pilot. This included describing the learning opportunities available for staff including access to a three-day primary care focused 'bootcamp' where the agenda is tailored to meet the needs of each cohort and where there is opportunity to meet other pharmacy technicians starting their journey in primary care. The framework for pharmacy technicians was designed to be aspirational and inspirational and will soon become embedded into workplaces similar to the pharmacist foundation framework which has been very successful within Scottish hospitals for many years.

The competency framework has been developed in response to an existing gap in pharmacy technician education and development. The Framework (Figure 1) has FIVE generic core elements which enable pharmacy technicians working in hospital, community and primary care, including cross-sector roles to undertake a standardised foundation training programme. Role specific competencies allow the pharmacy technician to identify development that will enable them to gain experience in the variety of roles undertaken across these pharmacy sectors and empower them to work at the top of their capabilities.

It is envisaged that pharmacy technicians will find this framework a vital tool in identifying ongoing personal development over the first 1000 days post-registration. It is also designed to be used as a tool for established pharmacy technicians taking up new roles in order to verify competency in new areas of practice. The framework is supported by the provision of a Guidance and Resource Handbook which is hosted within the TURAS online portfolio to help structure pharmacy technicians' progress. The framework aims to build in a progressive manner a common set of behaviours and skills required by all pharmacy technicians. It is designed to increase confidence, competence and capabilities of pharmacy technicians and give them the opportunity to develop a systematic approach to practice within their defined roles.



Figure 1



Arlene described her experiences developing and launching the framework and gave honest feedback on the challenges encountered: including timing of the framework and pilots, staff time to perform and record additional development and the limitations of developing a framework when pharmacy technicians roles are developing at such a fast pace. An example given is acute requests, which are not listed in the framework and some pharmacy technicians in GP practices are now undertaking this role. External factors out with their control were an unforeseen challenge. For example the new initial education and training (IET) standards had not yet been agreed. Professionalism and leadership are now listed in the IET, when at that time, these may have been seen as post registration developments. Programme designers were also mindful that this framework should not be a repeat of the S/NVQ.

Val and Arlene extended thanks to the pharmacy technicians of the various Short Life Working Groups (SLWG) who provided valuable input and direction for the framework. A SLWG has been formed to develop the final assessment.

The session finished with small group discussions where ideas were shared between participants from the 4 different countries.

Piloting is ongoing, with feedback being key to allow the framework designers to make changes to the content and the digital recording portfolios. A soft launch is planned across Scotland late in 2019 and strategic planning around capacity and resource is required to implement the programme in each health board. Future development opportunities look exciting for pharmacy technicians in all sectors across Scotland, but it doesn't stop there as an advanced framework is on the radar and much work has already been 'parked' in anticipation and the lessons learnt during this process will not be wasted.

For more information on the framework contact [pharmacy@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:pharmacy@nes.scot.nhs.uk)

**REFERENCES:** *The NES Vocational Training Foundation Framework for Pharmacy Technicians, Version 1, January 2019.*



**KAY MORGAN**  
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# APTUK National Education Framework Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines and Products

APTUK have launched an updated National Education Framework for the Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines and Products to support safe practice of pharmacy technicians undertaking the final accuracy checking role.

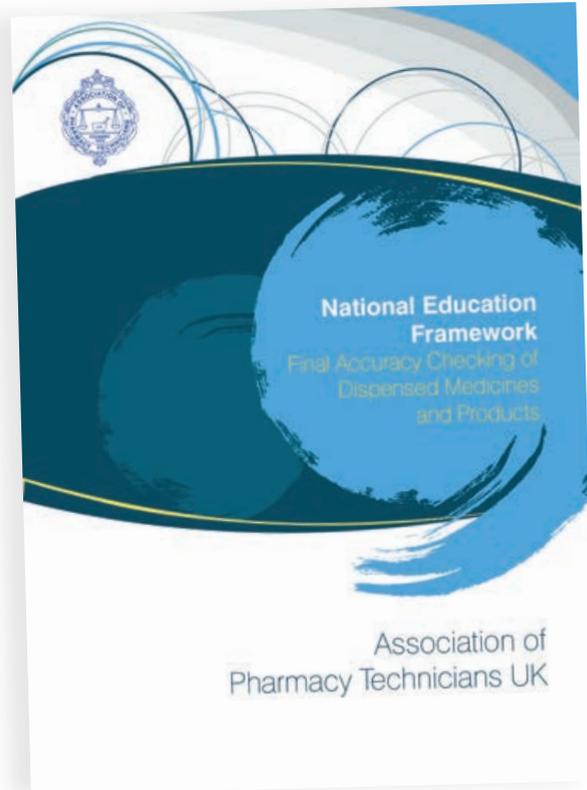
In the past, NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee (NHS PEDC) Nationally Recognised Competency Framework for Pharmacy Technicians: Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines has been used by providers of accuracy checking courses to standardise the delivery of the learning objectives and assessment methodology. Recently, the structure of the NHS has changed meaning that NHS PEDC could no longer continue to govern this framework to be UK wide.

It was decided that APTUK, as the professional leadership body for pharmacy technicians working in the UK, would be well placed to provide the stewardship of this framework. In January 2019 the stewardship of the NHS PEDC Nationally Recognised Framework for Pharmacy Technicians: Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines was officially transferred to APTUK.

An APTUK working group, with representation from all sectors, UK wide began to review the framework. To ensure the framework would reflect best practice across the UK, APTUK consulted with course providers on the assessment methodology. An APTUK steering group used the information gained to update the framework which was approved for a six week national open consultation. The comments from the national consultation were considered and used to produce the final version of the framework.

This revised framework supersedes the NHS PEDC Nationally Recognised Framework for Pharmacy Technicians: Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines following the transfer of stewardship to APTUK.

The framework will be reviewed in line with the new initial education and training qualification for pharmacy technicians, which will contain education and training for the final accuracy checking role.



In order to support the transferability and acceptance across sectors, APTUK are keen to provide training providers with a process to obtain APTUK endorsement that their programmes meet the framework and this option is currently being explored.

The APTUK National Education Framework for the Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines and Products will be an online resource only, held on the APTUK website and can be found by using the following link: <https://www.aptuk.org/acpt-framework>



**JOANNE NEVINSON**  
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# SS8 – Antimicrobial Stewardship: Focus on Optimising Antimicrobial Prescribing

Sarah Evans, Learning Development Pharmacy Technician and Joanne Nevinson, Lead Pharmacy Technician, Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) delivered a specialist session focussing on optimising antimicrobial prescribing.

**The aim of the session was to encourage pharmacy technicians to make antimicrobial stewardship a routine part of their practice.**

## Introduction

The prevalence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has risen over the last 40 years. It is estimated that 25,000 people die across Europe each year because of drug-resistant infections and action needs to be taken to allow routine procedures and interventions to be able to continue safely. Therefore, antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) is an important role for all healthcare professionals.

## Activities

The session started with a warm-up discussion on the most common challenges when faced with an antimicrobial prescription to dispense or check. Groups discussed whether the use of antimicrobials was appropriate and if so, the use of local guidance to identify if it is the right choice. It is important to consider the patients allergy status and determine the appropriate course length. The groups discussed the speed of the supply as it could be for a life-threatening infection e.g. Sepsis.

The group looked at Public Health England (PHE) data on local AMR indicators. PHE publish this data so that Trusts and CCGs can compare their antimicrobial resistance data to the national average to identify areas of improvement that can be made locally. To view your local indicators visit <https://bit.ly/2rRmerR>

The groups then went on to discuss a clinical controversy: *If a patient told you they were allergic to an antimicrobial, what action would you take?*

The groups discussed that allergies are sometimes confused with adverse drug reactions, which may lead to a decrease in use of first line, broad-spectrum antibiotics.

They would identify which antibiotic(s) had caused a problem in the past and what the nature of the reaction was. For example, was there a rash or swelling indicative of a life threatening anaphylaxis reaction? Or was there nausea and vomiting that was uncomfortable but not life threatening? How did the patient know that they were allergic? This may be something that their mother had told them when they were young. The drug name, the signs, symptoms and severity of the reaction and the date this was experienced would be documented.

The prescriber may prefer to continue to use the antibiotic under observation if it is the most appropriate choice to treat the infection and the allergy was not deemed to be life threatening. A discussion would be needed with the patient to make a shared decision of whether to use the antibiotic and consideration of their apprehension if they have thought for a long time, they were allergic.



The group considered an area of their own practice where they could make a difference to support antimicrobial stewardship. They registered to become an Antibiotic Guardian and made their Antibiotic Guardian pledge.

## Conclusion

Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats facing us today. Without effective antibiotics many routine treatments will become increasingly dangerous. To slow resistance to antibiotics we need to cut the use of unnecessary antibiotics and as pharmacy professionals, when antibiotics are prescribed, encourage them to be used properly by our patients.

Why not become an Antibiotic Guardian yourself and make your Antibiotic Guardian pledge today by visiting <http://antibioticguardian.com>

This specialist session on antimicrobial stewardship was delivered using a CPPE Optimise programme which is designed to be studied in a group at the workplace or as part of a learning community. If you would like to do the CPPE Optimise programme in full you can order it from the CPPE website <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/optimize/o?t=Antimicro-O-01>.

You can use CPPE Optimise programmes to learn with colleagues in a safe environment. The aim is to work through activities that allow learners to test their knowledge, debate controversial topics, make clinical decisions with justification and practice communicating with patients and health care professionals. Any member of the team can use CPPE Optimise programmes to run a small group learning session in your pharmacy at any time. For further information and a full list of topics visit [www.cppe.ac.uk/optimize](http://www.cppe.ac.uk/optimize).



**JOANNE NEVINSON**  
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# Pharmacy Technicians: Linking Our Role To The Fight Against Antimicrobial Resistance

‘Antimicrobials, particularly antibiotics, have saved millions of lives since they were first discovered. Our generation, and that of our parents, has benefited enormously from these important medicines’.<sup>1</sup>

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a serious threat to public health on a global scale. No matter our age, gender or nationality, we are all at risk of antimicrobial resistance, and all have a responsibility to slow down the rate of AMR.

Over the years misuse and overuse of antimicrobials has led to an increased risk of resistance and healthcare associated infections (HCAI) that presents clinical and financial risks to healthcare providers. The UK government’s five-year national action plan **Tackling antimicrobial resistance 2019–2024**<sup>1</sup> was published in January 2019. The document sets out a plan to reduce antimicrobial resistance and asks for the commitment of public and private sectors.

Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) promotes appropriate use of antimicrobials to minimise resistance and help safeguard these drugs for future generations. Previously, the focus of AMS has been mainly on antibiotics however increasingly includes stewardship of antifungals.

## Where does the role of the pharmacy technician fit?

The pharmacy technician is a relatively new profession which offers many opportunities to work in specialist areas. Pharmacy technicians can bring specific knowledge and skills to teams; allowing pharmacists to take on more clinical roles.

Within AMS teams, pharmacy technicians have become valued members of multidisciplinary teams working to the national AMR action plan.

Around the UK and abroad, AMS pharmacy technicians are leading and supporting various pieces of work including:

- Producing and analysing primary and secondary care antimicrobial prescribing surveillance reports.
- Participating in antimicrobial hospital ward rounds.
- Developing and delivering education and awareness sessions to various staff groups.
- Collating background information on treatment for infection as recommended in national, international and other hospital guidelines to guide local policy development and update.
- Participating in local and national audit.



- Maintaining electronic prescribing resources i.e. Microguide, antimicrobial website.
- Jointly manage pharmacy workload for annual influenza campaign.
- Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT) management.
- Supporting nursing homes to follow good practice recommendations.
- Leading and participating in public engagement work (particularly during World Antibiotics Awareness Week (WAAW)<sup>2</sup> to promote AMS and how everyone can help to combat AMR.

## Method

During summer 2018, three antimicrobial pharmacy technicians in England, Scotland and Wales worked in partnership to create a virtual network aiming to promote and develop their role within the UK and abroad.

To connect with as many specialist AMS pharmacy technicians as possible, social media and pharmacy networks were used to promote this idea and allow interested parties to contact the project leads. It was agreed to develop the virtual network in group email format and review effectiveness after 6-12 months.

There are currently around 25 members of the virtual network from around the UK and as far afield as Australia. Before being approved for membership, everyone was required to agree to and sign a terms of reference document to help ensure everyone is aware of the aims of the network.



## Results

Within the network members have shared pieces of work, good practice and education resources. It has proved an effective way to ask questions; some examples being around antimicrobial guidelines, plans to attend conferences and working towards meeting national prescribing targets.

The network has provided support for pharmacy technicians new to the antimicrobial role by being a source of information and a quick way of meeting more experienced people working in the same specialist area.

By sharing work undertaken by pharmacy technicians around the UK and beyond the network has shown members how they can further develop their role.

The virtual network has met many of its aims and provided a platform to enable members to promote the antimicrobial stewardship agenda.

To build on this success, continued engagement of members is key.

## The Twitter effect

The initial social media promotion of the planned virtual network led to a number of antimicrobial pharmacists contacting the project leads to enquire about their role, as it had highlighted a gap for this profession within their own multidisciplinary teams.

## Leadership

The virtual network is currently led by two pharmacy technicians, Amy John (antimicrobial pharmacy technician, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board) and Sarah Thomson (antimicrobial pharmacy technician, NHS Tayside). It is hoped that leadership opportunities can eventually be opened up to other members with the existing format under review to ensure all members are in agreement about the most effective way to continue to build the network.

## Opportunities

The Antimicrobial Expert Advisory Group (AmEAG) is a group of pharmacy professionals and experts in

antimicrobials. The group advises on resistance, infection prevention and management and any other issues which may affect the pharmacy profession and members of the public.<sup>3</sup>

In March 2019, the virtual network leads were invited to present details of their roles and an overview of the network to the AmEAG. Members of the AmEAG were keen to support the network and suggestions were given on how best to expand to include a wider section of the pharmacy technician workforce in the UK and abroad.

As a result of attending the AmEAG meeting the British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (BSAC) offered to host a free online forum on its website.<sup>4</sup> This offer was accepted and the virtual network project leads, BSAC and a web design expert have collaborated to develop a user-friendly forum. Support from virtual network members has been key to populate and test the site.

The AMS Pharmacy Technicians Forum is free to join and open to all pharmacy technicians in the UK and abroad who work in an antimicrobial role, have an interest in AMR and AMS, or who would like to find out a bit more about this topic.

The forum is due for launch on 2nd September 2019.



## Conclusion

Many AMS multidisciplinary teams aware of the knowledge and skills of the pharmacy technician are keen to include one within their team if one is not already in post. Highlighting the achievements of AMS pharmacy technicians may lead to more roles being created to allow for better skill mix within teams.

By promoting our specialist role we can encourage more pharmacy technicians to consider a career in this area or to link the AMR and AMS agenda with their current role.

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- *World Health Organisation World Antibiotic Awareness Week available at: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-antibiotic-awareness-week> [accessed on 01/08/2019]*
- *Royal Pharmaceutical Society Antimicrobial Expert Advisory Group available at: <https://www.rpharms.com/about-us/who-we-are/expert-advisors/antimicrobial-expert-advisory-group> [accessed on 01/08/2019]*
- *British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy <http://www.bsac.org.uk/> [accessed on 01/08/2019]*



### AMY JOHN

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### SARAH THOMSON

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# SS9 – Productive Healthy Ageing The Role of the Pharmacy Technician

**This year is my first conference as a national officer and so the opportunity of providing an update on the session I chaired is an amazing opportunity and I hope that I can do the session justice. I had the pleasure of attending ‘what is productive healthy ageing’ session specifically designed for how the role of the pharmacy technician can support this.**

The session was delivered by Hayley File and Alison Hemsworth. Hayley, MAPHarmT is Medicines Inspector for the Care Quality Commission and the Advanced Practice Associate for APTUK. Alison, FAPHarmT, is Head of Primary Care Policy, NHS England.

## How do you age effectively?

The session was able to identify some common ailments and conditions that can affect a person's ageing. The session looked at risk factors for persons having an increased chance of these conditions, of which had very similar factors.

Productive Healthy Ageing document was produced by Public Health England earlier this year and is designed to support pharmacy teams in a variety of settings. The document does support the Healthy Living Pharmacy campaign but is adaptable across the board and range of pharmacy related settings.

The guidance recognises various different reasons for a person's productive ageing. These include:

## Falls reduction

Consequences of falls in the older population become higher and more probable with age. Falls can cause loss of mobility, loss of independence, pain and increases the emergency admissions to NHS hospitals, therefore also increasing the cost of treatment provided by the NHS each year.

## Dementia

Dementia is the next recognised condition that requires support for a person to age effectively. Women are more likely to develop dementia but also more likely to care for someone with dementia. Up to 30% of dementia cases may be avoidable if changes were made to lifestyle and health factors. Risk factors that could increase the risk of dementia includes; smoking, alcohol and lack of physical activity.

Physical activity has many benefits to dementia including reducing cardiovascular risk and chronic conditions, helps maintain the opportunity to complete daily activities as well as improving mood, reducing risk of dementia and falls.

## Social isolation and loneliness

There are 1 million people within the UK that can have long periods of time without seeing or communicating with anyone. These factors are associated with increasing coronary heart disease and increases the likeliness of premature mortality. Risk factors include living alone, being a carer, low income, lack of friends and family nearby and lack of transport. The recently retired can find it difficult to find purpose if they don't know what to do with themselves. Those with a disability and those that are recently bereaved find social isolation and loneliness difficult.

## Malnutrition

Malnutrition should not be thought of as a normal part of ageing and it is important to keep ourselves strong. Malnutrition is

common but can go undetected. Risk factors can include loss of appetite, poor dental health, chronic conditions, disabilities, social isolation and mental health.

A resource was provided by Public Health England at the same time as the guidance. Those in attendance at the session had the opportunity to use the resources to complete the case studies provided, which showed us as pharmacy professionals how we can look out for signs and symptoms of patients that may need some support with healthy ageing.

There was an opportunity for feedback and group discussions around the case studies. This allowed us to:

- identify persons requiring support
- identify how we as pharmacy professionals can support these persons
- be able to signpost appropriately ensuring their medicines are appropriate and accurate
- make sure the patient is safe and well.

We have a duty of care for patients and as healthcare professionals we should be able to identify persons in need and those that may need additional support.

Signs of support needs include:

- looking at family and friend networks to combat social isolation and loneliness,
- meaning and purpose especially for those recently retired,
- financial security and social support.

The main outcome of the session was to provide those attending with enough knowledge to go back to their workplaces and be able to implement the guidance and resources to support the effective and healthy ageing of patients.

It was a really informative session which I have taken a lot from and been able to actively implement within the workplace and would very much recommend everyone having a look at the document and implementing within the workplace to ensure excellent patient centred care. I once again would like to thank Hayley and Alison for presenting the session.

The resources can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/productive-healthy-ageing-interventions-for-quality-of-life>



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# Physical Health and the Importance of Keeping Our Patients Safe

**My name is Jane Astley I have been a qualified pharmacy technician for 22 years.**

I started my career in the community and progressed to hospital pharmacy in 1997 as a rotational pharmacy technician and then went on to specialise in mental health services in 2001 at Royal Preston Hospital.

I have worked on in-patient units and secure units and I now work alongside the Community Mental Health teams (CMHT) in West Lancashire. It was identified that there was a need for pharmacy technicians to have input and be a part of the multi-disciplinary team within the community. I currently work alongside an integrated team with a mental health support worker and trained mental health nurses. I also work closely with the wider multi-disciplinary team including a pharmacist and consultant psychiatrist and refer patients on when appropriate.

One of the first tasks I was asked to address was to complete medicines reconciliation for patients in the community and update medication sections and allergy status etc. This was a new role within the CMHT and it was quickly identified that a pharmacy technician's knowledge, expertise and understanding of medication and its impact on physical health would be best utilised to provide a Physical Health Check Clinic. Whilst completing this task it became apparent that a lot of our service users, that were prescribed antipsychotic medication, were not having regular physical health checks as recommended in NICE guidelines. It was decided that we should set up our own Physical Health Check Clinic, encourage our service users to attend and thus provide a better quality of service for them.

As most of you are probably aware people with serious mental illness have a higher morbidity and mortality rate from chronic physical diseases than the general population. There are complex reasons for these disparities in health such as limitations of health services, the effects of having a serious mental illness has on lifestyle choices and the effects of psychotropic medication themselves. The service supports the NHS Five-Year Forward View for mental health. The objective of the national strategy is reduction in premature mortality of people living with severe mental illness by ensuring more people have their physical health needs met, increasing early detection and expanding access to evidence-based physical care assessment and intervention each year.

The service we provide gives an opportunity to have a health check completed and discuss any problems or concerns patients may have regarding medication. It also gives the opportunity to complete a validated side effect rating scale and the Rethink tool. Prior to the patient attending clinic I complete a medicines reconciliation and screening to promote medication optimisation. Here is a list of the

interventions as a result of these clinics (See Fig 1):

- Incorrect dose of medication
- New medications started
- Side effects identified
- Interaction of medication
- 'Make every contact count' intervention opportunity to provide intervention relating to smoking cessation/diet/alcohol intake. Lots of patients have been particularly keen to stop smoking.

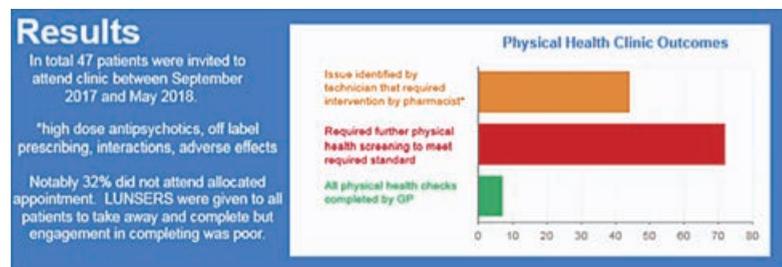


Figure 1

This pharmacy technician role in physical health clinic could easily be introduced to pharmacy technicians involved in the care of community mental health patients. It is imperative that the physical well-being of all our patients is looked after as well as their mental wellbeing ensuring that the patient has the best service we can provide. Pharmacy technicians have clear valuable skills to make these contacts and make a difference to patient safety and ensure medication optimisation.

Pharmacy technicians have the skill set to run clinics as they have good understanding of the risks and potential adverse effects of medication and this in turn shows we are using workforce skills appropriately. Training to take and assess physical observations was needed but this need was easily met by in-house training programme. I have designed documents for the purpose of our clinic which could be used as a template for other similar initiatives.

This is a fantastic development for the role of a pharmacy technician. It enables us to use our clinical medicines management skills to interact with patients and discuss medication but is also very rewarding for us to be able to assist in physical health monitoring and ensure our patients are receiving the best care they can. Physical and mental health go hand in hand and having a direct oversight and involvement in both areas is so beneficial to the patient. Within a very short time period the pharmacy technician role has been introduced in to the CMHT and is now an invaluable resource within the team continuing to improve patient safety and outcomes.

This extended role allows the pharmacy team to support such integrated care increasing our reach in the wider healthcare setting. I work with other members of the multidisciplinary team to ensure all patients newly prescribed anti-psychotics have received the necessary physical health checks. It allows prescribers to have assurances that checks for

Continued on p26 >



# APTUK LEAPING INTO ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CO

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# K 2019 D THE FUTURE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

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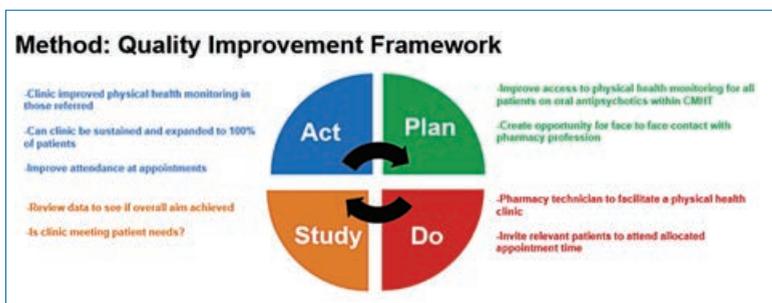


Figure 2

patients are co-ordinated in structured and systematic way. It has also enabled improved communication with GPs improving the sharing of information between primary and secondary care.

Positive change was driven by this quality improvement project by improving access to physical health monitoring. The project has developed a new way of working that promotes NICE medicines optimisation principles to ensure safe use of medicines. It has also promoted referral of patients requiring input from the CMHT pharmacist in a systemic manner.

Using a quality improvement framework has enabled staff to be involved in devising and implementing the best solutions. Furthermore Plan, Do, Study and Act (PDSA) cycles (see Fig 2) were established aiming to improve patient attendance and the referral system so we could offer assurances

of capturing 100% of patients taking oral antipsychotics. The difficulty in completing LUNTERS (side effect rating tool) has been highlighted by the project and work is being undertaken to improve meaningful feedback from the patient.

**Conclusion:**

The extended role of the pharmacy technician embeds the positive perception of pharmacy as the experts in medicines whilst at the same time ensuring physical health checks are complete. The role promoted a whole person approach to the safe use of medication.

This project showcases the skills and knowledge of pharmacy technicians around medicines management and its influence on physical health in mental health patients. Having regular face to face contact with such patients highlights and embeds the positive perception of pharmacy as the experts in medicines. We have had amazing feedback from service users and family members and really positive comments from the consultants we work alongside.

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# The Pharmaceutical Journal Launches 'Focus on Cold and Flu'

Educational resources launched after survey shows that pharmacy teams need support in managing patients' expectations regarding the treatment of cold and flu.

In response to a survey of 1,169 pharmacy professionals and an expert round table *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, in collaboration with GSK, launched an independent editorial campaign in October 2019.

Five free-to-access articles <https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/publications/supplements/focus-cold-and-flu> have been created that identify and meet the needs of both patients and community pharmacy teams and encourage better self-management of cold and flu symptoms.

Each year, tens of thousands of people visit pharmacies to seek advice on how to best manage their cold and flu symptoms and pharmacy teams play an essential role in caring for these patients.

However, given the fragmentation of the community pharmacy market, it is not surprising that there is wide variation in practice across the country, which results in differences in what patients expect from community pharmacy and conflicting messaging from other healthcare professionals.<sup>1</sup>

At the outset of the campaign, members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), pharmacy technicians, preregistration trainees and students were surveyed to identify current knowledge and understanding of the available management options for cold and flu, as well as the messaging that is central to these consultations. The results were presented to ten representatives from across pharmacy at a roundtable event at the RPS London headquarters on 24 June 2019 (watch the video at: <https://youtu.be/-Czc0vzThpU>).<sup>2</sup>



(Courtesy of The Pharmaceutical Journal)

The findings from the survey showed that over half of those working in community pharmacy had not had training for cold and flu in the past year.<sup>2</sup>

During discussions at the expert event, it was noted that any new training and resources needed to be short, to the point, quick and have a demonstrable purpose. In addition, the importance of considering the skills and competencies of individuals, including pharmacy technicians, should be considered before setting any rules about responsibility when it comes to cold and flu.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, pharmacy technicians' responses indicated low confidence and competence when managing patients with cold



(Courtesy of Julie Lee / The Pharmaceutical Journal)

and flu, highlighting a need for training to be delivered with a focus on the whole pharmacy team.<sup>2</sup>

A set of recommendations for the campaign were developed, including:

- Challenging existing behaviours and perception of self-care,
- Summarise information on infection prevention and symptomatic relief in the context of antimicrobial stewardship;
- Develop support materials to ensure pharmacy teams implement a pharmacy standard for patient care.<sup>3,4</sup>

The content developed, including the cold and flu consultation pathway and a poster summarising important cold and flu messages relating to self-care and infection prevention and control are available at: <https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/cpd-and-learning/learning-article/engaging-patients-with-cold-and-flu-putting-theory-into-practice/20207035>. All of the content can be freely accessed, along with more information on the campaign at: <https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/publications/supplements/focus-cold-and-flu/>.

I would encourage APTUK members to access and share these articles and resources with colleagues and the wider pharmacy team. Please let us know if you have any feedback or comments via email [editor@pharmaceutical-journal.com](mailto:editor@pharmaceutical-journal.com) or via Twitter @PJOnline\_News or @michael\_dowdall.

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# Recent Appointments

## EMILY WARDLE

APTUK Director of Communications  
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Emily started her pharmacy career in 2006 as a trainee pharmacy technician at Queen Alexandra Hospital Portsmouth gaining experience in the dispensary and wards before securing a post within the Medicines Optimisation Team. In 2012 Emily relocated to Yorkshire to be closer to family and took on a Medicines Optimisation role at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LHT) before moving into the Education and Training Team. It was here that she found her love of enabling others to develop and progress.

Emily extended her own personal knowledge and skills whilst at LHT by completing the CMI Level 3 in First Line Management and the BTEC Certificate of Unit Achievement: Therapeutics

(Diseases and their drug treatments) Level 5. Emily is also currently undertaking a CMI Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship: Professional Leadership and Business Management at Leeds Trinity University.

Currently Emily is on a year's secondment with Health Education England Yorkshire and Humber as a Clinical Leadership Fellow with the Future Leaders Programme, working on a project looking at the clinical requirements for pharmacy technicians currently and in the future.

Emily is proud to be a member of APTUK and is passionate about the healthcare we deliver, so looking forward to help shape the future of our profession and giving pharmacy technicians a voice.

## SARAH GRIFFITHS

APTUK Director of Finance  
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Sarah qualified as a pharmacy technician in 1986 at the Royal Cornwall Hospital (RCHT). She spent several years working first as a rotational pharmacy technician and then as a senior pharmacy technician in supply and distribution in both Swansea and Cardiff. Sarah moved back to Cornwall in 1996 where she worked part time for a retail chemist for a few years before returning to RCHT in 2002.

In 2004 Sarah became the senior pharmacy technician in the technical services unit, where she led a team of pharmacy technicians and assistants in the production of aseptic compounded medicines.

In December 2012 Sarah seconded to the pharmacy Procurement Department for 6 months

to try something new, she liked it so much then took the Pharmacy Procurement Lead position in September 2013. She now incorporates her pharmacy procurement lead role with prescribing support for Kernow CCG.

Pharmacy procurement goes largely unnoticed within the larger pharmacy family, so by becoming a National Officer Sarah is hoping to bring the role to the forefront, hopefully make it more appealing and an avenue more pharmacy technicians would be interested in venturing into. It is a varied role and can be done at local, regional and national levels. Pharmacy technicians are now taking regional procurement specialist roles that were once the domain of pharmacists only.

## SARAH WILCOX

National Officer, Devolved Countries - Wales  
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Sarah began her career in 1972 as a trainee pharmacy technician in the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff working her way to a senior pharmacy technician role in the dispensary before leaving to start a family. On her return to the same hospital in 1989 she worked as an NVQ assessor and IQA before taking up a training and development post in 1997. She has developed this post over the years completing a PGCE along the way. The role is now a trust wide one across the Cardiff and Vale UHB. She has been very involved in the educational development of pharmacy technicians across Wales including Accredited Checking, medicines management and NVQ level 2 & 3.

Sarah has been an APTUK member for all her working life and has held many officer posts including President and Vice President and has been involved in many developmental areas constantly promoting the role of pharmacy technicians. Has run a local branch and organised numerous APTUK conferences. She is currently representing APTUK on the Welsh Pharmaceutical Committee and the Welsh Partnership Forum and has been involved in the development of the Welsh Pharmacy Vision for the Welsh Government.

As the national officer for Devolved Countries (Wales) she is looking forward to promoting APTUK in Wales and keeping the Welsh agenda at the fore front of APTUK business.



## NICKY NARDONE

National Officer, Devolved Countries – Scotland  
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Nicky, originally from West Sussex, has been living in Perth, Scotland since 1992 and began her pharmacy journey at Perth Royal Infirmary in 1993. Qualifying as a pharmacy technician in 1995, she has spent her career in the managed sector, progressing to the role of Service Delivery Manager for Dispensing and Clinical Technical Services across NHS Tayside. In 2018, Nicky became the first pharmacy technician to be appointed to a Clinical Leadership Fellow post, jointly with the General Pharmaceutical Council and Scottish Government.

Over the years Nicky has been involved with several national pieces of work including the

review of the Initial Education and Training requirements for pharmacy technicians. She is also a member of the National Pharmacy Technician Group Scotland (NPTGS).

Nicky is keen to raise the profile and improve the professional recognition of pharmacy technicians. A strong interest in developing and growing the profession safely, recognising that the developing roles of each staff group within the pharmacy service need to complement each other and there is a need for a cohesive approach but also strong professional leadership from pharmacy technicians themselves.

## WARREN FRANCIS

National Officer, Devolved Countries - Northern Ireland  
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Warren began his career in Pharmacy in 1998 working for Boots the Chemists. In 2005 he moved to work in a busy independent pharmacy in Belfast. After gaining valuable experience working in community pharmacy Warren moved into hospital pharmacy in 2010 working as a rotational pharmacy technician in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Alongside gaining experience in various areas of hospital pharmacy, and in particular Pharmacy ICT, Warren completed his ACPT accreditation.

In early 2016 Warren was Lead Technician for

Community Services where he was responsible for managing vaccine supplies to GP surgeries and schools. In December 2016 Warren decided to specialise in Pharmacy ICT and Robotics, taking up his current post as Lead Technician for ICT and Robotics in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. Warren has developed streamlined IT solutions for pharmacy which have been introduced across all Trusts in Northern Ireland.

As National Officer for Northern Ireland Warren is excited to represent APTUK in Northern Ireland.



Congratulations to the winner of **#RxTechDay** twitter competition *'post a picture wearing your APTUK1 polo shirt'*

**Winner - Sarah Green**

**Prize:** half price membership for herself and a new member of her choice.

# APTUK 2019 Fellow Membership Award Winner – Tess Fenn

Fellow membership is the highest level of Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) membership and recognises developed expertise and sustained professionalism. Being awarded a fellowship is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a member.

The membership category of Fellow is achieved through peer nomination. To be eligible to be nominated members of the Association must demonstrate upholding the values of the Association demonstrating loyalty to APTUK and the pharmacy technician profession and be well respected by their peers and colleagues.

A Fellowship is awarded in recognition of exceptional professional performance or outstanding service contribution to the pharmacy technicians profession or to the Association, on either a local or a national level.

This year's Fellow Membership award was presented to Tess Fenn. Tess was nominated by Julie Mathieson and Diane Meech.

*Tess Fenn receives her Fellow Membership Award from APTUK President Liz Fidler.*



“I am nominating Tess for a fellowship of APTUK based on her long standing commitment and passion for the pharmacy technician profession, her unwavering support for APTUK, her excellent leadership skills and proactive approach to situations that she has demonstrated throughout her career.

Tess has long shown her continued commitment to APTUK as a member from early in her career and over the past 18 years at national level. She was instrumental in starting up the Kent branch of APTUK and being part of the organising committee for the Maidstone conference in 2006. Tess continued her commitment and loyalty to APTUK when taking on National roles as Education Officer, Vice President, President and up until today as immediate past President. When holding these posts and those held throughout her professional career in the NHS and community sector Tess has demonstrated exceptional professional performance, drawing on her expertise and use of her professional judgement in enabling her to make effective and strategic decisions often in difficult circumstances leading to successful outcomes and the delivery of change both within the Association and the wider profession.

Throughout her professional career she has nurtured and developed many pharmacy technicians always guiding and supporting them to reach their full potential. She is always there to listen and give advice when there are concerns, worries or anxieties. Many pharmacy technicians today have reached the top of their profession through Tess's support and guidance. Tess's specialism as an Educationalist has been instrumental in shaping our professional qualifications and upholding the highest standards.

Tess has always championed collaborative working and has been instrumental in influencing decisions at local, National and European level, as demonstrated by her active participation on the Board of the European Pharmacy Technician Association, the Department of Health Rebalancing and Supervision Committees, RPS, GPhC to name but a few, where she is well respected, communicates effectively and acts in a professional manner and with integrity at all times.”

APTUK Board of Directors, independently score each of the nomination received and the outcome and result is verified at a Board meeting. Those Directors with a conflict of interest are excluded from the process.



# APTUK 2019 Honorary Membership Award Winner - Gail Fleming

An honorary membership category, ratified by members, was introduced in June 2011 to enable APTUK to acknowledge exceptional service given either to the Association or to The Pharmacy Technician profession generally, by a person who is not eligible to be a member of APTUK.

The honorary member is a distinctive membership bestowed in recognition of the efforts of the nominee who has made a profound difference by either:

- championing and upholding the professional role of pharmacy technicians
- publically supporting the continuing development of pharmacy technicians
- advancing the roles, knowledge, skills and behaviours of pharmacy technicians
- working consistently hard on behalf of pharmacy technicians

The awardee will be entitled to lifetime membership of APTUK, however they will not be entitled to any voting rights. Only one honorary membership will be awarded each year and this year the award went to Gail Fleming, Director of Education and Professional Development, Royal Pharmaceutical Society.

Gail was nominated by Liz Fidler.

"I am nominating Gail Fleming for Honorary membership of the Association, as I believe that she has demonstrated all the key attributes worthy of such an esteemed honour. I would be delighted to provide further examples for the Board should they require. I feel passionately about this application which I am submitting on behalf of a number of APTUK members, names of which I can provide to support this application if required.

## Championing and upholding the professional role of pharmacy technicians

Gail throughout her career, has championed the role that pharmacy technicians contribute to patients and services.

Within her previous role as Pharmacy Dean in HEE London and South East, Gail ensured that pharmacy technicians have had opportunity to access training that was not defined by profession. For example, Gail ensured that whilst setting up quality management systems for trainees the standards were applied for pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (PTPT). This led to raising the profile of education for PTPT at both a departmental and trust level, enabling the quality of education to be enhanced.

In addition to this, Gail supported many projects at a senior level to ensure that equitable training opportunities were available to pharmacy technicians, for example access to educational supervisor training. Gail championed that pharmacy technicians have the correct knowledge and skills to supervise trainees regardless of their professional status. This led to consistency and opportunities for pharmacy technicians in London and the South East to demonstrate they had the necessary knowledge and skills to be appointed into roles that were education in focus across the professions.

## Publicly supporting the continuing development of pharmacy technicians

Gail is a well-respected national pharmacy leader and I have witnessed on many occasions her passionate support for the pharmacy technician profession. She has at every opportunity championed the contribution pharmacy technicians make and challenged where access to funding or opportunities has



not appeared proportionate. Her ability to influence and clear knowledge of what the pharmacy technician profession can contribute to service and patient care has been pivotal in the support of developing continuing development on a local, regional and national level.

## Advancing the roles, knowledge, skills and behaviours of pharmacy technicians

Whilst in her previous role as Chair of the NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee (PEDC), Gail supported the development of the National Medicines Management Framework and approval process. This was a key professional development educational opportunity for pharmacy technicians. This is well established and now a key unit within the new qualification and an enabler for medicines optimisation as defined by Carter.

Gail was a key supporter to ensure that HEE was able to support Skills for Health with funding to facilitate the development of the new qualification to meet the October 2017, GPhC Initial Education and Training Standards.

On a personal level, I have witnessed Gail's mentoring, role modelling and pastoral support for key pharmacy technician leaders. Encouraging them to take on national positions and challenging roles where it was appropriate to change recruitment criteria to reflect registration status rather than underpinning qualification.

## Working consistently hard on behalf of pharmacy technicians

I have personally worked closely with Gail for 14 years and throughout that time, have numerous examples of how Gail will champion often behind the scenes, but very much publicly when needed to support the profession.

The key reason for nominating is to recognise that Gail has supported so much more than a voice, she has supported real examples that pharmacy technicians' access as part of everyday development, I have no doubt that without her support these opportunities may not have been as well implemented or started!"

APTUK Board of Directors, independently score each of the nominations received and the outcome and result is verified at Board meeting. Those Directors with a conflict of interest are excluded from the process.

# Katherine Miles Poster Awards

Sponsored by **Helapet**



**1st Place – Mary Carter**

*'The learning needs of pharmacy technicians working in general practice'*

Training Programme Director Pharmacy Workforce Development South



**2nd Place – Michelle Llewellyn**

*'Achieving prudent healthcare by reducing repeat reauthorisation in GP surgeries'*

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Wales



**3rd Place – Helen J. Taylor**

*'Developing a leaner process for supplying controlled drugs in a large acute NHS Trust'*

Leeds Medicines Formulary Manager, Leeds Medicines Advisory Service, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

# APTUK 2019 Award Winners

Sponsored by **AAH** | Hospital Services

## Pharmacy Technician of the Year

• **First Place** – Sarah Jane Green, Chief Pharmacy Technician, Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust



*Nominated by Anna Atkinson, Deputy Lead Pharmacist – Central Lancashire, Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust*

Combining her enthusiasm to encourage others to strive for excellence with a desire to raise awareness of the importance of medicines safety and patient centred outcomes, Sarah has successfully led and developed the team of pharmacy & newly qualified pharmacy technicians who join our Trust. Sarah is passionate about improving medicines adherence and believes that pharmacy technicians are in a great position to have meaningful discussions with patients. She has developed a Twitter platform called 'What About ME' (the ME also standing for Medicines Education).

• **Second Place** – Margaret Vass, Pharmacy Technician Team Leader, Medicines Governance Team, NHS Fife



*Nominated by Geraldine Smith, Andrea Smith Lead Pharmacist Medicine Governance and Education and Training, Lead Fife HSCP, NHS Fife.*

Margaret is an outstanding example of a professional leader who goes above and beyond to deliver not only on her own objectives but in supporting the development of others across the pharmacy service but also multi-professionally. She can be relied upon to deliver complex, organisation wide change and always considers the needs of her team when doing so.

## Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician of the Year

• **First Prize** – Nicola James, Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician, Powys Teaching Health Board



*Nominated by Sarah Blythe Gray, Senior Medicines Management Technician, Powys Teaching Health Board*

Nicola is currently midway through the first multi-sector training programme here in Wales, and her training is being undertaken in community pharmacy, secondary care, GP practice, senior health board team and across community and social care sectors. Nicola has been pivotal to this pilot training programme being a success thus far. Her desire to deliver a wholly professional pharmacy service to patients and also to work in partnership with her multidisciplinary colleagues, has been such a pleasure to see.

• **Second Prize** – Fflur Elenid Gwyn, Student Pharmacy Technician, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health board



*Nominated by Julie Mathieson, Senior Pharmacy Technician. Procurement & IT, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health board*

Fflur has a passion for pharmacy and patient care. She is enthusiastic in her work and personal development sharing this with her peers. Fflur has been fully engaged with all aspects of her training and is now looking forward to developing her career pathway as a registered pharmacy technician. Her enthusiasm to reach a high standard in her studies has been rewarded with a special commendation for her poster at the North Wales Pharmacy Conference.

### Excellence in Leadership Award

- **First Prize** – Sarah Griffiths, Chief Technician Pharmacy Procurement and High Cost Drugs, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust



*Nominated by Iain Davidson/Alison Hill, Chief Pharmacist/Head of Pharmacy Supply Services, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust*

Sarah is an excellent example of what can be achieved with a mixture of hard work and talent. What makes her really stand-out for the leadership award is how she has shared this new learning, experience and enthusiasm with those around her, whether within her local team or at a regional level- where she had led numerous educational workshops. We are very proud of her at the Royal Cornwall and feel she is very worthy of this award.

- **Second Prize** – Lisa Green, Pharmacy Dispensary/Operations Manager, St Andrews Healthcare



*Nominated by Libby Clifton, Pharmacy Procurement Lead, St Andrews Healthcare*

Lisa is a natural and exceptional leader; she goes above and beyond to encourage others around her. Lisa's desire for the best patient outcomes are what drives her to do this and her role model status goes beyond pharmacy. Lisa consistently delivers results and throughout achieving this will inspire others that they can achieve more. The qualities that Lisa brings to the profession of pharmacy technicians cannot be taught, she is a real example of 'excellence' in leadership.

### APTUK Branch of the Year

- **First Place** – KENT Branch



*Nominated by Lynn Gallagher, Kent Branch Chair*

- **Second place** – LONDON Branch



*Nominated by Pam Bahia, London Branch Chair*

### Excellence in Pharmacy Practice

- **First Place** – Bhavesh Rathod, Adam Johnston, Lisa Monaghan, Pharmacy ED Team, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



*Nominated by Andrea Ashton, Associate Director of Pharmacy Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust*

A pilot was commenced at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to establish the benefit and potential skill mix of a pharmacy service in the Emergency Department (ED). The pilot demonstrated the model integrating Medicines Management Pharmacy Technicians in the team was the most effective and proved significant improvements to medication

safety. From this success, a business case was approved and an innovative six- day pharmacy service was introduced which has improved the overall care provided to our patients earlier in their hospital stay.

• **Joint second Place** – Helen J. Taylor, Pharmacy Technician, Leeds Medicines Formulary Manager and DTG Professional Secretary, Leeds Medicines Advisory Service, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust  
Nominated by Keri Murphy, Lead Pharmacist, Leeds Medicines Advisory Service, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Helen has developed an innovative process for supplying controlled drugs to clinical areas at this large acute NHS trust. Each clinical area has a bespoke, electronic, live CD stock list which pre-populates a printed CD requisition that meets all legal requirements: all the nurse has to do is add the quantity required for each item and sign it. This has virtually eliminated errors and released 20 days of nursing time /year for patient care.



Michelle Walker and Helen Taylor receiving the award

• **Joint second Place** – Michelle Walker, Rheumatology Pharmacy Technician, Rheumatology, Moving Well Service, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust  
Nominated by Catherine Oakes, Highly Specialised Pharmacist (Rheumatology and Biologics), Lancashire Care Foundation Trust

The nomination is for Michelle Walker for the APTUK/AAH Excellence in Pharmacy Practice Award for developing a new pharmacy technician role within a community-based rheumatology service. This has improved the existing service to enhance patient care involving a multidisciplinary approach to delivering pharmacy services/care to rheumatology patients within Central Lancashire. Michelle's hard work and dedication to developing this service has made a success of this new role.

## Excellence in Pharmacy Education and Development Award

• **First Place** – Sarah Griffiths, Chief Technician Pharmacy Procurement and High Cost Drugs, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust



Nominated by Danny Palmer, Regional Medicines Procurement Specialist (SW), UH Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

For some time, our regional meetings have been very business focused, and we looked to change the experiences of our colleagues to better engage their views and to contribute. Something that many felt unable to do. Sarah took on the challenge of sharing her experiences of studying for her CIPS exams and delivered innovative and engaging material that has up skilled many of our colleagues and refocused our future regional agenda and work plans.

• **Second Place** – Mandeep Matharoo, Principal Pharmacy Technician - Education & Training, Cambridge University Hospitals



Nominated by Gill Shelton, Principal Pharmacist - Education & Training, Cambridge University Hospitals

Over recent years, an increasing incidence of both physical and mental wellbeing issues has been observed amongst the trainee cohort of pre-registration pharmacists and pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians. A strategy to support the trainees was developed and Mandeep was a key contributor to a project, in conjunction with the wider E&T team, to develop a trainee wellbeing strategy in order to move from reactive support to proactive positive wellbeing management.

# APTUK 2019 Bursary Winners - continued

## **BENJAMIN SMITH** **MPharmT**

Surgical Clinical Pharmacy Technician  
East Kent Hospitals University NHS  
Foundation Trust  
ben.smith17@nhs.net or benjamin0594  
(Twitter)

### **The Highlight in the Pharmacy Technician Diary: The APTUK Annual Professional Conference**

This year's APTUK Annual Professional Conference was one of the best to date! Best location in the heart of Birmingham, easily accessible by many pharmacy technicians throughout the UK; our new president Liz Fidler and vice president Ellen Williams taking centre stage throughout; and oh my, pharmacy technicians do know how to party!

The focus on conference this year was 'Leaping into the Future' and the topics, speakers and workshops were all relevant to the current headlines for all pharmacy technicians, in all sectors of pharmacy.

The range of workshops this year were the best yet: safe and appropriate deprescribing in pharmacy; technical services in the NHS; the APTUK website learning platform supporting revalidation; pharmacy integration fund supporting workforce development, the list goes on! The workshops can also be used to collect evidence for revalidation. Still unsure about Revalidation? GPhC have been to APTUK conferences for the last four years that I have attended and always willing to speak to delegates about questions or concerns on revalidation. If this is your first conference or your tenth, there is never a dull moment. The feeling of over 200 people at a conference where you don't know anyone can be quite daunting at first, but that feeling soon disappears. The networking opportunity at conference is priceless; we are like one big family! APTUK are always on hand to speak to members about how their career journeys are going, and there to speak to non-members about the benefits of joining an Association that supports **YOU!** We now have these flash new polo shirts to advertise our Association too. So close to being a designer brand!

2019 is my fourth attendance to the APTUK conference and each year my highlight is the celebration of the work pharmacy technicians have completed over the year. The annual awards is a key example of this with so many categories included from Pre-Registration Trainee

Pharmacy Technician of the Year to Pharmacy Technician of the Year, and who can forget APTUK Branch of the Year... The Katherine Miles poster exhibition opened my eyes to the amazing work pharmacy technicians complete in their field of work, and has encouraged me to start thinking of a project I would like to set up, ready to submit a poster for next year's APTUK conference.

Branch of the Year Award is always a noisy time of the awards dinner evening. This year, Kent Branch won this prestigious award, and I was proud to collect this with Lynn Gallagher (Kent Branch Chair) and Sue Jones (Secretary). I look after events and social media for Kent branch, running the Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages to advertise our meetings as well as organising where our meetings take place. Very simple roles that are so rewarding to see people, old and new, turn up to our branch meetings. Kent branch are committed to continue reaching out to pharmacy technicians, members and non-members about the benefits of joining APTUK. We too have official merchandise with Kent Branch hoodies, available to committee members!

If you are interested in attending APTUK Conference 2020, but money might be something that's putting you off, APTUK offer the opportunity for members to apply for a bursary. A simple statement to why you want to attend conference sent to APTUK could give you the chance to attend the best date in the pharmacy technician diary.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the professional committee at APTUK for giving me a bursary for the 2019 APTUK Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition, for the continuous sterling work they do for pharmacy technicians throughout the UK, and for organising another amazing conference, that was simply FABULOUS! See you in 2020!

## **MICHELLE POWER** **MPharmT**

Lead Clinical Pharmacy Technician  
St George's University Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

My first Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) conference was a couple of years ago now but I remember clearly how I felt on the journey down there. I'd been to pharmacy events before - I'm shamelessly geeky

about my profession and take every opportunity I can to develop myself - but conference was something new and I really wasn't sure what to expect from it. London Branch meetings aside I'd never been to anything focused solely on pharmacy technicians and I wasn't sure what it would be like to undertake the weekend's packed schedule, particularly as very few people I knew were likely to be there. Anyone who's met me can confirm I'm not at all a shy person but it's safe to say I was more than a little nervous as I made my way to Cardiff. Well that disappeared almost as soon as I arrived at the venue. People were friendly and welcoming, the sessions brilliantly informative and I met dozens of fantastic people. Even before the weekend was over, I was eager to do it all again.

This year's conference was my third but it's safe to say the novelty has not worn off. A friend and I arrived the evening before the event and there were already a fair number of delegates around, chatting on the sofas in the lobby or at tables in the bar and terrace. Long before I'd picked up my lanyard I'd caught up with old friends, made new ones, and learned about various projects different people were undertaking, including how the new technical services branch was coming together. Mind you I'd be lying if I said it was all shop talk!

As always there was a good range of topics on the schedule, with a mix of specialist and general sessions kicked off by a warm welcome from our new president, the fabulous Liz Fidler. Our opening talks covered updates to national policy, the conference organisers ensuring each of the four home nations were represented on the stage, and throughout day one specialist sessions covered everything from deprescribing and primary care to T-Levels and how the APTUK website can support revalidation. It wasn't always easy to pick what to attend - there was plenty on offer - and many of us spent coffee breaks swapping notes with delegates who'd gone to different sessions.

Day two was no less informative, and among sessions from the NHS Leadership Academy, Centre of Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (antimicrobial resistance) and UK Clinical Pharmacy Association (medicines reconciliation in the emergency department) and others on healthy ageing, procurement and mental health. We were given two brilliant talks on Primary Care Networks

(PCNs) from Graham Stretch and Wasim Baqir, with both ensuring that delegates were clear on a subject that is going to be an important part of NHS plans for the next few years. As an active member of Twitter's pharmacy community, I'd gone into the weekend determined to live-Tweet as much as possible, but I certainly had my work cut out for me... there were no filler sessions here!

But, as always, it was over far too soon. Officially, at least. Twitter was still buzzing with #APTUK19 for days afterwards, and I know that I for one am still sharing all I learned there.

**MELISSA MELLY**

Student Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician, Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust  
Melissa.Melly@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

**Standards in Practice**

Working in the pharmacy sector, we will have heard the term 'Standards of Practice' many times, but we must also be sure to put standards into practice. It should go without saying that every pharmacy technician (from student pre-registration pharmacy technicians like myself to those who are registered and

have been practicing for many years), are working to the 9 standards for pharmacy professionals as set out by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). This article will look at how these standards were also observed throughout the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) conference 2019. There are many reasons why we should upkeep our commitment to the standards for pharmacy professionals. The three which will be addressed in this article are the effects on patient care and safety, revalidation in order to remain on the GPhC register for pharmacy technicians and pride in and promotion of the career of pharmacy technician. As healthcare professionals our main priority must be to ensure that the patient is safe and cared for in an appropriate way. By upholding the standards for pharmacy professionals, we are complying with the standard of care expected from us.

'The standards for pharmacy professionals are relevant to all pharmacy students and trainees while they are on their journey towards registration and practice. The standards explain the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that will be expected of students and trainees if they apply to join the register'. While at the APTUK conference, I realised that

these standards were clear to be seen all around in the work being done by the pharmacy technicians in their workplaces and throughout the conference itself.

The first standard is about providing patient centred care. This was a main theme of a lot of the presentations at the conference. An example of this was the project conducted around the implementation of 'Assisted Checking of High Risk Medications' programme in the Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The result of this programme was the elimination of errors involving these medications. This is a huge improvement in patient safety and care. It also reduced the turnaround time which improved efficiency within the department involved. Another example of this patient centred care was the joint project conducted by Northern Health and Social Care Trust and Uppsala University in Sweden. This project increased patient safety by reducing the number of missed days monitoring of patients potassium levels.

The second standard states that pharmacy professionals must work in conjunction with others. This became a clear goal in the future of the pharmacy technicians. The NHS Long Term Plan explicitly sets out the plan to increase the

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We are currently offering a financial package to Students in their 2nd yr of training in the form of a £3.7K (taxable) bursary that decide to join the RAF Medical Reserves. We are also recruiting fully qualified Pharmacy Technicians who are registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). This is an opportunity to apply and develop your skills in an environment of unique personal and professional challenge.

Your commitment can be as little as 27 days per year, for which you'll receive pay and an annual tax-free lump sum (currently over £1700 after five years service). You can join up to age 50 (or 56 with previous military service).

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presence of pharmacy professionals in the primary care setting and a £4.5 billion of new investment in multidisciplinary teams in the community setting. This will result in more collaboration between pharmacy professionals and GPs, care home workers, nurses, and others in the healthcare profession.

The third standard for pharmacy professionals states the pharmacy professionals must communicate effectively. This is important to ensure accurate and complete communication about the patient, their care etc. This affects all aspects of our work from conducting medication reconciliations / reviews to communicating a change in care plan from a hospital to the community (GP / regular pharmacy). It also relates to the effective communication between pharmacy professionals and the patient themselves. This allows the patient to understand their diagnosis, their medication, how to use the medication correctly and how to raise any concerns or difficulties they may have with the appropriate teams, whether the pharmacy team or the GP / hospital depending on the seriousness of the problem. Clear and effective communication was also at the forefront of the APTUK conference where posters and presentations were available on many different topics. They were easily understood and accessible for all. They were set out in a way where their aims, methods and results were clear and concise.

The fourth standard states that pharmacy professionals must maintain, develop and use their professional knowledge and skills. Lots of the projects carried out by pharmacy technicians displayed at the APTUK conference were about doing exactly that. From the introduction of a pharmacy led clozapine clinic in the North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Trust to the initiation of a pharmacy technician led discharge process in the Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust which allowed for the '[u]tilisation of the knowledge and expertise of the skilled pharmacy technician team [to allow] skill sets to be optimally used within the wider team'. This standard was also brought to the forefront during discussions about the revalidation process for remaining on the GPhC register. There is a requirement to show Continuing Professional Development from both planned and unplanned events. This requirement ensures that as technicians we are keeping active in our continued learning and progression rather than becoming complacent in our everyday activities.

This in turn allows for more opportunities to grow within the career.

The fifth standard for pharmacy professionals is the required use of our professional judgement. This is to ensure that we are working to, but not beyond, our capabilities and knowledge. This was seen at the APTUK conference through the new pharmacy-led initiatives displayed at the conference. It was also the focus of one project about 'The learning needs of pharmacy technicians working in general practice'. This project noted that there is 'a gap in providing support and quality assuring competencies through training' for General Practice pharmacy technicians (GPPT). Projects like this one highlight the need for further training to ensure that we are working as efficiently and safely as possible to provide the highest standard of care to our patients.

The sixth and seventh standards state the importance of behaving in a professional manner, showing respect and maintaining a person's confidentiality and privacy. This too was displayed at the APTUK conference where, despite the number of patients and services involved in the compilation of the data for many of the projects, their identities remained confidential and all other aspects of their wellbeing were safeguarded at all times, including throughout the projects themselves. This is also related to the first standard of having patient-centred care. We must always consider the possible consequences to our patients when conducting projects like some of those presented at the conference.

The eighth standard focuses attention on the importance on the fact that pharmacy professionals must speak up when they have concerns or when things go wrong. This was discussed at the conference with reference to the Gosport Report. The Gosport Report is a report about the events which may arise from failing to question, when appropriate, some practices going on in the healthcare setting. This report along with others such as the Francis Report leave us with no doubt about the necessity to draw attention to practices which we believe to be harmful or inappropriate. These reports show that when we digress from these standards, there may be consequences which adversely affect our patients' care. It can also harm the level of trust which can be placed on our profession by other professions, our patients, and their loved ones/carers.

While the theme of the APTUK conference 2019 was not the standards for pharmacy professionals, it was clear that these standards and leadership

the last standard were threads running through each aspect of the conference. It meant that the conference was an excellent way to see the very best of what our pharmacy technicians have to offer the healthcare profession and was also enlightening to see the number and variety of opportunities for us, as pharmacy technicians, growing exponentially beyond what we have had in the past.

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## SAM MASON

### Introduction

I was fortunate to be successful in obtaining a bursary place for this years APTUK conference in Birmingham.

I had never applied for a bursary before, but I found the process easy to follow.

I attended my first conference last year in Glasgow with funding from my pharmacy department. I found it inspiring, and the advice given to me by senior APTUK members gave me the confidence to apply for another role completely out of my comfort zone of clinical pharmacy. In the past 12 months I have been successful in securing a secondment as Transformation Project Manager. I felt it would be beneficial to attend the conference in this new role. I was hoping to network with other pharmacy technicians in similar roles. It also would give me the chance to attend presentations I would not have normally attended with my 'clinical head' on.

### The conference

This year I was lucky to be attending the conference with some of my work colleagues.

We arrived at the beautiful Ramada hotel in Sutton Coldfield early on Friday morning. There was a warm welcome from the APTUK and plenty of tea and coffee to get us started.

This year there were many posters on display, and I felt that pharmacy technicians working in all different areas could find one that they could relate to. The standard was high, and a lot of information was available. It was great to talk to the people who had produced the posters and get their experiences. I felt very inspired by the poster section – so much so I would like to present one myself next year.

There were stands for various pharmaceutical companies and associations e.g. APTUK, CPPE and others. The reps were happy to chat and explain their products and services. My colleague and I talked to a company



that produces emergency boxes. This is exactly what we had been discussing at work a few days before. We had the opportunity to speak directly to the manufacturer and see the products they make.

The conference timetable is made up of presentations and specialist talks. The main events are in the conference hall. Here we heard about various topics and of course the future of the role of pharmacy technicians. Some of the ones that stood out for me was the 'Gosport report' which was very thought provoking. Also, the presentation about A&E pharmacy services. This was interactive and gave us the chance to practice our drug history taking. After the presentations there is ample opportunity to ask questions and I was glad I felt comfortable enough to do this. The atmosphere is very friendly and even if you are there alone there is always someone to talk to.

### Gala dinner

Of course, a highlight of the weekend was the awards and gala dinner. This gave us the opportunity to get on our posh frocks and sparkle.

The room was transformed with stunning table decorations and the food was beautiful. The hotel staff and service

was outstanding. We were all made to feel very special.

After the dinner was the awards. Inspiring pharmacy technicians that have achieved amazing success in their fields are recognised and rewarded for their hard work. To me this is one of the most inspiring parts of the conference. This gives us the chance to see what pharmacy technicians can achieve.

With the formal side of the evening over it was time to hit the dance floor. There was a fantastic DJ who seemed to know the right songs to play. The highlight of the evening for me was 'oops up-side your head' and a dance floor full of pharmacy technicians sitting on the floor!

But we all know that pharmacy technicians work hard and play hard.

### Benefits to practice and role

The session on procurement was very interesting and relevant to me in my new role. I gained a lot of information from this talk. This has helped me understand more about the procurement system. Understanding how systems work gives you the confidence to explore how you can improve workflow systems back in your own department.

But also, being in a room full of pharmacy technicians who have achieved so much in their careers gave me the

confidence to return to my workplace and lead the pharmacy transformation program.

### Reflection

I cannot stress how strongly I would recommend all pharmacy technicians to attend the APTUK conference. It provides a chance to see what other pharmacy technicians are doing and how other trusts/ departments work. It is also a chance to network with other pharmacy technicians.

Twitter is a great platform for sharing news. At my trust we have our own pharmacy twitter account. I tweeted throughout the conference about the sessions I was attending and what I had learnt. Through my pharmacy departments twitter page, I could share this instantly with my colleagues. After the conference I could network with people I had met through twitter.

When I went back to work colleagues came up to me and asked about the conference. The positivity I took from the conference back to my workplace interested people to think about attending next year. There has been a lot of talk about doing posters and I feel I may have some serious competition!

Thanks to the APTUK for this opportunity and hopefully see you all again next year.



## Exclusively for members - the APTUK T-shirt

APTUK members are exclusively offered the opportunity to purchase their own APTUK T-shirt! These shirts are premium cotton polo shirts with the APTUK logo on the front and back.

They currently come in size medium (40" chest) and large (44" chest).

To place an order for your T-shirt please complete the order form here <http://bit.ly/2ox9l8A>.

Have your membership number handy (full name can be used if you cannot find your number) and prior to order please BACs transfer £25 per T-shirt ordered to the following referencing your name on the transaction:

**Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK**  
**Account Number - 11041951**  
**Sort - 60-20-56**

Your order will be posted via Royal Mail and should be with you with 5-7 days following completion of an order form and confirmation of payment.



# Virtual Technical Services Branch

The newest of the APTUK branches to be established is the virtual Technical Services Branch.

APTUK Branches are available as a membership benefit and offer the opportunity to:

- Share best practice
- Gain revalidation support
- Gain educational training and revalidation evidence
- Network with other pharmacy technicians across all sectors

The virtual Technical Services Branch is open to all APTUK members, but will focus on topics relevant to those in this sector of pharmacy.

Quarterly branch meetings are conducted via Microsoft Team to ensure that members from all parts of the United Kingdom can participate.

Members can join the branch by sending an email to [asepticvirtual@aptuk.org](mailto:asepticvirtual@aptuk.org) stating your APTUK membership number and preferred email address.

SurveyMonkey links are sent to all branch members so they can choose to participate in the next meeting.

All those who wish to participate will be sent a link at least one week before the scheduled meeting date.

Future meetings with the link to register to join are also publicised via the branch Twitter account @APTUKTechnical.

The content of the meetings will develop over time to suit the needs of the members of the branch.

The initial meeting held on the 15th August was led by John Oliver, Pharmacy Technician Specialist QA/QC from Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust. He discussed the topic of 'comportment' and how the required behaviours can be instilled in and maintained by unit staff.

The next meeting planned for 19th November, further details on twitter or by emailing the branch.

If you would like the opportunity to network, share best practice and keep up to date for revalidation, then sign up now!



**KATE PRESTON – MPharmT**  
Training Manager- Technical Services  
Royal Free London  
[asepticvirtual@aptuk.org](mailto:asepticvirtual@aptuk.org)



## Association of Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom Technical Services Branch

Do you want an opportunity for networking?  
to support professional development?  
to attend educational sessions?

**Then join the new virtual Technical Services  
Branch of APTUK now!**

Email [asepticvirtual@aptuk.org](mailto:asepticvirtual@aptuk.org) with your name, membership number and preferred email address to join the mailing list and have your say in how you want *your* branch to evolve.  
Meetings will be conducted via Skype / Skype for Business.

Open to all members of APTUK  
*Regardless of specialty*

Not a member of APTUK yet?

Go to [www.aptuk.org/join-aptuk](http://www.aptuk.org/join-aptuk) to join



# A Very, Local Meeting – Kent Branch

As chair of the Kent branch, I faced a dilemma, like most counties in the UK; Kent covers a large area, from the coast, through rural areas, then up to the London border. Transport is not very reliable and I was contemplating an evening meeting so how people were going to get home needed to be a consideration. We normally rotate venues across the county but they are always located mid county. One or two of our members were keen to host the meeting on the coast, but support from other members was not favourable. We had no particular topic in mind, as we had the CPPE facilitated event scheduled for our next meeting. What should I do?

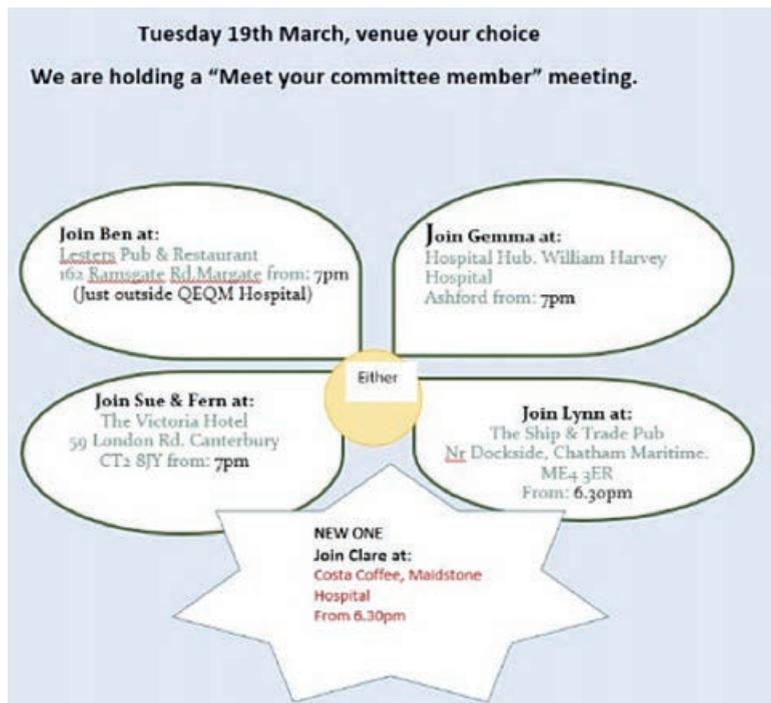
Suddenly I had a light bulb moment, why not give everybody what they wanted and hold several 'very local meetings' simultaneously. Fortunately, our committee members were from very different areas of Kent, so this meant that we could have a facilitator at each venue. That left the problem of the theme for the meetings. That seemed obvious, if the committee members were hosting why not a theme of 'meet your committee member'. I put the idea to the committee via our What's App group. The app seemed to come alive with positive responses. Five volunteers from various part of Kent agreed to host a meeting. We decided as a group to use a pub or coffee shop local to each of us and to make the meetings quite informal (drop in when you can) event. We had a flexible Agenda, based on how we could attract new members, why people were reluctant to join APTUK, and what we (Kent Branch) could do to attract people to our meetings.

## Was it a Success?

Four of the venues had between two to six people attend; the fifth venue unfortunately had nobody attend.

Response from the questions discussed at the meeting was that:

- People felt APTUK did not offer anything extra that they felt was of value to them.
- People had enough of Pharmacy during the day and just wanted to go home after a hard day's work to unwind.
- Meetings that were educational based were considered more useful than social/networking events.



Overall people that attended enjoyed the meeting; we got a lot of good comments & a few new members.

From a numbers point of view we achieved an increase in the total number of people compared to those that would have attended a normal meeting. We did have several apologies from people who would have normally attended meetings and some new faces.

## The Future

The feedback from the committee members was positive and we all felt it was worthwhile making this an annual event, not to replace the traditional meetings but as a supplement to other normal branch activities. The next time we may consider using skype between venues to connect everybody together.



**LYNN GALLAGHER**  
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**Have you registered for the new APTUK website?**  
**www.aptuk.org**

Ensure you log on to the members area to take advantage of the new features

# Service Transformation and Change Award Winners 2018

Alethea Murley with Lisa Miles and Julia Christie from Kent Community Hospital NHS Foundation Trust won 2018 Service Transformation and Change Award. Alethea has given a brief update on the service.

The initiative covers East Kent where our aim is to reduce the number of patients that need to have their medication administered by the community nursing team by educating and empowering them or their carers to administer their medication safely and manage their condition.

We have been trained to administer any medicines a patient may be prescribed and could potentially administer themselves so can take over if the patient is unable to self-administer.

Each patient was reviewed by the pharmacy team to assess whether they would be suitable to take over administration of their medicines with education and support.

Referrals are invited from -

- community nursing teams,
- intermediate care teams,
- rapid response,
- cardiac specialist nurses,
- respiratory specialist nurses,
- podiatry,
- any other health care professional that had been asked by a patient for advice about their medication.

There were some challenges along the way, for example:-

- Integrating with and being seen as part of multiple nursing teams.
- Encouraging patients (and nursing teams) who were used to nursing visits, of new ways of thinking.
- Patients who would be able to self-administer but refused to take part in scheme.
- Developing policies to account for changes to pharmacy technician roles.

The team worked closely with the diabetic specialist nurses to identify and refer patients whose blood glucose readings were out of range and helped patients manage dose changes. Many patients are started on insulin in hospital but are not given the education around diabetes/insulin/diet alongside, so the team provide the education and/or refer to diabetes specialist nurses.

As a result of our work:

- many patients are now able to self-administer their own medicines and manage their own conditions.
- increased freedom for patients to be able to go out as not waiting for visits from nurses.
- blood glucose readings improved as readings are taken and insulin given at correct times in relation to food, as not having to wait for nurses to visit.

Also from this work I now deliver the care home diabetes training and we support the competency sign offs for the carers.

We are also involved in administering intramuscular injections

such as the flu vaccinations and B12. Through this role other medication needs were identified and optimised through medication reviews and liaising with GP surgeries and the patient's community pharmacy.

As a result of our work we have recorded significant savings for the NHS.

### The Self-Administration of Medicines Scheme

Following a pilot in 2015 in the Swale area, where a Pharmacy Technician was employed to reduce the number of nursing visits for medication administration by supporting patients to self-administer their medicines, the service was taken up by the community nursing teams in East Kent. Four technicians were employed to cover South Kent Coast, Ashford, Canterbury & Coastal and Thanet.

The Technicians have been trained to administer any medicines a patient may be prescribed so can take over if the patient was unable to self-administer. They are also involved in administering intramuscular injections such as the flu vaccinations.

#### What has been taught?

*"I could not have coped without them..."*

**Objectives of the Scheme:**

- To reduce the number of patients on the community nursing caseload.
- To empower patients to self-care with their medicines.
- To put in place simple interventions to help a person to manage their medicines safely.

*"Very pleasant, caring and helpful..."*

**The results so far....**

The Technicians made many interventions to improve patient care and help with self-administration such as referring for insulin dose changes, changes to type of insulin, reviewing the medications, providing advice on medicines, providing aids to help people self-administer etc.

*"The service helped me to be independent..."*

*"Very kind and considerate..."*

#### How many discharges?

Of those 160 patients on insulin 24 were referred to a GP or diabetic nurse as their blood glucose levels were out of range

Out of all the patients referred, 20 had specific medicines related interventions such as putting into place tick sheets, arranging medicines to run out at the same time, and organising delivering services from the community pharmacy.

**A total of £734,960 per year has been saved so far.**

There is work going on currently to expand the service to other teams, such as the short term services (ICT) plus specialist nurses.

(All data from September 2016 to September 2017)



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# SS10 – A Multidisciplinary Approach to Medication Reconciliation in the Emergency Department

The Emergency Department (ED) has become an important and growing area where clinical pharmacists are practicing, supporting medical staff and importantly offering a valuable contribution to improving patient flow.

However, with greater involvement from a pharmacy perspective in utilising the skills of a wider pharmacy team further improvements to the patient journey can be achieved.

One organisation that has successfully implemented a multidisciplinary approach in the ED is Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It was with great anticipation that I introduced this specialist session at the recent APTUK Conference, having recently been involved in a pilot in the ED at my own Trust to determine ways in which technical staff could support the clinical pharmacist role.

The session was delivered by Victoria Heald, Highly Specialist Pharmacist and Bhavesh Rathod, Medicines Management Pharmacy Technician, giving a valuable insight into how the introduction of a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting the ED had been successful.

The session began with a heart thumping scenario... Bhavesh set the scene ...an ambulance was arriving at the ED, as the pharmacy technician on duty you had 30 seconds to make critical decisions regarding the situation in front of you, and as the clock ticked the realisation that this is a situation faced in the ED every day set in. My heart did literally thump, and time appeared to stand still, followed by a couple of blank seconds before I was able to think clearly and decide what to do next.

The slide set that followed outlined the differences between working in an ED and that of other wards and departments and the personal qualities that are required.

## Multidisciplinary working and learning

- You are known as 'Pharmacy' there is no distinction in the team

All pharmacy queries come to you!

## Remain calm under pressure

- Can be a high demand on Pharmacy all at once

## Be really organised

- Multiple work streams can occur, things can change instantly

## Good at prioritising workload

- Faster pace of work than on wards, things can and do change quickly

## Greater 'emotional intelligence' of self and others

- Dealing with 'raw' patients, straight from the ambulance
- Seeing things you don't normally see on the wards for example - trauma, intoxication, distress
- Staying professional at all times

Following a pilot in 2018 in which pharmacy supported the ED between the hours of 5.00pm and 7.30 pm (2017 data had showed that this was the time that 29% of 4 hour breaches occurred) and a successful business case, the pharmacy ED team now comprises of 5 prescribing pharmacists, 3 pharmacy technicians and a medicines management assistant who also provide cover for Medical Assessment Unit (MAU).

The ED pharmacy service runs from:

8.00 am – 8.00 pm Monday – Friday

8.00 am – 5.30 pm Sunday

9.00 am – 5.00 pm Bank Holidays

Not only does the team provide patient focussed care with drug history taking, medication counselling, discharge planning, medication transfer from the ED to receiving wards, it supports from a governance perspective the safe storage and security of medicines and also participates in audits, for example controlled drug records and transfers.

There is a wider team-based approach within ED that enables pharmacy staff to support further in upholding good standards, challenging bad practice in relation to medicines and provides opportunities for further education in medication safety.

Having witnessed the effect of making split second decisions and felt the panic myself, one of the last points made with regards to working in ED is the absolute importance of 'downtime', with regular meetings with colleagues from the multidisciplinary team, an opportunity to talk and share experiences.

The session left no doubt in my mind that this is an extremely worthwhile career route for pharmacy technicians, but that it wouldn't be for everybody, but for the patient journey the team at Lancashire know they 'make a positive difference'.

What are the future plans for this team?

- Ipads to be introduced to ensure that clinical information is available for example Medusa for information on injectable medicines**
- To work with North West Ambulance Service (NWS) to encourage patient medicines to be brought into the ED with the patient**
- Electronic medication storage to reduce medication errors**
- Extend to a 7-day service**
- Integrate into ED handovers and further educate**
- Pharmacy Technicians – introduce Clinical Diploma**

It is important to initiate and expand the use of pharmacy technicians in environments where they can have the greatest impact, working as part of a wider multidisciplinary team. The results of 5 months hard work by the entire team at Lancashire NHS Foundation Trust are shown in the statistics below:

- Spent 1172 clinical hours in ED**
- 2085 patients (average of 33.7 minutes spent with each patient)**
- Ordered 402 critical medicines**
- Made 623 interventions**
- Started 221 new prescription charts**
- Prescribed 773 medicines**
- De-prescribed 179 medicines**
- Prevented 129 on call queries**

*Continued overleaf >*

Finally.....Thank you to Victoria and Bhavesh for delivering an informative, thought provoking and interactive presentation in the Dorchester Suite and to the wider pharmacy team at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust many congratulations on receiving the winner's trophy for the APTUK Award for Excellence in Pharmacy Practice 2019.



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## SS11 - Developing the Clinical Role of Pharmacy Technicians in Mental Health

Presented by Neelam Sharma, Chief Pharmacy Technician, Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust.

Neelam has worked in mental health for 16 years in different trusts and various acute hospital settings. Neelam was the first pharmacy technician to undertake the Post Graduate Certificate in Psychiatric Therapeutics which opened up the qualification for other pharmacy technicians. She was a council member of the College of Mental Health Pharmacy from 2017 to 2018 and is currently the pharmacy technician member of the General Pharmaceutical Council Appointments Committee. As Chief Pharmacy Technician in Medicines Management, Education and Training she set up the medicines reconciliation service across 3 hospitals covering 50 wards and also ran a medication clinic at the Maudsley Hospital.

So, what did Neelam need to do this work? Tenacity, ambition, support and having the confidence to push boundaries. Always keep asking questions, volunteer and know when to say no.

Neelam is working at the “top of her license” and to achieve this she gained an undergraduate degree. She also studied for a Post Graduate Certificate in Psychiatric Therapeutics at Aston University and to extend her clinical training she also completed the Clozapine Accreditation.

These qualifications have helped Neelam to use her knowledge to train and up skill other pharmacy technicians.

She has trained pharmacy technicians to write articles on mental health topics, case studies and improving medicines safety. Staff were trained to present topics to pharmacy staff who work in the acute and other sectors and setting up services with community mental health teams.

Neelam explained some of the challenges of setting up clinical services.

She stressed the importance of checking the validity of prescriptions, checking doses, frequency, interactions and contraindications. Training is given on how to check ECGs, difficult medicines reconciliation, prescription reviews, side effects and treatment options.

Neelam's workshop gave excellent insight for pharmacy technicians wanting to develop an extended role in Mental Health.

“SO, WHAT DID **NEELAM** NEED TO DO THIS WORK? **TENACITY, AMBITION, SUPPORT AND HAVING THE CONFIDENCE TO PUSH BOUNDARIES**”



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# SS15 – Maximising Clinical Efficiency Using Today's Digital Systems

Faraaz Hussain, Clinical Lead, Live Services NHS Digital

Faraaz introduced the session by asking the delegates to list the different systems we use in our workplace. We categorised these into the following groups and were amazed at the length of our lists:

- Electronic patient records systems
- Data analytics tools
- Communication tools
- Mobile apps, medical devices and diagnostics

Faraaz went on to remind us of the pledge to rid the NHS of using faxes and embedding the use of NHS Mail of which there are 1.322 million users. Future developments of NHS Mail portal include:

- Self-authentication
  - Portal search functionality
  - Directory
  - Mailbox alias which will improve mailbox naming conventions.
- Summary Care Records (SCR) development includes additional information flags, repeat medications, end of life care and communication preferences. The SCR app will enable users to access their own records. The iPad mobile SCR app will remove the need for a smart card and use fingerprint technology. SCR will also be rolled out to users in new care settings: dental

practices, care homes, private hospitals, Ministry of Defence, substance misuse clinics.

Future clinical informatics will allow records to be kept of time of admission through to discharge and give a warning when time is running out to carry out a medicine's reconciliation checklist. Dashboards to identify patients on high risk medications will enable doctors to prioritise who to see first on ward rounds.

Faraaz concluded his session by highlighting the extremes of technology used in each trust and reminded us of the risks of using WhatsApp as data is held outside the UK. He also highlighted the NHS app as one of the best new developments. The app provides a symptom checker, appointment portal, medication histories and being able to order repeat medications.



**DIANE MEECH**  
MAPharmT  
APTUK Past Director of Finance

## APTUK What we are working on...

- **Co-commissioning with Health Education England the UK wide role analysis of foundation practice for pharmacy technicians**
- Key purpose to support the education pathway for newly registered pharmacy technicians to escalate through their careers
- Support standardisation and opportunity for pharmacy technicians to support patient care and national policy
- **Co-developing a national Primary Care Pharmacy Technician Education Framework with the Primary Care Pharmacy Association**
- Provide a national framework to support a standardised quality assured education pathway for pharmacy technicians wanting to specialise in primary care roles in a structured way
- Provide job descriptions for employers so that there is wider understanding of the scope of practice pharmacy technicians can provide in these roles
- **Publishing the updated National Framework for Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines and Products**
- Making it reflective of current practice
- Supporting Standardisation and Quality Assurance of education provision
- **Working with key partners to support the implementation of the GPhC 2017 initial education and training standards for pharmacy technicians across the UK**
- **Providing tools to support revalidation**
- Examples and advice on completing entries
- Signposting to local branch for peer discussion
- Training of APTUK revalidation champions (Do you need a peer?)
- **Providing...**
- A forum for pharmacy technicians to be kept up to date on policy and issues which impact on the profession through a branch network
- Virtual branches for pharmacy technicians who don't have a local branch or who don't want to leave the comfort of their own home
  - New Technical Services Virtual Branch – See p40
  - Virtual Branch hosted by Kent Branch – See p41
- **A forum to have your voice heard and utilised in response to proposed changes in policy across all home countries (responding to a consultation as a profession)**
- **Building collaborative relationships with key partners and stakeholders across the pharmacy professions**
- **Our offer to Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians – Free to join!**



## Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK)

The Professional Leadership Body for Pharmacy Technicians

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

### Reasons to join APTUK.....



#### APTUK Events

- Free attendance to all APTUK branch events and exclusive discount to the APTUK annual professional conference



#### Access to all online resources

- National Education Frameworks, training videos, revalidation tools and support
- Presentation library - presentations from all of the APTUK events
- Poster library - Large resource of posters displayed at APTUK and other events (opportunity to showcase your own work and achievements using this platform)



#### Subscription to the Pharmacy Technician Journal

- Quarterly journal containing updates on recent activity from APTUK and the pharmacy technician profession, highlights and educational articles.



#### Opportunity to have your say

- Respond to consultations that influence and impact on the pharmacy technician profession
- Enhance your career by representing your profession (with full support) on local, regional and national platforms

#### Use of post nominal MAPHarmT

### MAPharmT

- Celebrate your professional status through the use of the APTUK member post nominal MAPHarmT, Member of the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK



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# Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK)

The Professional Leadership Body for Pharmacy Technicians

## YOU SAID

## ~ WE DID

**“How are APTUK working with other organisations?”**

*“ we are currently co-developing a National Primary Care Pharmacy Technician Education Framework with the Primary Care Pharmacy Association as well as a joint membership benefits for Pharmacy Technicians engaged with both organisations We are actively building collaborative relationships with key partners and stakeholders across the pharmacy professions having widened the membership and refreshed the Terms of Reference of the Partners Engagement Group. The Vice President and newly appointed Partners Relationship/Engagement Associate will take our partnership work agenda forward “*

**“Can APTUK keep in mind that Pharmacy Technicians are part of a Multidisciplinary team & as such we need to be mindful to “pitch” ourselves in the multi professional arena ?”**

*“We have co-commissioned with Health Education England, a UK Wide Role Analysis of Foundation Practice for Pharmacy Technicians to support the education pathway for newly registered pharmacy technicians to escalate through their careers and to support standardisation and opportunity for pharmacy technicians to support patient care, be integral to the multidisciplinary team and develop national policy“*

**“how are APTUK supporting Technical Services?”**

*“We are providing a forum for pharmacy technicians to be kept up to date on policy and issues which impact on the profession through our branch network with a virtual Technical Service Branch and have recently appointed a Technical Services associate to lead this work.”*

**“What is the role of the revalidation champion?”**

*“These will be volunteers within branches and who will receive face to face training to support members with their revalidation evidence and arranging their peer discussions. We have examples and advice on the website and our learning platform will be able to hold your revalidation evidence and record your progress”*

**Could APTUK champion getting Pharmacy Technicians on Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs)?**

**“ This will be built into the communications and engagement strategy”**

**Can the accounts be audited?**

*“ This will be considered and the finance workstream will be looking at costs and companies who could be contracted to do this work”*

**Can ex-Pats on the GPhC register have an APTUK membership category?**

*“ This will be investigated further and considered by the board”*

**What is the purpose of updating the National Framework for Final Accuracy Checking of Dispensed Medicines and Products?**

*“The framework is now reflective of current practice, supporting standardisation and quality assurance of education provision for pharmacy technicians undergoing their ACT training”*

**Are APTUK still championing to get PTPT registered with the GPhC, in light of changes in the IET?**

*“APTUK are working with key partners to support the implementation of the GPhC 2017 Initial education and training standards for pharmacy technicians across the UK. PTPT leads will be tasked with looking at the case for PTPT registration. PTPT membership of APTUK continues to be FREE.*

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