



PHARMACY TECHNICIAN JOURNAL

AUTUMN 2024

Journal of the Association of
Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom



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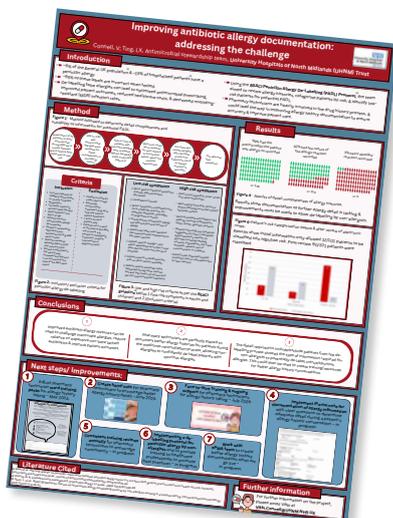
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DIANE TORRY MPharmT – Editor
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Welcome To Our Bumper Post-Conference Edition

If you were able to attend this year's conference in Nottingham, I hope you found it as inspirational and informative as I did.

The atmosphere was amazing – lots of pharmacy technicians coming together to share ideas, inspire others and generally talk about all things 'pharmacy' as well as letting our hair down at the awards dinner and disco afterwards, there were a lot of sore feet (and a few sore heads!) on Saturday!

If you didn't get the opportunity to attend, we have some exciting news further on in this edition. We are announcing the date and venue for APTUK conference 2025 – further announcements will be made as details are confirmed but save the date in your diary.

Along with all of the conference coverage we have some of our regular features from the executive committee, including a welcome to our newest committee member, Linda Henderson, who has been appointed as Professional Lead for Scotland. You can read more about Linda and her career to date on page 13

We have updates from a number of branches, including our new PTPT branch and our 'Branch of the year' Sussex.

And there are, of course, several articles written by you, our members. You are the ones that make this publication possible, and I can't thank you enough for sharing your stories with us. Please continue to submit your articles and if there is anything you want to see featured in the PTJ, get in touch – we'd love to hear from you.

'Your visions, ideas and plans have the power to shape the future, but not if you keep them to yourself.'

Gloria Feldt

Apology

In the last edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal, we inadvertently accredited an article to the wrong author. Once it was brought to our attention, it was quickly corrected in the digital version and was also corrected for the printed copy. We would like to apologize to Andrea McConkey for this error and have reviewed our procedures to ensure this does not happen again.

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PTJ 2024 timeline

Edition	Copy Deadline
Winter	30 th December 2024

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Subscription available on request. For more information contact membership@aptuk.org.



NICOLA STOCKMANN MAPHARM T – APTUK PRESIDENT
president@aptuk.org

President's Column

I am delighted to share our conference edition of our APTUK annual conference 2024, with the theme Shaping the Future.

A heartfelt thank you to the delegates, sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and to the executive committee members who worked so hard before and during the conference to deliver this wonderful event.

Key announcements during our conference included:

- APTUK to hold a UK-wide register of pharmacy technicians looking to take part in research activities.
- David Webb, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England announced that NHS England (NHSE) will fund 530 apprenticeships in community pharmacy for pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians.
- Due to a direct challenge from APTUK, the MHRA have now included pharmacy technicians as a healthcare profession who are now able to report directly Yellow Card interactions.

A huge congratulations to our newly appointed Fellows of the Association at this year's conference, and thank you to our

newly founded APTUK Fellows' Forum members for judging nominations for the first time:

Parampreet Bahia
Lisa Green
Katherine Watkinson

In the spirit of the conference theme, our 2022-2026 strategy is being reviewed by our executive committee in the latter half of this year. We recognise that so many of the aims set out in our current strategy have been achieved or significant progress has been made towards them. To maintain a strategic and future-focused path, we will be proactive in our review so please watch this space, and we will also continue to be part of the UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board. Please see Amy Laflin's column for further workstreams we are involved in, and upcoming events we will be attending.

Enjoy this edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal!

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Vice President's Update

What a summer it has been, hopefully all our members across the UK have had some sunshine and a well-deserved break.

As we move into late summer, I am delighted that we still have so much to look forward to and report back on.

Echoing Nicola from the president's column, if you missed the APTUK annual conference this year, it was a wonderful two days, where we got to meet so many members. I would like to express a thanks to Neil Layborn and Jonny Benjamin for joining us as our keynote speakers this year. Raising awareness and sharing their journeys on mental health and the work they have put into supporting others within the UK.

Please do keep an eye out for our early bird tickets on sale soon for APTUK conference 2025. We are looking forward to announcing the venue soon.

As we look forward to the remaining months, seasons, events and festivals of 2024, we are now approaching the main conferences and APTUK are looking forward to being present at Pharmacy Show, CPC North, RPS, BOPA and Day Lewis conferences, so if you are attending, please visit the APTUK and come and meet the committee. We are always excited to meet our members and PTJ readers.

I am delighted to be working with Phil Jones, Education Director, on a lot of projects within education and so we will keep you updated on our work here over the next few editions of the PTJ.

You will see an education update from Phil further into this edition.

Finally, I have had the pleasure of reinstating the crucial partners engagement group. This group enables APTUK to share its work with stakeholders and key organisations to ensure a quality and robust service is delivered to our members and to the wider pharmacy technician profession. So, rest assured, we are collaborating and engaging our partners and stakeholders on all key work including the work on the pharmacy technician career frameworks. If you attended conference, you would have seen Kerry Street present on this topic.

APTUK has been commissioned by Health Education in Wales (HEIW) to undertake a review and refresh of the pharmacy technician career frameworks and career pathways. So, we are delighted to announce this was started early 2024 and is underway at present time. We are excited to share the results with members and the pharmacy technician profession soon.

I will look forward to updating you on key pieces of work again in the next edition, where next time, hopefully, you might be snuggled up in the warm for our winter edition.



AMY LAFLIN
MAPharmT
APTUK Vice President
vicepresident@aptuk.org

APTUK Membership information

CURRENT FEES

To join APTUK follow this link:
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Early Years: £60 for 18 months or £4 per month
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For support with username and password, please contact Lynn Ali, the Membership Coordinator.

APTUK JOURNAL

Four editions of the journal are published digitally. Printed copies available on request. All members, including trainees can access previous and current editions via the member's only area on the APTUK website:

www.aptuk.org/key-resources-page/PTJournal.

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

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Contact details for Lynn Ali – APTUK Membership Coordinator

Email: membership@aptuk.org

Welcome To The APTUK Branch Update

I would like to start this update by sending a massive congratulations to the Sussex branch for winning APTUK Branch of the year 2024. What an honour it was to be able to present the award to you and thank you in person for the incredible hard work and dedication you have put in over the year for the APTUK members.

Moving on to the branches, yet again they have all been working hard and have been busy organising and delivering sessions to APTUK members. There has been some great feedback from those that attended. I have been fortunate to attend most of the sessions being delivered, and really enjoyed the variety of topics being presented and also the follow up discussions and conversations. Branches are great at providing you with networking opportunities. You can share and gain knowledge and experiences from other pharmacy technicians across the United Kingdom and get to know people in your areas or across the UK.

Some notable moments so far have been the very first South West Branch meeting since the last PTJ and the East Midlands relaunch face to face meeting held at the APTUK conference. You can read more about the East Midlands face to face meeting in their article, as well as hearing from the PTPT branch following their first successful branch meeting. The Mental Health APTUK/CMHP branch went live a couple of months ago also and had a great turnout from both APTUK and CMHP members. Turnout to all these meetings was incredible and it was great to see such enthusiasm attendees had for the branches they were joining.

We have a new branch! I am proud to announce the new Pride branch and chair Jason Benning Professional, Lead Pharmacy Technician Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. The Pride branch has recently went live in September this

year please check out the branch page on the website for more information and how to contact Jason and get involved. There will be meeting dates advertised on the branches pages. Hoping to see many of you at the first meeting.

We also have a couple of new regional and speciality branches coming up and I will be able to share more detail about those via social media, the website and the membership newsletter shortly.

News

Are you passionate about being a pharmacy technician and have the energy enthusiasm time and skills to lead? If so, we want to hear from you. Scotland Branch is looking for new committee members. If you are interested and want to know more about it please get in contact to discuss. You will have the full support of APTUK executives, including the new professional lead for Scotland Linda Henderson who we welcomed this September.

We have recently said goodbye to the existing Scotland APTUK branch committee. I would like to say a massive thank you for all their hard work and dedication to APTUK over the years and we wish them all well.

Last note from me don't forget branch website is where you will find all the upcoming branch events and the recordings for those sessions recorded. The branches also use social media via the APTUK account to share dates and details of upcoming events.



KRISTY GARTON
MAPharmT

Branch Liaison Executive
branchliaison@aptuk.org

New Branch: Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician Branch

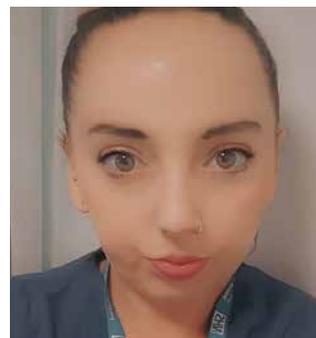


My name is Emma. I am the pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician branch Chair.

I have over 25 year's pharmacy experience in multiple sectors including community pharmacy and wholesale where I acquired a breadth of experience. In 2013

I moved into secondary care and the NHS. In this time, I have worked as a clinical ward-based pharmacy technician in a large acute trust and currently work as a specialist lead pharmacy technician in medicine safety. Over the years I gained lots of clinical knowledge however, looking back I feel there was never an opportunity to gain professional work base skills such as leadership, direction, communication skills, networking, civility, behaviour framework and feedback. The pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician branch will provide you with the skill and direction to wherever your passion lies. Don't know where your pharmacy technician road will take you or unsure of the roles available out there as pharmacy technicians? This is also something we can support you with on your pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician journey!

The branch is made up of several dedicated committee members who help run and support the branch. Laura, Dan and Gavin are all pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians and passionate about their roles and chosen profession. Hear from each of them and their experiences and journeys so far:



My name is Lauren, and I am currently a second-year pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician working in a tri-sector post in the southwest. I am fortunate to gain experience across various sectors where pharmacy technicians play a crucial role in the healthcare system. I am passionate about patient care and supporting patients with

their medications, and I aspire to advance this further once I am registered. I have been an APTUK member since starting the course and am now proud to serve as a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician branch committee member, where I hope to be able to network and support other pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians on their journey.



My name is Gavin, and I am currently a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician working in a cross-sector post in Birmingham. I've been in pharmacy for 3 years with experience in community and hospital pharmacy. I joined the NHS because I wanted to make a difference. As someone who has often been at the receiving end of the healthcare system, I

know what good healthcare can do for patients. I aspire to be a role model for young people and advance in the profession once I qualify. I have been a member of APTUK since beginning my course. Now that I'm a proud pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician branch committee member, it allows me the opportunity to further contribute to my professional leadership body and the pharmacy technician profession.



My name's Daniel and I am currently just past halfway through my pharmacy technician training course, which I am doing in community pharmacy in Surrey. Having worked in both large multiple and independent pharmacies as a dispenser before starting my training, I have a fair bit of community pharmacy

experience behind me. I am very ambitious and highly value education and training, so I am looking forward to using this to help the members of our pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician branch in their paths to registration and practice. I'm very proud to be part of our professional leadership body and excited to be able to further improve the support pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians can receive from APTUK!

APTUK / CMHP Branch Meeting

The APTUK/CMHP Mental Health Branch has established a full branch committee, and they were introduced at the second branch meeting on 2nd October.

The branch committee are:

- Louise Revell**, Branch Chair
- Ciara Hallows**, Branch Social Media Lead
- Claire Buter**, Branch Social Secretary
- Katherine Watkinson**, Branch Secretary

More than 25 pharmacy technicians joined the main session delivered by Caroline Lawrence MPharmT BSc (hons) PGCert, Lead Pharmacy Technician at Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust. The session focused on anxiety disorders. Caroline highlighted how common anxiety is and how to recognise and support people whose anxiety impacts their quality of life. The session gave a clear overview of the different types of anxiety and how they are diagnosed. Anxiety can present with a wide of variety of symptoms and this leads to challenges when diagnosing anxiety as many of the symptoms are initially associated with other physical and mental health conditions. Caroline explained the variety of psychological and pharmacological treatments available for anxiety, giving a clear overview of the range of medications, their mechanisms of action and place in NICE guidelines. The session highlighted the importance of checking the indication for different medications, for example, SSRIs are often assumed to be prescribed for depression, but they are also a first line pharmacological treatment for some anxiety disorders. Caroline helped those in attendance understand

the role of pharmacy technicians in the treatment of anxiety disorders including reviewing benzodiazepine use, working with other members of the multidisciplinary team to support correct diagnosis, signposting and referral, medication counselling and considering co-morbidities. Caroline closed the session with helpful advice on how to support someone that is struggling with anxiety; this included support from organisations including the Samaritans, mental health crisis helplines and texting "SHOUT" to 85258 for support from the charity Mental Health Innovations.

The meeting closed with updates from APTUK and CMHP with a reminder that pre-registration pharmacy technicians can access free membership to both organisations for the duration of their training. Pharmacy technicians are eligible to apply for CMHP bursaries and the next PsychPharmTechs event is scheduled to take place on 4th April 2025. It would also be fantastic to see more pharmacy technicians submitting posters and oral presentations at the APTUK and CMHP conferences. Attendees highlighted current challenges in their practice including medicines safety and implementation of EPMA, the meeting gave an excellent opportunity for people to network and share their experiences in these areas.

We are planning a festive social and the next full meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 8th January and will take place on Teams, the topic will be pharmacy technicians in community mental health teams, please contact mentalhealthbranch@aptuk.org if you would like to attend or present at future meetings or for any further information.

Say "Hello" To Your New East Midlands APTUK Branch

The East Midlands APTUK Branch has officially relaunched with a fresh set of faces at the helm. Before we introduce your new Branch Leads, we would like to offer a big shout of appreciation to Lianne Whitehead who previously chaired the East Midlands Branch single-handedly for some time. Lianne is now moving on to pastures new, and we wish her all the best and hope to make her proud going forward!

The East Midlands Branch relaunched at the conference, at the start of September, with a face-to-face meeting in Nottingham...well, it was on our patch!

It was an opportunity to meet and greet members and promote the relaunch of the branch. We started the meeting with a quiz on all things pharmacy technician related. Members were very knowledgeable and excited to win a box of chocolates! Following the quiz, there was a group discussion on topics for future meetings, and the Branch Leads introduced themselves and their areas of specialty, which could become themes for future meetings. Let's introduce you to them:



Angharad Thorpe, Leicester

I am the Chief Pharmacy Technician for University Hospitals of Leicester and work across the three hospitals sites of our busy acute hospital Trust. I am very much looking forward to working with other fabulous pharmacy technicians

to support the East Midlands APTUK branch. I have worked in the NHS for over 30 years now, working across both hospital and prison pharmacy sectors. I have worked in a range of interesting specialties, which include homecare and infectious diseases. I am keen to network and am focused on promoting positive workplace cultures and greater opportunities for both pharmacy technicians and pharmacy support workers.



Clare Filipowicz, Nottingham

I am dedicated to advocating the significance of pharmacy technicians and the opportunities for learning and advancement in this field. I believe every pharmacy technician should have the opportunity to cultivate a career

that reflects their talents and passion so they can strive for excellence and innovation.



Gail Hall, Derbyshire

I have a portfolio career working two part-time roles as the Pharmacy Workforce Lead for Joined Up Care Derbyshire and as the Programme Development Lead for Buttercups Training with a focus on programmes for post-registration pharmacy technicians.

I have a passion for research and am currently in my final year of a doctorate in clinical education at the University of Leeds. Pharmacy technicians as researchers are rare and I am hoping that our branch can promote research and inspire others to undertake doctorate level qualifications and research projects.



Sarah Sharman, Chesterfield

I am a Senior Pharmacy Technician for Chesterfield Royal Hospital but have been part of workforce development for the last year with the Pharmacy Faculty for Joined Up Care Derbyshire. Having worked in multiple sectors throughout

my career, I am looking forward to inspiring our branch members about the varying career paths available to a pharmacy technician, and the different roles they can pursue. My personal career interests lie within education and training, and research.



Sian Pickering, Leicester

I am from Leicester, and I am the Lead Pharmacy Technician for Clinical Services at the University Hospitals of Leicester. I am really excited to be a part of this East Midlands branch, and I hope to bring better knowledge and understanding of all the varying roles out there for

pharmacy technicians throughout the profession.

We are looking forward to developing a network in the East Midlands. If you are an APTUK member, living or working in the East Midlands and want to join us, please send us your details to eastmidlandsbranch@aptuk.org and we'll add you to our mailing list.

We have scheduled the meetings for the next 12 months, aiming to cover topics identified at the relaunch.

Meetings will take place online between 7-8pm on:

- 9th January 2025
- 8th May 2025
- 9th October 2025

If you would like to get in touch with the East Midlands branch team, please email eastmidlandsbranch@aptuk.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

Angharad, Clare, Gail, Sarah and Sian

Kent And Medway Pharmacy Professionals Conference – 8th September 2024

On 8th September I attended the first Kent and Medway conference at the Medway School of Pharmacy, travelling up by car from the Kent coast. Once I arrived, (there was plenty of free parking!) I was welcomed into the conference.

The conference agenda was shared prior to the event and like other pharmacy conferences there was an opportunity to share the great work pharmacy teams are doing in their different sectors with posters displaying their achievements and the processes they had taken.

There were a number of speakers presenting at the event on the following topics:

- Sustainable Healthcare, with a focus on health inequalities.
- The Future of the Pharmacy Workforce - looking at how the various NHS publications are affecting NHS workforce for the future and the soon to be published Pharmacy Technician Workforce Development Strategy - aligning workforce development with population health needs.
- Inclusive Pharmacy Practice and Allyship – doing the right thing for the success of the organisation.
- STOMP-STAMP – an initiative to ensure that the right medications are used for the right patients, for the right reason, the right time and for the right amount of time.
- Harnessing the potential for maximising pharmacy technicians in Kent and Medway – getting some feedback about how the pharmacy services are used across the sectors and the positive effects this has had.
- Coach a Pharmacist Prescriber Online platform and cross sector STAIRS programme.

There was also a choice of workshops; I attended the primary

care workshop as this is relevant to my practice area and I was interested in how the speaker's team in the PCN was built up. The presentation was very thorough and gave me some ideas to take back with me.

During the conference there was the opportunity for attendees to vote for posters and prizes were given to colleagues with the most votes. All posters demonstrated innovative changes made to better safe patient care.

All presentations were very informative and there is undoubtedly much to learn from our colleagues in other sectors. It was also very good to bump into previous colleagues and make connections with new attendees and see what they have been up to, sharing experiences and learning opportunities.

I found this event informative with some of the work undertaken having vast impacts on services for patients and patient care and it was inspiring to hear.

The hope for this event is that it continues as an annual event as it is a great opportunity for learning, networking and sharing best practice across all care settings. I will be attending next year and will be really interested in seeing this develop.



GEMMA ROLF
MPharmT

Kent and Medway branch chair
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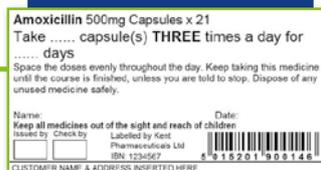
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EDI Update

With the horrible, racism driven events that occurred earlier this summer, I thought it poignant to reflect as the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead for your professional leadership body.

I have feelings interchanging between frustration and anger to sadness and disappointment. Anger and frustration that a far right, extremist minority can have such influence in inflicting devastating effects on people's lives and livelihoods. Conversely, the sadness and disappointment stems from the efforts and tangible steps that were made to eradicate racism, through valuing inclusivity and embracing diversity in our society, have all been shattered. Allyship is a fundamental asset at times like these, with need for proactive stances to unravel the decades damage that these race riots may have inflicted. These riots only lead me to view the systemic issues more closely that are present everywhere around us.

For those that are less familiar with my background, I am a proud Muslim, born and raised in the United Kingdom (UK). I'm a child born to migrant parents of Pakistani ethnicity. I'm a married woman with a young family made up of three children. Giving you this context will hopefully provide a background to how these recent events affected me and allow you to empathise with my perceptions.

Upon first hearing about the rioting, I was filled with dread of the notion that once again Muslims are being targeted. However, upon delving into news and media coverage, deciphering the misinformation which spread like wildfire, the attacks were not only driven by dislike of Islam, its teachings and its followers, but it also became apparent that asylum seekers and migrant homes, centres and safe havens were being attacked. I hastened to message friends and acquaintances that I had had little recent contact with to ensure they were safe. These news stories and those alike, were not only gut wrenching and sickening, but began to exacerbate my anxiety and fears. I couldn't help but just understand that being "British" has another meaning for the rioters, an opportunistic provocation to display innate white supremacy and exceptionalism. Questions such as

- "What has this place become?"
- "Do I belong here?"
- "Where do I go if I don't feel safe in this country?"
- "Is my family safe here?"
- "Is anyone safe here?"

My perception was that potentially I may be a target because of the religion I chose to follow, but that is something I do not wish to change therefore I am able to fathom the possible consequences. However, what I wasn't prepared for was to be a target because of the colour of my skin – a constant

unchangeable variable. Skin colour is determined by genetics, and predominately not something that can be altered (unless you develop a sunkissed tan, in which case, obviously, the skin will become darker toned). As a someone that is classed as dark-skinned Pakistani, I have recollections of several experiences of racism, inter-racism, victimisation, harassment and bullying directly due to the colour of my skin in the past and being vilified for it.

The view of colourism is not new but is often described to have inter-racial foundations, whereby racism is between different races. As Pharmacy Workforce Race Equality Standards and many studies have found, quite distressingly, the darker the skin tone, the wider the pay and differential attainment gap. These stark, difficult to digest findings are just the tip of the iceberg to perpetuate the issues we must face in modern day Britain.

As a pharmacy profession we are very privileged to have the astounding work of the Inclusive Pharmacy Practice (IPP) initiative, which is a testament to our vision at APTUK and as a pharmacy wide profession, which endeavours to bridge the gaps of inequalities and inequities amongst every member of the profession, irrespective of the protected characteristics such as race, gender (including gender reassignment), sexuality, marital status, abilities and disabilities, pregnancy and maternity status, religious beliefs and faith. In my view, neither race, creed or colour determine the successfulness of someone. Components such as characteristics, attributes or the intelligence of an individual would have a greater influence on the success of the individual. For me, true success is being a kind and considerate person, and for this to be achieved, enshrining EDI fundamentals are essential. Embracing diversity and valuing the qualities that diversity brings, with specific personal lived experiences, will allow us all to become more inclusive. Inclusivity is the key to eradicating biases including racism and Islamophobia. For me I have profound difficulty in understanding the term Islamophobia. This simply derives from the meaning of the word Islam, which means peace, hence I think to myself "how can anyone have a fear of peace?"

This is why as an EDI lead, I would like to share with yourselves the mantra for inclusivity, which is the 3 E's: Engage, Educate and Empower. The 3 E's principle was coined to understand how we can develop change, within ourselves, others and our workplaces to ensure inclusivity. The first step is to ascertain engagement of individuals or target population you would like to elicit a change within. Literature, webinars, resources and discussions are all suggestive ways we can help build knowledge and get across messages we are wanting to convey for educational purposes. Lastly, we need to embolden and empower the target audience to enact the change required. Give them the opportunity to build self-belief to make the desired change to reap the benefits.

As per the statements released by APTUK and partner organisations that there is clear anti-racism stance and a zero tolerance for any forms of discrimination, including Islamophobia, within our pharmacy profession.



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Education Update - Mapping Pharmacy Technician Careers



At 1,085 metres, Snowdon stands as the highest mountain in Wales and England, offering at least 10 recognized routes to its summit. When planning a route up Snowdon—or any peak—careful consideration is essential. The choice of path should be guided by your skills, goals, and experience. For instance, the Llanberis Path is relatively easy, while the Watkin Path presents more challenges, and Crib Goch is the most demanding.

Similarly, navigating your career pathway as a pharmacy technician requires thoughtful exploration. You may prefer a flexible approach, blending different routes, rather than adhering to a rigid, predetermined path. It is crucial that the available paths are clearly marked and described, with clear explanations of the skills required and the outcomes to be achieved.

Significant investments have been made across the UK to enhance pharmaceutical patient care, supported by major reforms in the initial education and training of pharmacists. These changes, alongside proposed legislative adjustments, will lead to increased clinical responsibilities for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

The pharmacy technician workforce is well-positioned to support these workforce changes and maximize their impact on patient care and public health outcomes. However, to fully harness this potential, a clearly defined post-registration development framework is needed. This framework should recognize and develop the knowledge and skills of pharmacy technicians, formalize education pathways, and prepare the profession for enhanced and advanced future roles.

Currently, various pharmacy technician development frameworks exist across the UK, outlining the competencies

required for enhanced and advanced roles. However, these frameworks are not consistently adopted nationwide, highlighting the need for greater clarity and standardisation.

So, phase 1 of a project commissioned by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) to APTUK is underway utilising Pharmacy Workforce development South (PWDS) and Bath University to focus on the following specifications:

Phase 1 a)

- Scope the current evidence base for future pharmacy technician roles.
- Create a role analysis for pharmacy technicians in 5 to 10 years.
- Consider how the pharmacy technician roles and career pathway fit within the multi-professional landscape and the whole pharmacy team.
- Produce a gap analysis from the scoping work

Phase 1 b)

- Describe the high-level career pathway for pharmacy technicians.
 - Engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Royal Pharmaceutical Society as a key partner, to review and refresh any existing post registration frameworks, to align with the evidence base.
 - Engage any necessary external expertise to scope and evaluate the evidence base for future pharmacy technician roles.
- Phase 1 has already had a very positive response with focus groups having good representation across working groups and home nations.

So, what's next? Phase 2 will look at the development of curricula for the initial elements of post registration practice with Phase 3 looking at the development of a programmatic assessment for the initial element of post registration practice with associated credentialing or

its equivalent and provide an indication of supporting education and training.

How can and will pharmacy technicians be involved in this?

“We must take time to define our own path. Too quickly we can find the world defining it for us.”

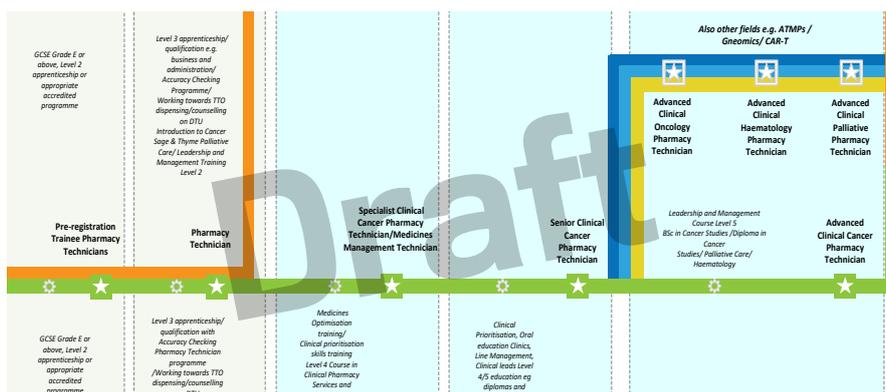
As pharmacy technicians, it is only logical that we play an active role in shaping the career pathways available to us and future generations of pharmacy technicians.

As this larger project progresses, efforts continue to explore and define these pathways. For instance, APTUK, in collaboration with the British Oncology Pharmacy Association (BOPA), is currently working on establishing a care pathway for pharmacy technicians.

There is also the ongoing work with the NHSE Infusion and Special Medicines (ISM) Working group as career pathways and education is explored.

This body of work clearly demonstrates that defining and providing well-structured career pathways and development opportunities for pharmacy technicians fosters greater professional diversity. This diversity, in turn, strengthens the profession by enhancing its resilience, deepening its capabilities, and creating more opportunities to attract the right talent to the right roles.

As the roles and responsibilities of pharmacy technicians continue to evolve, the need for clear, well-defined pathways has never been greater. APTUK is committed to guiding the profession in mapping out these paths, ensuring that pharmacy technicians have the direction and access needed to achieve their career goals, no matter how ambitious they may be. By doing so, we help every pharmacy technician navigate their career with confidence, enabling them to reach the summit they aspire to conquer.



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Membership Update

I am writing this reflection following a truly inspiring APTUK annual conference. It was an absolute pleasure to meet so many of you in person. The event showcased some remarkable individuals, well-deserved awards being presented, and diverse experiences shared.

The APTUK conference is more than just a gathering of like-minded professionals. It serves as an invaluable platform for meaningful dialogue, collaborative learning, and networking with individuals from around the UK.

This year's conference was particularly significant. Not only did we celebrate monumental advancements within our profession, but as a board, we are also in the process of reviewing APTUK's strategic vision. We are carefully considering the value we provide to our members and ensuring that our offerings

remain responsive to the evolving needs of our profession. The insights and ideas exchanged during the conference will be crucial in shaping our future direction.

If you didn't have the opportunity to say hello at the conference, please feel free to reach out! I really want to hear from you, learn about your experiences and find out what we can do for you as your professional leadership body.



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Scotland Update

As I step into the post as Professional Lead for Scotland, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Mel Bryan for her passion and commitment to the development of the pharmacy technician role in Scotland.

I am excited to be part of the next phase in the development of the pharmacy technician profession.

I have been a pharmacy technician for 35+ years. I spent the early part of my career in Acute Care sector in Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC), working in the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Inverclyde Royal Hospital and the Western Infirmary in Glasgow. I also worked for a year with the Ministry of Defence as a pharmacy technician.

I moved into Primary Care in 2008 working as a prescribing support pharmacy technician. I have worked in different settings in Primary Care including GP Surgeries, Intermediate Care Units and Care Homes.

I have had many different opportunities in my role as a pharmacy technician most recently as part of the team to deliver a Pharmacy Service for the Scottish Nightingale Hospital called the Louisa Jordan Hospital and as one of the Scottish Clinical Leadership Fellows (September 2021-September

2022). My project for that year was to define advanced practice for pharmacy technicians. This led to the creation of draft development pathways for both pharmacy technicians and pharmacy support staff which will be out for its final consultation in as this journal goes into print.

In my present post I am the Lead pharmacy technician in Primary Care in GGC.

I am excited to work within APTUK to realise one of the ambitions of Scottish Government by meeting increased patient need by developing the workforce. The change in PGD legislation and the proposed change in the supervision legislation are enablers to reimagine the role of the pharmacy technician



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We are keen to continue to provide APTUK members with an informative and educational publication which is a current representation of our profession.

Please tell us your views by answering a few short questions and share any ideas you may have to make it even better in the future. [Click on this link to share your views](#)



Pharmacy Technician Journal

The only publication written by pharmacy technicians, for pharmacy technicians.

Welsh Pharmacy Awards 2024

The Vale Resort played centre stage to a glamorous night of awards celebrating the best and brightest of pharmacy professionals and teams throughout Wales in 2024. Recognising great achievement, the awards showcased innovative practice, sustainability and service delivery. The awards also provided a landmark moment for the pharmacy technician profession.

APTUK Professional Lead for Wales, Emily Guerin, presented the very first Welsh Pharmacy Awards Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award. The momentous award was won by Emma Williams a community pharmacy technician working in Tynewydd Pharmacy, South Wales. Emma had this to say on her award win:

'I'm really pleased that pharmacy technicians and pharmacy teams are being recognised for their valuable contributions to patients, the profession and wider healthcare.

It has been very rewarding professionally for me since moving to an independent pharmacy to have upskilled myself to be entrusted to be very involved in pharmacy services and contributing directly to patient wellbeing.

I was delighted and humbled to receive the award. I hope it will inspire other pharmacy technicians



to expand their horizons on how we can contribute in the right working environments and I am very much looking forward to the new advances next year for more pharmacy technician involvement in clinical services.'

The awards provided a great occasion for all that attended, it was fantastic to see pharmacy technicians being recognised for their impact on patient care and long may it continue.



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Interested in writing an article for the PTJ?

We are always looking for new articles so if you are interested in sharing your knowledge, research, experience, or opinions with fellow pharmacy technicians, then please get in touch.

Email: editor@aptuk.org

Self-Administration Of Medicines In A Children's Hospital

Self-administration of medicines (SAM) is a multi-disciplinary process by which patients, carers or parents can be assessed to administer their own medicines in a hospital setting.

Background & Purpose

SAM has been available on select adult wards at University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) since 2004 and was extended to include certain wards within the Children's Hospital from 2022. For patients under 16, a parent, guardian or carer can be assessed to administer medicines; teenagers over the age of 16 and young adults receiving treatment on a children's ward can be assessed to administer their own medicines.

Most of our patients who participate in SAM live with one or more long-term conditions that they normally manage at home. SAM helps to ensure that they receive their medicines on time and maintain their normal routine whilst in hospital. For some patients and their families, SAM can be a training tool supporting them to learn how to administer new or complex medicine regimes in preparation for discharge.

Method

Nurses from the Children's Hospital worked with the Medicines Safety Team to amend the trust policy and patient information leaflet to make these suitable for children. Specialist nurses requested that insulin be excluded from SAM for children for safety reasons and bedside lockers were purchased to provide secure access to medicines. The parent or young adult is assessed by a registered nurse or nursing associate, pharmacy technician or pharmacist to ensure they understand how and when to take their medicines and can do so safely. This is then followed by a

shorter daily assessment to capture any changes in suitability.

Before launching on each ward, registered nurses, nursing associates, pharmacy technicians and pharmacists completed e-learning and had face-to-face training from the Medicines Safety Team. A member of the Medicines Safety Team would then complete a 'go live' checklist with the ward manager and provide ad hoc support for the first patients. Ward pharmacy technicians and pharmacists provide on-going support to nursing teams with individual patient queries.

Results

SAM is now available on four wards within the Children's Hospital and is well-received by children and young people and their families. Several children have participated on multiple different admissions and we have received positive feedback from parents.

We have also received a request to bring SAM to an additional children's ward in the future.



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Barriers	Actions Taken/Considered
Nursing time	Expanding to additional wards means more nurses are SAM-trained and can support assessments if staff are re-assigned. Pharmacists and Medicines Management Pharmacy Technicians can also be trained to perform assessments.
Patient transfers between wards	Expanding SAM to all medical and surgical wards allows parents and guardians to continue to self-administer when transferred
Availability of bedside lockers	Children's wards do not routinely have bedside lockers, but these have been purchased to facilitate SAM.
Fridge medicines	Currently nursing staff administer fridge medicines as these cannot be stored at the bedside. Parents have expressed a desire to administer these if secure access can be provided.
Availability of drug charts	Parents and guardians need access to the drug chart to self-administer. This was difficult if drug charts needed to be reviewed by medical or pharmacy teams. EPMA is now live in the Children's Hospital; a copy of the drug chart can be printed off for the parent or guardian and medical and pharmacy teams can now view drug charts remotely.

Development and Implementation Of A Clinical Pharmacy Technician (CPT) Role In The Clinical Validation Of Hospital Discharge Medications By A Pharmacist Non-Medical Prescriber (NMP)

Introduction

With an increasingly challenging recruitment and retention stance, at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LTHr) we explored opportunities to use and maximise the skills of the pharmacy team as part of our recruitment and retention strategy. We identified an opportunity to up-skill the pharmacy technician role within the surgical Clinical Pharmacy Unit (CPU).

The surgical CPU consists of a Pharmacist NMP, a Clinical Pharmacist, a Pharmacy Technician and a Medicines Management Associate. The team provides cover for 84 beds covering the specialities of urology, upper GI and lower GI whilst also providing pharmacist support for the nutrition multidisciplinary ward round.

The aim of this improvement work was to -

- Provide development opportunities for our pharmacy technician team upon completion of the Level 4 Professional Diploma.
- Identify the scope and role of a clinical pharmacy technician within surgery.
- Develop a robust training programme for pharmacy technician validation of discharge prescriptions.
- Increase the opportunity for pharmacist NMP prescribing of discharge prescriptions.
- Have a pharmacy technician validate discharge prescriptions prescribed by a pharmacist.
- Improve discharge validation times and contribute to patient flow by validating and processing discharges earlier in the day.

Project Team

A pharmacy technician with a clinical diploma and an established pharmacist NMP, working on the surgical CPU piloted this project.

Bharti Parmar - Clinical Pharmacy Technician (CPT)

Richard Marshall - Highly Specialist Pharmacist NMP - Lead in Surgery

Andrea Ashton – Associate Director of Pharmacy / Chief Pharmacy Technician – Project overview

Jenny Whatton – Lead Divisional Pharmacist – Surgery (CPT Mentor)

Joanna Pointon – Lead Divisional Pharmacist – Medicine (Advocate)

CPT Background and Project Method

I successfully completed the Pearsons Self-Regulated Framework (SRF) Level 4 Professional Diploma in Pharmacy Clinical Services (now BTEC Level 4 Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy Services and Therapeutics V4) June 2021. The knowledge I gained from the Diploma has allowed me to excel in my job role, to recognise and understand diagnostic tests, various diseases, treatments and identify reputable resources to use information. It highlighted the importance of collaborating closely with the

multidisciplinary team to provide safe patient care pathways delivering the patient's best interests.

In this project I shadowed our surgical CPU Highly Specialist Pharmacist NMP. I familiarised, researched, and understood the various specialities and how prescribing is individualised for each patient. A clinical induction and information module was designed and developed by the surgical CPU Highly Specialist Pharmacist NMP. It was specific to surgical practice and supported local development and training, including a skills competency assessment. The module and competency assessment captured underpinning knowledge and skills acquired from the clinical diploma. Clinical discussions took place in practice to ensure learning was appropriately implemented and relevant to each individual patient case study. This process allowed me to recognise the importance of a more in-depth picture of clinical aspects in patient care and medicines management in safe prescribing, counselling, and medicines adherence.

Complementing the clinical aspects of the role I also observed the discharge process pathway. The process varied from patient to patient, due to types of procedures taken place, background history and recovery pathway. I proceeded to the second phase of the project which consisted of completing and validating discharge prescriptions for practice purposes, using my knowledge, skills and observation teachings. After each practice discharge prescription, a discussion took place with CPU pharmacist NMP or rotational clinical pharmacist, where I discussed my outcomes and raised questions. I found many risks versus benefits within medications in individuals, which I questioned and established; it was this understanding that is most important when it comes to the safety of patient treatment.

I felt confident to commence with my first log of 50 prescription validations of discharges written by the pharmacist NMP. Each validation was discussed with my clinical mentor and prescribing pharmacist. Positives and negatives were discussed for each patient and medications validated fit for purpose and patient safety. Counselling patients on new medications and interactions with ongoing medications if any were brought to the patient's attention. These validations were second checked by a clinical pharmacist. Checks carried out included diagnosis, pathology results, patients' clinical pathway, multidisciplinary team meeting notes, clinical observations and relevant treatment input from medical, oncology and renal areas if relevant to the patient. On successfully completing my log with no errors, I commenced another 50 prescription validations solo, which were written by an NMP prescriber. All 50 prescriptions were successfully clinically validated, and no errors or clinical incidents reported. Bearing in mind my remit, using the skills, knowledge and ability to recognise and highlight any inconsistencies with the relevant healthcare professionals. I created a log to record my prescription validations, the data captured:

- Time prescription taken to write by NMP
- Time taken for CPT to clinically validate discharge prescriptions
- An audit of patients discharged across the surgical CPU pre and post-implementation of the improvement project took place. This audit consisted of the following:
 - Number of discharge prescriptions written by each profession (prescribing pharmacist or doctor)
 - Prescription generation time
 - Number of discharge prescriptions validated by each profession
 - Discharge prescription validation time
 - Time elapsed between prescription generation and prescription validation

Results

The diagram below summarises the results of the project outcome.

Utilising the CPT model with discharges prescribed by the pharmacist NMP and validated by the CPT led to discharges being completed earlier in the day. Dispensing of discharges was enabled at ward level with an overall quicker turnaround time, contributing to an improved patient discharge experience and supporting patient flow across the organisation.

Benefits of the role

1. As a CPT I am more involved with clinically optimising patient medications, which involves highlighting and addressing medication discrepancies and prescribing errors, in an advanced efficient and effective manner, by utilising my clinical judgement skills and relevant resources available.
2. Improved processing of discharge prescriptions in a timely manner to ensure and manage patient flow across the Trust.
3. Advance my existing experience in consulting with relevant healthcare professionals in view of patient progress and medication adjustment, whilst enhancing clinical knowledge and professional judgement.
4. Working collaboratively with the multidisciplinary team ensures that the patient receives optimum safe care and support with medications.

5. A procedure and check list for clinically validating discharge prescriptions in now completed.
6. Consistent, effective and accurate delivery of discharge validation by a CPT; I detected significant amounts of near miss errors which were resolved prior to validating the discharge prescriptions. The newly developed process has reduced error rates and processing times to the benefit of the patient and the service.
7. The Pharmacist now has more time to clinically verify critical medications, deliver more face-to-face patient care, increase prescribing capacity and attend consultant ward rounds.

Conclusion

The aims of this pilot have been achieved successfully. We now have an exemplar CPU skill mix model within surgery. This has since been replicated in orthopaedics and acute medicine.

The CPT role has stimulated pharmacy technicians at LTHTr to develop into CPT roles and as a result we have recruited a further 3 into this field.

We are looking to develop the CPT role further and expand the skills and knowledge into other fields in the near future.

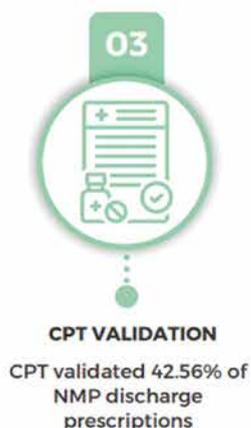
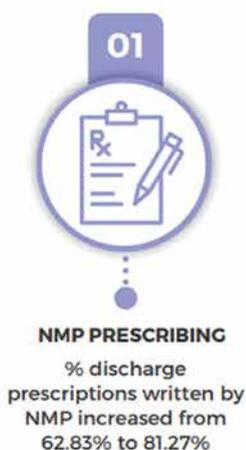


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Clinical Pharmacy Technician Pilot

- a) Identify the scope and role of a clinical pharmacy technician in surgery
- b) Develop a training programme for pharmacy technician validation of discharge prescriptions
- c) Increase opportunity for pharmacist prescribing of discharge prescriptions
- d) Have a pharmacy technician validate discharge prescriptions prescribed by pharmacist





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The Plaza Hotel, Nottingham





Katherine Miles Poster Awards



1st Place - Vikki Connell

Lead Pharmacy Technician for Antimicrobial Stewardship and Outpatient Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy (OPAT) University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust
vikki.connell@uhnm.nhs.uk

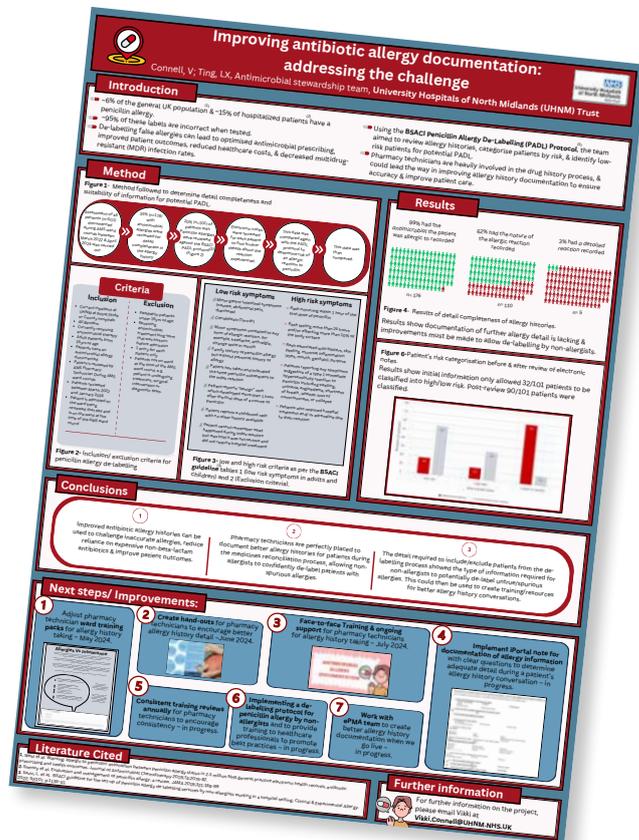
When I came to the APTUK conference in September to showcase my allergy assessment project, I was so excited to just share what I had done with other pharmacy technicians! I had been working on the project for over a year, and it was something I felt very fervidly about. I couldn't wait to network with peers about the project, and hopefully inspire other secondary care pharmacy technicians to make these improvements. I love being a pharmacy technician and am excited to see what we can achieve! I attended the awards dinner, and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing so many pharmacy technicians achieving these wonderful awards. It got to the poster presentations, and I genuinely had no clue that I was about to win the 1st prize against so many fantastic posters. When my name was called, I was in absolute disbelief! I couldn't believe the work I had personally been so passionate about doing had been recognised so highly by other pharmacy technicians! I was absolutely elated, and I am so proud to have achieved this in the presence of my peers. The certificate has taken pride of place at home on my bookshelf, and it is something I will always treasure.

Purpose/ background/ objective

The team assessed the adequacy of antibiotic allergy documentation to facilitate penicillin allergy de-labelling, based on the BSACI (British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology) protocol (1). We must ensure recording of adequate detail to allow non-allergists to de-label suitable patients.

Method

Retrospective analysis of 178 patient allergy records obtained during Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) ward rounds was



carried out, focusing on documented allergies, drug reactions, and detail completeness.

Results

Around 50% of patients were documented as allergic to penicillin and 1% didn't have any antibiotic allergies documented. Only 60% of patients had the nature of the allergy recorded and less than 5% of patients had further detail. Incidents were identified when patients received an antibiotic, they were allergic to without any reactions.

We also determined if reactions were allergy responses, Adverse Drug Reactions (ADR) or unknown (no information available). 25% showed a true allergy response e.g. anaphylaxis. 65% were unknown due to lack of information. Therefore, only 35% of patients could be assessed for de-labelling, demonstrating areas for improvement.

Conclusion

Antibiotic allergy documentation lacks detail for confident penicillin allergy de-labelling by non-allergy specialists. Proposed future interventions include assessing current documentation against the BSACI protocol to determine patient suitability for de-labelling with current details, developing an allergy history proforma for allergy documentation, reassessment post-implementation of the proforma to gauge improvement. This also brings the role of the pharmacy technician into focus, as the allergy proforma could be filled in during the drug history, prompting more thorough detail.



2nd Place & Delegate's Choice - Rebecca Jarvis
 Lead Mental Health Pharmacy Technician at Sussex Partnership NHS foundation Trust. Chair of APTUK Sussex branch
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Receiving the Delegate's Choice Award and second prize for our poster in the Katherine Miles category was a really rewarding experience. The recognition from my peers made it even more special. Like all pharmacy technicians at the conference – and around the UK (!), we have had an incredibly challenging year. Winning and bringing these awards back home to the team gave me a chance to reflect on the countless hours of hard work and dedication that went into creating not just this poster, but all the work the team does every day that sometimes goes unrewarded. Our achievement was a team effort, so thanks and recognition also must go to the other pharmacy technicians in the team; Claire Butler, Petra Fernandez, and Amber Benbow-Hart, as well as Jules Haste, our clinical pharmacy lead, and Ami Hale, our lead pharmacist in Coastal West Sussex who were all responsible for pulling the poster together with me. This was our first year attending the APTUK conference, so bringing home these awards has reminded me of the importance of sharing ideas and engaging with others in meaningful ways. It has also motivated me to continue pushing boundaries and exploring new avenues in our field. If you've not presented a poster before - give it a try next year!

Background

Clozapine is a high-risk medicine that requires regular monitoring and can cause many side effects. One of the serious side effects of clozapine is bowel obstruction, as it can cause slowing of the gut resulting in constipation, blockage, and a 'paralytic ileus' which can be fatal. It is essential that constipation is recognized and actively treated.

Description of project

Patients were being admitted to hospital needing urgent attention for constipation, due to not seeking or being able to access treatment promptly.



A protocol and assessment were designed to allow pharmacy technicians and nurses to assess patients presenting with constipation in clozapine clinics, and to issue laxatives where this was deemed appropriate.

Pharmacy technicians were trained and assessed by the lead pharmacist for education and training.

Pharmacy technicians then introduced the protocol into their community clozapine clinics, training and assessing registered nursing staff.

Results

The protocol has been in use for a year and in that time 28 patients have been assessed after presenting with constipation and senna and/or docusate has been issued 28 times. Serious incidents involving patients prescribed clozapine needing urgent treatment or hospitalisation have reduced. Clozapine clinic staff are more confident and aware of the seriousness of constipation in this patient group.

Conclusion

The protocol has improved safety and the quality of the care we provide to patients prescribed clozapine who attend clozapine clinics. There is a need to introduce the protocol to areas where there is no clozapine clinic to ensure equity of care.

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 Twitter - @APTUK1 Facebook - APTUK1



3rd Place - Natalie Auld, Amanda Taylor, Ingela Nadeem and Katherine Heyworth
Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Going to work in the morning, knowing you will make a difference gives such an uplifting feeling; by working within the clozapine clinics and actively engaging with service users we get that feeling on a daily basis. Getting the recognition for all the hard work and determination we have shown as a team to get our service users actively talking about their health and side effects has helped us appreciate what pharmacy technicians have to offer and just how much pharmacy technicians can make a real difference to service users' lives. Receiving this award has increased our determination to showcase the pharmacy technician role and we are ecstatic to have been chosen to receive such a prestigious award. We would like to thank APTUK for being there to support pharmacy technicians in their journey to success.

Introduction:

Clozapine has a wide range of adverse effects, many of which are serious or potentially life threatening. Pharmacy technicians working in clozapine clinics identified through audit that the Trust did not have a standardized method for completing side effect assessments and that the quality of the assessment varied between clinics. Three pharmacy technicians working across seven clinics collaborated to improve the quality of conducting and recording clozapine side effect assessments and to raise awareness of other physical health conditions to help improve patient outcomes.



Project description:

Over a period of four weeks, the pharmacy technicians trialed the use of a side effect assessment tool which was built into the patient's electronic clinical record. They encouraged discussion rather than closed questioning and targeted side effects which are associated with clozapine. If a side effect was reported this was escalated accordingly. Written and verbal education on side effects was also offered to patients and carers.

Results and conclusion:

Following the introduction of the assessment tool, patient reporting of side effects had increased by 69.3%. Use of the assessment tool also demonstrated significant improvement in the quality of recording and enabled higher quality conversations helping to achieve better outcomes for example patients reporting hypersalivation and constipation received timely intervention to help manage side effects.

THE ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK www.aptuk.org

In the next edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal:

- Part 3 of the history of pharmacy technicians and APTUK
- Pharmacy technicians in the Emergency Department
- In conversation with... Northern Ireland Professional lead and Darren McConville, Pharmacy Technician - Republic of Ireland
- Plus lots more.....



APTUK 2024 SHAPING THE FUTURE
ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
6 - 7 September Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nottingham

APTUK 2024 Pharmacy Technician Awards

The APTUK Annual Conference Awards celebrate and acknowledge successful individuals, teams and projects within the pharmacy technician profession. We are delighted to be able to recognise all sectors of pharmacy practice and individual excellence through these awards.



Community Pharmacy Technician of the Year

Winner: Kate Gardiner, MAPHarmT
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Winning Community Pharmacy Technician of the year is not just a personal milestone; it is a culmination of years of hard work, relentless dedication, and an unwavering belief in the pursuit of excellence. I am here because of the countless individuals who have shaped my journey – the mentors who guided me, the colleagues who supported me, and the family who stood by me every step of the way.

Becoming Community Pharmacy Technician of the year is a testament to the power of collaboration, passion, and perseverance. It symbolizes what one can achieve with determination. As I accept this honour, I am reminded of the early days of struggle, the setbacks that seemed insurmountable, and the victories that were all the sweeter for their difficulty.

Being crowned Community Pharmacy Technician of the year is not the end, but rather a marker along a continuing journey. It is a reminder to keep striving, keep learning, and keep pushing the boundaries of what is possible. This award is a celebration of that journey to becoming Community Pharmacy Technician of the year, an acknowledgment of the resilience and determination it takes to succeed.



Excellence in Education and Development Award

Winner: Bradford College Pharmacy Team
Zoe Corcoran, Head of School of Pharmacy, Bradford College

The Bradford College Pharmacy Team are deeply honoured and grateful to win the APTUK Excellence in Education and Development Award at the recent APTUK 2024 conference. Winning this award and the recognition of our hard work means a great deal to our team, and we are humbled by your acknowledgment of our work.

The team work together to transform lives to create a better future for all through education and training. We continue to strive for excellence whilst making meaningful contributions nationally in the pharmacy field. Attending the APTUK conference was a great chance for the team to come together to enjoy and celebrate their great achievements.

The Bradford College Pharmacy Team look forward to upholding the standards of excellence that the award represents and to attending the APTUK conference next year! Thank you for this prestigious award.



Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician of the Year

Winner: Liam Whitaker
liam.whitaker2@nhs.net

Being nominated for such a widely recognised award is an achievement in its own. To then be shortlisted and have the honour of attending the conference and experience the multiple workshops and speakers that were being showcased throughout the weekend was an insight that you can't get from just anywhere. To then win the award and have the pleasure to celebrate such an achievement with my friends and fiancé was overwhelming. Having the pleasure to speak to various people at the conference gave me insight into how they have progressed in their own careers as well as the various potential areas I could go into within pharmacy which was very informative and inspiring.

This has really improved my confidence in myself and solidified my ability to grow as a pharmacy technician which I can use and develop throughout my career. Having this accolade will remind me of the hard work that I have exhibited, and I aim to maintain this standard going forward (with the hopes of winning more awards).

Primary Care Pharmacy Technician of the Year

Winner: Rachel Rowlands, MAPHarmT
Rachel.a.rowlands@wales.nhs.uk



Being shortlisted for the APTUK Primary Care Pharmacy Technician of the year was an incredible honour, to be chosen to receive the award was an absolute pleasure, especially against such strong competition - they are all winners. I am deeply grateful for this recognition. It motivates me to continue striving for excellence and to continue to the develop the role of the pharmacy technician.

I am particularly grateful to my lead pharmacist Robert Bevan for nominating me and recognising the work of the pharmacy technician and the encouragement and opportunities I have been given in order to develop the role of the pharmacy technician within the Chronic Pain Service, not to mention the support from the rest of the team Anna, Emma and Shelly.

I believe it is an exciting time to be a pharmacy technician and with the drive and determination to continue to develop the role, which is something I feel passionate about the future of, our profession looks bright.



Secondary Care Pharmacy Technician of the Year

Winner: Victoria Bull
 Community Rehabilitation Service Manager
 Central, East and West Mendip PCN
Victoria.bull@SomersetFT.nhs.uk

I am extremely honoured to have received the Secondary Care Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award. It is a true privilege to work alongside such a dedicated and hardworking team of healthcare professionals. This multidisciplinary team would not have come together without the support of Dr Helen Milbourn, Consultant Geriatrician at the Royal United Hospital Bath and me.

Since winning the award, the profile of the clinic and this holistic model of working – putting the patient at the centre of their care – has gained significant interest both internally and externally. We now have a third clinic up and running in West Mendip Community Hospital, working in collaboration with Yeovil District Hospital and the PCN.

Dr Milbourn was thrilled with the recognition and commented: “Vicky’s hard work and tenacity have been paramount in setting up and maintaining this clinic. Pooling resources across different trusts and primary and secondary care settings isn’t easy but Vicky’s experience and vision have ensured an effective, cohesive, multidisciplinary, patient centred service that runs efficiently.

If anyone would like to learn more about how to set up a similar clinic, Vicky is happy to be contacted at Victoria.bull@SomersetFT.nhs.uk.”

I look forward to hearing from you.



Pharmacy Technician Team of the Year

Winner: Leeds Medicines Advisory Service Pharmacy Technician Team

Helen Taylor Bowers; Gail Brigg; Lauren Craig; Dawn Lawrence and Karen Roche.

“Wow, what an honor to receive this award. It was fantastic to even be nominated amongst other such wonderful teams!

We are all so delighted to receive the APTUK Pharmacy Technician Team of the Year award.

We all come to work aiming to do the best for our patients and colleagues alike. We're very lucky to work in a team where our voices are heard and our contributions valued. We are proud to be pharmacy technicians here at Leeds Teaching Hospitals working in the Leeds Medicines Advisory Service, leading on medicines advice, best value medicines, medicines safety and medicines commissioning.

We have a very broad range of knowledge and history of working and leading in outpatients, inpatients, mental health, ward support and pharmacy IT.

It is great that our expertise and contribution to NHS care has been recognised at a national level.

We are all now plotting and scheming about what we are going to get involved in next. The pharmacy technician world is expanding rapidly, and we want to continue to play a key role in that”.



APTUK Branch of the Year

Winner: Sussex Branch

Sussex branch secretary: Tracy Hedley

Sussexbranch@aptuk.org

Sussex Branch are grateful, excited and proud to receive the APTUK Branch of the Year Award 2024. We really appreciate the recognition and are proud of the hard work which went into achieving this highly sought-after title.

Branch founder and Secretary, Tracy Hedley would like to thank everybody who has attended meetings over the past three years the branch has been running, especially all the inspirational pharmacy technicians who have shared their experiences, knowledge and passion about their roles.

Sussex Branch always provides new members with a warm welcome and as a virtual branch, has members from across the country who regularly join our meetings.

The year ahead for the branch is looking exciting, and with our new Chair, Rebecca Jarvis appointed early this year we hope to see more people enjoy our programme of events which includes a pharmacy technician from the South East Coast Ambulance service talk about her role and a pharmacist explaining how to become a pharmacy technician at an Olympics. Come and join us by emailing **Sussexbranch@APTUK.org** now.

APTUK 2024 Honorary Award

Ade Williams

An honorary membership category was introduced in 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 to our profession.

Ade has been instrumental in supporting the implementation of pharmacy technician practice within the community pharmacy setting. He has been supportive of ensuring his pharmacy technician team were educated and prepared for the changes to community first and has encouraged and enabled vaccinations under the PGDs for the pharmacy technician profession. He also supports APTUK with speaker sessions when requested and does so, happily to ensure his positive outlook is widely shared.

It is a most unexpected and humbling honour to receive the APTUK Honorary Membership Award at the APTUK Conference. APTUK members and leaders have excelled in exemplifying professional excellence in the pharmacy profession and in



stewarding patient care to tackle social injustice, especially racism and health inequity.

I now carry with this honour a welcome burden of living up to our collective ideals and values, knowing I must not let our patients, pharmacy or fellow APTUK members down.

APTUK 2024 Fellowship Awards

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

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.

We had several very strong nominations, and we awarded three fellowships this year.



Parampreet Bahia

This fellowship award goes to Parampreet in recognition of her dedication to the pharmacy technician profession and her outstanding leadership within NHS England. She has consistently supported APTUK, co-founded the pharmacy technician of Colour group, and played a pivotal role in advancing

workforce training and development. Her commitment to equality, advocacy for underrepresented voices, and proactive involvement in professional communities demonstrate her unwavering dedication to the field. Her compassionate leadership, collaborative approach, and focus on patient-centred care have earned her respect across the profession, making her a deserving recipient of this fellowship.

“I am overwhelmed with gratitude to being recognised for my service to the profession. Receiving this fellowship means so much. Thank you to those that nominated me and to APTUK for awarding and welcoming me as a fellow.”

“I am looking forward to working with APTUK, with another hat, and I hope that I continue to make a positive difference”.

Parampreet Bahia FAPharmT



Lisa Green

The fellowship award goes to Lisa who was nominated for her exceptional leadership, professionalism, and dedication to the pharmacy technician profession. As an Associate Director, she has consistently demonstrated courage, integrity, and vision, improving patient safety and efficiency in every organisation she has

worked with. Recognised for her contributions to pharmacy and healthcare, she has won multiple awards, including Pharmacy Technician of the Year and was named RPS' 2021 Woman to Watch. Her expertise extends beyond human healthcare, as the first pharmacy technician qualified to advise and prescribe veterinary medicines. Her commitment to mentorship,

inclusion, and professional standards makes her a deserving candidate.

“What can I say... Shocked was an understatement, I wasn't aware of the nomination so a double surprise.”

“I could not be more humbled and honoured to be awarded fellowship of APTUK, this really is the milestone of your career, to be recognised by your profession in the most prestigious way possible.”

“I'm sure many would agree, the challenges we have faced throughout our career make us what we are today, I have used my experiences (both good and bad), to become the leader and role model that I am, to constantly push the boundaries and succeed in whatever I have chosen to set my sights on. My message to everyone is never let someone tell you that you can't, surround yourself by positive role models, you can be anything you want to be, if you want it enough.”

“Thank you APTUK, this award really is a privilege, and I will make sure I continue to fly that flag for pharmacy technicians.”

Lisa Green FAPharmT



Katherine Watkinson

Katherine is an expert in mental health pharmacy, who is nationally recognised for her skills and leadership. As Head of Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy at Turning Point UK, she has elevated the pharmacy technician profession, particularly in mental health. Her work impacts diverse patient groups, showcasing the adaptability of pharmacy

technicians. A former APTUK National Officer and mental health advocate, Katherine continues to inspire others through her vision and dedication. Her quiet determination, high standards, and respect from peers make her a model professional, and she is highly deserving of an APTUK Fellowship 2024.

“I was in total shock when I found out I'd been awarded the Fellowship. I've been involved with APTUK throughout my career and every year I have been in awe of the professional contributions and impact of those pharmacy technicians who have been awarded fellowships. It is an incredible privilege to be recognised by a profession which I am so proud to be a part of and which has given me so many opportunities. I have always endeavoured to be an advocate for pharmacy technicians in as many forums as possible and I'm excited to use the profile of being an APTUK fellow to find more opportunities to do this. The Fellowship is a highlight of my career and has been a fantastic opportunity to reflect on my career but also further ignited my passion for supporting the development and advancement of pharmacy technicians”.

Katherine Watkinson FAPharmT

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APTUK 2024 Bursary Awards

Victoria Cooke MPharmT

Pharmacy Technician South Hardwick PCN

victoria.cooke7@nhs.net

I was so grateful to be awarded the bursary place for the recent APTUK conference. It meant that I was able to attend the conference for the first time which otherwise I wouldn't have been able to do. I am so glad I got to attend because the programme was fabulous. It was wonderful to be surrounded by like-minded pharmacy technicians who are all passionate about their roles.

There was a wonderful selection of parallel run sessions to choose from I found the Primary Care Network session particularly helpful and empowering as this is the current sector I work in. It was so good to hear what other pharmacy technicians in similar positions are doing and how they have developed the role.

I also appreciated being able to attend sessions by

pharmacy technicians from other backgrounds to see what the wider pharmacy teams are doing and how their roles have expanded and changed over time.

I enjoyed being able to hear updates provided by the APTUK team first hand and get a better understanding of the brilliant work they are doing to raise awareness of our profession and make sure pharmacy technicians have a seat at the table for key meetings. The conference was an invaluable place to aid networking and find further training opportunities. I was able to have long conversations with training providers to help decide about which further training would suit me best and get information to bring back for other pharmacy technicians in our team to see what would be best for them to consider.

Sue Marshall

Specialist Pharmacy Technician

MKUH – Integrated Discharge Hub

susan.marshall@mkuh.nhs.uk

I was lucky enough to receive a bursary to attend the APTUK conference in September in Nottingham and I have to say the conference did not disappoint.

From the opening address to the closing presentation, it was informative, thought provoking, exciting, encouraging, motivating and made me proud to be a pharmacy technician.

I qualified as a pharmacy technician 40 years ago this year – and to see the breadth of work being undertaken by colleagues and the growth of the profession was inspiring. An outstanding moment for me was when colleagues presented how they had got to the point of studying for their PhD – what role models for pharmacy technicians of the future.

The talk by Katherine Watkinson was moving – it brought me to tears to hear the personal story of someone who had

been addicted to drugs and how we have the power to influence their journey for better or worse. It costs nothing to be pleasant and might just save a life.

I also enjoyed pondering the question “how do I show I can be trusted” – a pertinent point when completing our CPD records, but the sentence that hit home to me was “if you are trusted you can influence others”. This is important to me in my role with patients as I strive to support them with their medications and equally in my relationships with colleagues and the wider MDT – am I seen as a trusted professional and do I use my influence in the right way.

Thank you APTUK for all your hard work behind the scenes making the profession what it is today and for the privilege of joining you at conference.

Vikki Connell MPharmT

vikki.connell@uhnm.nhs.uk

I was planning on submitting a poster to the APTUK conference, and I was reading through the instructions when I originally came across the bursary application. My immediate thought was that I would never get it, as surely lots of people would apply. Then I thought, you don't get anything if you don't ask, and I clicked to apply. I explained my passion for the pharmacy technician role, and how my passion for antimicrobial stewardship was something pharmacy technicians could really make in impact with.

When I got the email to say I had been successful in my application, I was absolutely thrilled! The bursary allowed me to stay over and attend the evening awards dinner, and I was so thrilled to be in the presence of so many inspirational pharmacy technicians. It was truly one of the best professional experiences I have had, and I am now going to ensure I attend every year.

The experience was amazing from start to finish. It was a privileged opportunity to enjoy an all-access pass to the biggest event in the pharmacy technician calendar.

It was my first time attending the APTUK conference, and it made the experience special. The presentations were so inspirational, and I went away from the conference inspired to do more. The companies holding stands at the event were great too. I spoke with a few different educational companies to potentially help me with projects I have ongoing for my role in antimicrobial stewardship, and I enjoyed conversing with others as well.

And for next year's bursary applications, just remember that you don't get it if you don't ask!



APTUK 2024 SHAPING THE FUTURE

ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
6 - 7 September Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nottingham

Shaping The Future

As the captivated audience drew the president's welcome address to a close with rapturous applause, the final words resonated with me throughout the conference, 'what happens if we do?' It was incredible to be part of a caucus of attendants with that very 'what happens if we do' mentality, championing our profession to like-minded pharmacy technicians across the healthcare and education landscape. The array of posters presented encapsulated the spirit of those that 'do', those that challenge convention, overcome barriers and unapologetically exceed expectation.

Equally impressive were the compilation of speakers that came from far and wide to engage and inspire. I was fortunate to attend the session presented by Katherine Watkinson entitled 'How can we create a better future for vulnerable people'. This thought-provoking

presentation really challenged common perceptions, the ways in which we engage with vulnerable adults and subsequently ostracise those often most in need of support. Katherine really hit home the importance of making every contact count.

The keynote speakers, Johnny Benjamin and Neil Laybourn also drilled this sentiment home. Personifying the power of humanity, Benjamin and Laybourn epitomise 'what happens if we do', delivering an upsetting yet heart-warming retelling of their journey.

The APTUK awards ceremony that followed provided a great platform to showcase the amazing work being done by pharmacy technicians and pharmacy teams throughout the UK. Ade Williams also provided a highlight with his infectious enthusiasm and advocacy of the pharmacy technician profession;

a worthy winner of the APTUK honorary member award.

As the conference closed, I found myself thinking what a great time it is to be a pharmacy technician. APTUK 2024 truly provided a great stage to promote those intent on shaping the future and to celebrate those that embody the principle of 'what happens if we do.'



ANDREW WOODS
MPharmT

Business Development Director
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A Personal Reflection

"What happens if we do?"

These captivating words from our president Nicola Stockmann have not left me since the conference. What an amazing and inspiring experience the whole event was. The theme for this year's conference was 'Shaping the Future', and it has never looked brighter for pharmacy technicians.

The two days were jam-packed with incredible speakers, who provided regulatory and professional updates from bodies such as NHS England, GPhC, Chief Pharmaceutical Office and CPPE.

The choice of parallel sessions meant that I was able to attend things that not only interested me outside of my current role, such as a session on the role of pharmacy technicians in offender health by Chelsea Harris and Ellie Pepper, and how we can create a better future for vulnerable people by

Katherine Watkinson, but also sessions that have made me look at my current role differently, such as the PCN session by Samantha Garside.

The poster submissions were all excellent – voting was not easy! It was, however, easy to see how much effort had gone into this work, and how much pride these pharmacy technicians had in their role, and how much of a difference they have made to the patients in their care.

The awards ceremony was the perfect outlet to showcase some of the amazing work that is taking place, and of course to watch everyone let their hair down!

And who could forget the awe-inspiring story of Jonny Benjamin and Neil Laybourn – I don't think there was a dry eye in the house! Their emotional journey showed us just how important even the seemingly smallest of human interaction can be.

All in all, my first conference experience was amazing. It was a great opportunity to meet other pharmacy technicians and celebrate the remarkable things we are achieving as a profession. So, to those of you who are on the fence about attending in future, I have only one question for you – what happens if you do?



EMMA GREEN
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A Career As A Pharmacy Technician In A Drug And Alcohol Service

In 2022, I was working in community pharmacy with a drive to enhance my career as a pharmacy technician. Now, fast forward to 2024, and I am providing a medicine management role across Cornwall for WithYou.

WithYou is an amazing charity providing free and confidential support to people experiencing challenges with drugs, alcohol or their mental health.

My career as a pharmacy technician in a drug and alcohol service provides me with exciting opportunities and lets me expand my knowledge. Each day is different, interesting and full of challenges.

My role varies on a daily basis – I conduct medicine management audits, train staff in pharmacies on their awareness of opiate substitute treatment, support prescription generation in the service, manage the effects of local dispensing capacity on clients, risk assess clinical incidents and much more - including recently having the opportunity to guest speak at events and provide information about my role to pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians.

Weekly I visit our residential rehab service, Chy, which means 'home' in Cornish, where clients who attend have undergone detox and are substance-free. WithYou have just one residential rehab in England, so my role is unique in the organisation. Here I support medication management by reviewing administration adherence, identifying medication errors, and working in multidisciplinary teams with GP surgeries to arrange appointments and medication reviews. I enjoy having the ability to offer general clinical support to both clients and staff during their rehabilitation.

Another vital part of my role is the provision of naloxone training to staff members and local pharmacists. Naloxone comes in an injection or nasal spray form, and it reverses the effects of an opioid overdose, potentially saving lives. Little did I know that I would recently be putting this training to use by administering Naloxone to a client myself. This just shows how my role varies daily and expands my skills and experience in ways I'd never have imagined.

Recruitment of pharmacy technicians is expanding within the organisation, because of the benefits we contribute to services, and the wide range of skills we bring to the team. Our team of pharmacy technicians attend regular sessions for support and continued professional development. I am supporting the onboarding process of our new pharmacy technician in our Bournemouth service and will soon be able to support the delivery of vaccinations following the recent change to the law around PGDs.

It is gratifying to have a job that I love and look forward to attending. I feel honoured to be involved with a charity so dedicated to patient centred care and to support in the recovery journey of an individual.



JADE CARUANA MPharmT
Medicine management pharmacy technician
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THE ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK

APTUK 2025

Following the successful sold out APTUK 2024 Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition, we are delighted to announce that APTUK 2025 will take place on September 19th and 20th 2025 in Newcastle upon Tyne.

save
the
date

More details will follow shortly, but for now, add the date to your calendar and look out for further announcements on:

- Early bird ticket savings
- Poster abstract submission details
- Award nomination process
- Bursary application opportunities

19th and 20th September 2025

The Impact Of A Pharmacy Technician Led Service In The Emergency Department On Service Improvement And Strategic Development

I work as a lead pharmacy technician in the emergency department for adults and children at University Hospitals Leicester. I have been in this role for over two years and worked as a pharmacy technician for the NHS for over 22 years, undertaking various roles in emergency & specialist medicine. Leicester has one of the busiest emergency departments in the country, serving a population of over one million people.

Up until February 2022 the emergency department has been absent from sufficient pharmacy support, the clinical management group (CMG) lead pharmacist was the sole contact. When I took on this role my aim was to improve medicines management, improve safety through increased compliance with pharmacy standard operating procedures and processes to ultimately support and save nurses time looking for medications, thereby reducing the number of missed doses.

This role has allowed for the planning and delivery of a safe and effective medicines management service. It has been challenging as this has been the first role created in the department. I have only been able to achieve my goals with the great support and guidance from Kerry Morgan, Head of Nursing Emergency Medicine, Dr Martin Wiese, Lead Consultant for Adults Emergency Medicine, Dr Gareth Lewis, Lead Consultant for Paediatrics & Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Rishi Gupta, CMG Lead Pharmacist for Emergency Medicine and Damini Davda, Advanced Specialist Pharmacist for the Emergency Department & Medical In Reach; also not forgetting the great emergency department team for adapting to change, quite often at short notice. The feedback has been very positive from colleagues across the department.

I was privileged to present my poster at APTUK Bristol conference in September 2023, for the work I achieved within the emergency department. It was a great opportunity to share my experience and knowledge with fellow colleagues across the country. Since the conference I have managed to create a team of wonderful nurses who share my vision and who are passionate in helping me make the necessary improvements. This team are the medicines management link for nurses. We plan to meet monthly to share ideas and experience on how we can make further improvements. We will be having a theme of the month to focus on a topic to help educate staff. I will be in touch as we plan to visit emergency departments across the country to see what we can learn and bring back to our trust and also share our achievements and practice. The team is growing and I am grateful to all staff within the department for supporting me and working with me to achieve my goals. Please read my poster for an insight into the improvements I have achieved within the emergency department.

The impact of a pharmacy technician led service in the Emergency Department on service improvement and strategic development

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
PHARMACY
UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF LEICESTER NHS TRUST

Jasbinder Kaur
Advanced Specialist Pharmacy Technician in Emergency Medicine, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Leading on service improvement and strategic development of the pharmacy service in Adults & Children's Emergency Department

Background

UHL has one of the busiest Emergency Departments in the country serving a population of over 1 million.

Prior to this role being introduced, the pharmacy department only provided basic pharmacy services mainly stock replenishment to Adults & Children's Emergency Department. The CMG Lead Pharmacist was the sole contact for the Emergency Department.

Objectives

- Review all ED stock lists with Deputy Head of Nursing and Lead Consultant. QR code to be introduced to locate medication required in ED
- Reorganise all medicine stock cupboards
- Lead on drug alerts, batch recalls and shortages
- Monitor high cost drugs usage and borrowing from other departments in and out of hours
- Monitor pharmacy on call logger monthly and all calls received from ED
- Conducting controlled drug and medicine management audits
- Improving the compliance in ED of following pharmacy SOP's
- Lead on training new starters
- Contributing to complaints and investigations
- Collaborate with ED Teams in setting up new areas

Methods

- Meetings set up with Deputy Head of Nursing and Lead Consultant & CMG Lead Pharmacist to review stock lists, Lead Consultant to produce QR code of all stock available in ED
- Notify Lead Consultants on drug alerts, recalls and shortages
- Review borrowing books in ED and stop charge as per usage. Provide feedback to relevant areas CMG Lead Pharmacist. Produce a spread sheet to enter the stock levels daily of high cost drugs
- Call logger reviewed monthly and feedback given to Deputy Head of Nursing, Lead Consultant & CMG Lead Pharmacist on nature of calls
- Organised regular dates for audits with the Medicines Safety Pharmacist & Senior Pharmacist in ED
- Engaging with the staff on the ED floor daily visits to all areas, and linking in with the co-ordinators and nurse in charge. Share my number on the ED look up page and enter into all co-ordinator phones on the floor
- New starters introducing them to the department and giving them a tour of all areas within ED and going through the expectations of their role
- Providing feedback for complaints by speaking to staff involved and checking pharmacy systems to identify information, that will lead to the route cause of the complaint

Results

- The introduction of this new role in ED has allowed for the planning and delivery of a safe and effective medicines management service, working under the direction and support from the CMG Lead Pharmacist, the Deputy Head of Nursing and the Lead Consultants for medicines management
- The Emergency Department now have a named Pharmacy Technician to contact to assist in any pharmacy related matters arising without any delays
- Significant amount of nursing time saved looking for medications with the introduction of a QR code for ED stock lists. Stock lists are reviewed and updated monthly, which has led to a reduction in the number of missed doses.
- Drug recalls, alerts and shortages are managed in a timely manner to help reduce any harm to patients. High cost drugs stock levels are monitored daily and entered onto a Excel spreadsheet, and any stock discrepancies are identified immediately.
- Huge amount of money has been saved by the re launching of borrowing books in all ED areas. High cost drugs stock levels are monitored daily and entered onto a Excel spreadsheet, and any stock discrepancies are identified immediately.
- There has been a reduction in calls from ED to pharmacy in and out of hours due to the improvements made in ED.
- Carrying out regular visits to the ED floor linking in with co-ordinators and nurse in charge for any pharmacy related issues arising
- There have been improvements in compliance following CD and Medicines Management Audits. The results are shared with the Deputy Head of Nursing who then sends actions to all Matrons responsible for ED audit.
- Improvement in the pharmacy stock replenishment service provided to ED, which is now consistent.
- Delivered from pharmacy increased to every hour, previously was twice a day.
- New starters are introduced to ED so they can familiarise themselves with the stock replenishment in a team road and sent to all ED staff.
- Incidents reported are investigated in a timely manner, any new learning communicated in a team road and sent to all ED staff.
- New areas are set up in ED without any delays regarding medicines management, under the direction of the Deputy Head of Nursing.

Acknowledgements

Rishi Gupta - CMG Lead Pharmacist for Emergency Medicine
Gareth Lewis - Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine
Kerry Morgan - Deputy Head of Nursing
Martin Wiese - Consultant in Emergency Medicine



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The Role Of Pharmacy Technicians In Controlled Drug Stewardship

In February 2021, Solent NHS Trust introduced the role of a specialised Controlled Drug (CD) pharmacy technician to enhance CD governance across all service lines. Since then, significant improvements have been observed, contributing to better compliance and safety in the management of CDs.

As the specialised CD pharmacy technician, my responsibilities are diverse and crucial for maintaining stringent CD governance. I handle and investigate all CD-related incidents, ensuring they are properly documented and include all the required information for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) quarterly occurrence report. Where necessary, I support service line managers to feed back to the staff responsible, identify any learning required and work to understand how we can prevent reoccurrence. I compile and submit quarterly occurrence reports to the CQC, highlighting trends, incidents, and improvements. I manage the anomalies highlighted by ADIOS (Abusable Drugs Investigation Software).

This excellent piece of software monitors usage of over 1200 abusable medications and highlights any change of usage. I will then investigate if the change is due to changing needs of the patient, a change in process or if there is a risk of diversion. I carry out a wide range of training including e-learning, face-to-face sessions, record-keeping workshops, and reflective practices to educate healthcare professionals about CD regulations and best practices. Regular audits and reports are an essential part of my role for monitoring compliance and identifying areas for improvement. I oversee these processes and ensure that findings are addressed promptly. I collaborate with Fraud and Security teams, working with these teams helps to prevent and address potential fraud or security breaches involving CDs. It was on their recommendation that the 'WEEKLY CD STOCK CHECK' stamp was introduced which has standardised how we record the checks across the Trust.

I am very proud to be a member of the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer (CPhO) Pharmacy Technician Professional Advisory Forum. It is such an exciting time for the pharmacy technician profession with major developments such as Patient Group Directives (PGDs) and pharmacy supervision opportunities. It has been a privilege to contribute to these discussions alongside a forum of inspirational pharmacy technicians from all areas of practice.

Participating in Controlled Drugs Local Intelligence Networks (CDLIN), I share initiatives and learnings. Most recently, in collaboration with our community nursing team, we developed a leaflet detailing the handling of End-Of-Life (EOL) medications. This initiative was prompted by an incident in which the anticipatory medication that remained in the property of a palliative care patient after they had passed away, including morphine and midazolam, was used by the patient's son to end their own life. There were no signs this was his intention. In response, a learning poster has been shared and a leaflet for relatives has been produced that outline what to do with end-of-life medicines after their relative passes. This is given to all families being supported by the palliative care team in the community. I also oversee CD destructions and manage competency assessments for authorised witnesses. All staff who are given this extra responsibility by the Controlled Drug

Accountable Officers (CDAO) have had training and been assessed as competent. Each year all authorised witnesses are reviewed and 'reauthorised'.

Using this process we have amended our list of authorised witnesses to have fewer staff carrying out this role. Having fewer people perform the role more frequently has ensured destructions are carried out in line with legal requirements and all documentation is completed clearly and accurately.

This year several medicines management pharmacy technicians have received training and been deemed competent to carry out the authorised witness role. Medicines management pharmacy technicians are best placed to destroy CDs that are no longer needed on inpatient wards. Their support has contributed to the Trust compliance with only storing which CDs are necessary and reduced the risk of storing expired items in the CD cupboards.

The MMTs have also supported with the 6 monthly CD audits, increasing their scope of practice and knowledge surrounding CD stewardship has been invaluable. They are readily available on the ward for questions and queries from nursing staff. Perhaps the most crucial part of my role that has the most impact is acting as the primary contact for healthcare professionals, providing guidance and support on CD-related matters. Since the inception of the specialised CD pharmacy technician role, there have been notable improvements in CD governance. Over the past two years, there have been no balance discrepancies. There has been a significant reduction in expired CDs, with only 2 items across the Trust being discovered in 2023/2024.

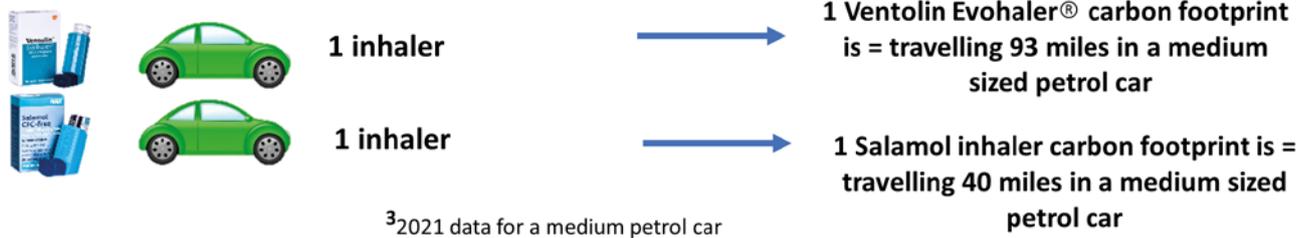
The biggest improvements have been seen in our Special Care Dental Service. When I took on this role, they were the least compliant with CD legal requirements and in house policies. In the last audit their compliance was 99%! I have also worked with the dental team to develop Patient Specific Directions (PSD) to allow Dental Therapists to administer Midazolam to epileptic patients in the event of a seizure. This has increased their scope of practice and relieved pressure from our team of dentists. The introduction of the specialised CD pharmacy technician role at Solent NHS Trust has significantly bolstered CD governance and compliance. By managing incidents, providing training, conducting audits, and serving as a key point of contact, the role ensures that controlled drugs are handled safely and effectively, ultimately improving patient safety and compliance with legal requirements.



CHARLOTTE GRIMWOOD

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Reducing The Environmental Impact Of Salbutamol Inhalers



Introduction

As inhalers contribute to 3% of total carbon emissions of all NHS emissions, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (SYICB) Sheffield place recognises that alongside reviewing short acting beta agonist (SABA) overreliance, we could also reduce the amount of carbon emissions generated from pressurised metered dose inhalers (pMDIs).

We identified that the amount of hydrofluorocarbon propellant varied between brands, and therefore some brands were less damaging to the environment than others, which would support the NHS net zero plan¹. This work was further supported by a study² from New Zealand which showed that Ventolin Evohaler® and Salamol inhalers are equally effective.

Aims and objectives

- Reduce the carbon footprint per salbutamol inhaler.
- Assist the practices to achieve the Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) indicator for environmental sustainability ES-02.
- Provide education to staff and patients to make the change sustainable.

Method

It was identified that Salamol had a considerably lower carbon footprint than Ventolin Evohaler® (12kg CO₂e vs 28kg CO₂e),

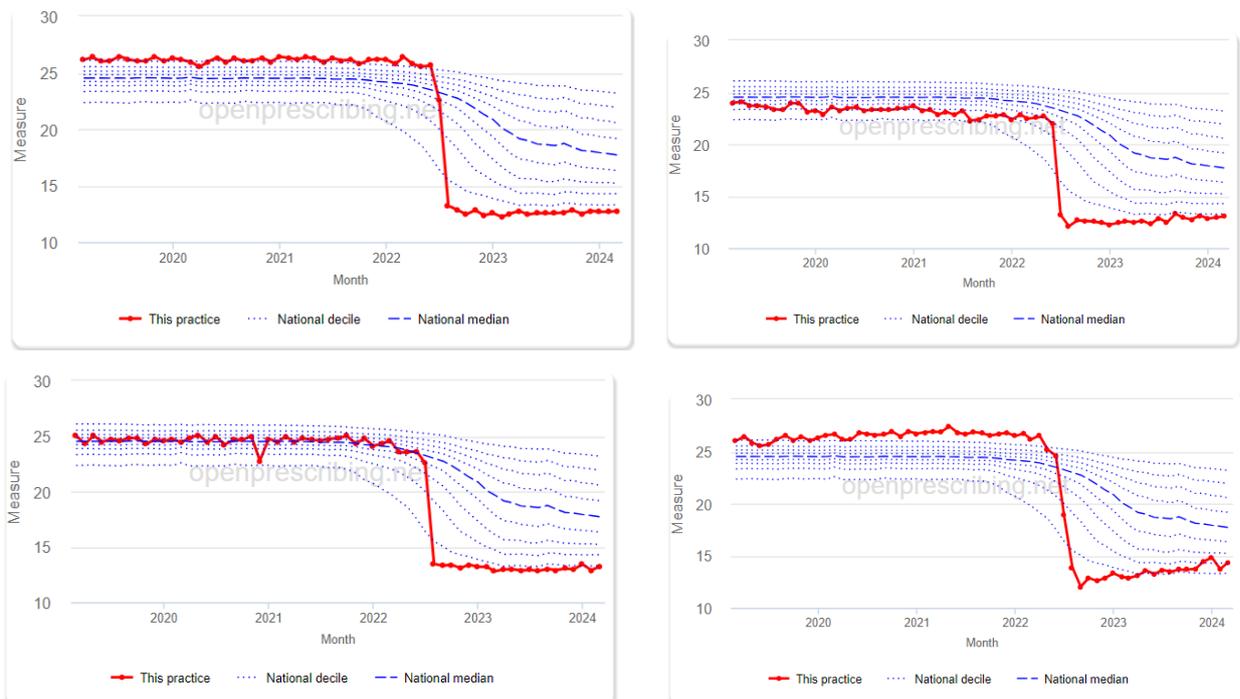
so the Sheffield Medicines Optimisation Team (MOT) promoted the use of the Salamol brand by making it the formulary choice across Sheffield.

We then identified a Primary Care Network (PCN) with high prescribing of generic salbutamol and Ventolin Evohaler® - over 2000 patients - and gained support from the clinical director to switch all patients to the Salamol brand. We held a discussion in the sustainable respiratory group which consists of primary and secondary care clinicians to find the most efficient and cost-effective way of delivering this work. It was decided that it was appropriate for a bulk switch in this situation. We also engaged with a patient group to ensure that the supporting documents created by our respiratory team were appropriately written and understood the documents, including a patient focused poster and leaflet that were both made available digitally and in paper form.

Although we don't routinely advocate for bulk switches and would certainly not use this method for changing inhaler devices, it was agreed by all parties that it was appropriate for this work as it was a like for like change.

Results

As you can see from graphs⁴ below there has been a significant decrease in each of the four practice's average carbon footprint, per salbutamol inhaler.



The Y axis measures mean carbon emissions per salbutamol inhaler prescribed (kg CO₂e). The X axis shows the period from 2018 to mid-2022.

I then joined the Primary Care Network (PCN) for a short period, whilst also working as a bank pharmacy technician within the prison service. The prison service can be forgotten about when it comes to pharmacy, but with 122 prisons in England alone and a prison population with a range of needs, it is a varied and challenging place to work. I enjoyed the fast pace, the feeling that I was making a difference to the prisoners I was supporting. From acute illnesses to referrals, each prisoner interaction had an outcome.

My work in the PCN focused on supporting the GP Practices with their Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) target, drug monitoring, medication reconciliation, and updating the Patient Medical Record (PMR). I covered clinical updates and discharge letters following hospital visits and arranging any follow ups. I supported with medication queries including stock storage and sourcing alternatives or even contacting manufacturers to discuss supplies.

I was then offered a new challenge, the NHS Client Liaison Manager role at Woodspeen Training. I was attracted to this job because I want to make a difference. Supporting pharmacy apprentices, helping them develop and reach their full potential is truly rewarding.

I've seen firsthand, while working in the NHS, how in demand the pharmacy team is and how, an effectively trained and deployed team can facilitate the NHS to create an integrated care process. Working with NHS Trusts to enable them to make this a reality, affect patient outcomes, and move into the next stage of healthcare is an exciting process to be part of.

So far during my time in post I've delivered training for

employers and learners, given guidance to ensure support is put in place for apprentices if needed. I've onboarded new learners, completed inductions, and made sure our learners have had the right start to their apprenticeship programme. My lists of firsts are continuing to grow.

I'm now a qualified assessor, completing my qualification through Woodspeen Training's in-house academy. This has enabled me to support our learners by tutoring them and developing the support they need to help them achieve their goals.

If that wasn't enough, I also have an outreach element to my role. I investigate and review areas of improvement within the apprenticeships we provide to help the development of the course. This ensures we cater to different areas of demand that the NHS has and the versatile roles that pharmacy technicians play within the industry.

No two days are the same within the pharmacy sector, from community pharmacy to the NHS, prison service to training provider, each area I've worked in has enabled me to give back to the people that matter – the patients. I can't wait to see where the next generation of pharmacy technicians takes us.



MICHELLE FROST

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My name is Elizabeth Dalton, and I am a Pharmacist, Curriculum Writer, and Tutor.

I started my career in pharmacy in 2009 as a relief pharmacist in the community. Since then, I have had the opportunity to work in many different pharmacies, carrying out various roles from Store Manager to lead in-store pharmacist. I am passionate about delivering services and new initiatives; this is one of my favourite aspects of working in a community pharmacy.

Currently, I am splitting my time between my role at Woodspeen Training, training the next generation of Pharmacy Technicians, and working as a pharmacist in a busy community pharmacy. This current mix is the most fulfilling time in my career to date, I thoroughly enjoy supporting the development of the future pharmacy profession, and I still experience patient interaction every week.

Since beginning my role with Woodspeen Training, I have been working in partnership with the Curriculum Lead to develop the curriculum for the level 3 Pharmacy Technician apprenticeship. This includes writing new learning material, reviewing material in use, and ensuring that all materials align with the course specification and meet the educational standards required.

My role within Woodspeen Training has allowed me to gain new experience and qualifications. In my first year at Woodspeen Training, working with the support of our in-house Academy, I gained my Assessor qualification and an Award in Teaching, continuing my professional development in a new direction.

My role at Woodspeen Training extends beyond content creation. I work collaboratively to enhance the curriculum to reflect the qualification standard, together with an understanding of how the industry is changing. The additional learning and continuous professional development (CPD)

opportunities have included partnering with external organisations to bring in guest speakers and ensuring the content is relevant and comprehensive. I also work closely with the IT /Digital team to ensure that our modules are accessible to learners via digital platforms. It's a team effort, and I'm proud to be part of it.

One of my favourite aspects of the job is the opportunity I have had to develop content for our tutorials. Our tutorials provide personalised support to learners. I also deliver one-on-one and group tutorials to address specific areas of the course, particularly the scientific components. Tutorials allow me to ensure the learning resources we provide are engaging; it is an opportunity to check in and see how our learners are progressing through the digital content we provide, ensuring our learners have all opportunities to succeed. This interaction allows for our curriculum to remain agile, and changes and amendments are made as needed to benefit the learners.

Pharmacy is a field that's always evolving. With new advancements and the progression of different services and roles, it is an incredibly exciting time to be part of the profession. Our learners are working towards joining the register at a very exciting time; change is happening, and it's rewarding to be part of it.



ELIZABETH DALTON

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Woodspeen

PHARMACY
APPRENTICESHIPS

Woodspeen Training understands how important Pharmacy Technicians are.

Our staff have firsthand experience in a range of Pharmacy settings: community, primary care, secondary care, MoD, and more. We know why Pharmacy Technician training should be invested in.

Learn more about the apprenticeships available to Pharmacy Technicians, whether you're supporting someone starting out in their career or want to progress yours, Woodspeen Training has something for you.



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Woodspeen
TRAINING



'An Interview With...Meet The Member'



Name:

Zuber Patel

Current Role:

Senior Pharmacy Technician
Radiopharmacy (RP)

Highest qualification related to your role:

Postgraduate Course in Radiopharmacy at King's College London.

Contact:

zuber.patel@lthtr.nhs.uk

Steps you took to get to where you are now:



dealing with radiation, and the knowledge you have to apply to ensure radiation protection. Another surprise is how much we have to operate within financial restrictions whilst still delivering and developing the service with limited trained staff members.

If you had the chance to do it all over again, what would you change?

I would look into working in a licensed unit sooner, where the opportunities are more plentiful to advance skills.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

The contribution to the overall pharmacy operation and also having specialised technical skills required for the job.

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

At this point in time, I don't think I would be anything else, but I may work in the clinical side of pharmacy.

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

The lack of training to move forward, either because there is no funding for the course or no staff to backfill your attendance.

What do you do that supports equality, diversity and inclusion?

As a line manager I act within the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHTR) values, facilitating the opinions and views of staff members, listening to them and their concerns and making inclusive decisions.

What has been the highlight of your career, so far?

My highlight has been successfully working in a licensed unit which

encompassed a lot of responsibilities, adapting to a very fast pace and delivering on high expectations.

What is at the top of your to-do list?

Contributing towards the radiopharmacy unit at LTHTR obtaining a license and delivering a service that can supply gallium.

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

Most don't recognise me as a pharmacy technician, but rather a member of a clinical investigation team, with my scrubs and radiation monitoring badge.

What do you usually do when you have time off?

I dedicate most of my time to my kids, but when I can I like to go swimming or to the gym.

Who do you go to for advice or to bounce ideas off?

The senior members of the team or experts in the field where I require advice. This could be the Head of Production, Radiation Protection Officer, Cleanroom Engineer or Radiopharmacy Pharmacist.

What simple thing sparks joy at work?

Passing the 'leak' test (pressure decay test) in the morning. When the facilities function as required, it means a smooth start to the day.

What's next?

To take on more responsibilities as a senior technician as demand increases, and, if we are able to obtain a license, become a regional supplier. Personally, I plan to go on the advanced RP course at Kings college to develop myself further in my chosen field.

Describe what your role entails:

I oversee production activity in the radiopharmacy unit, this not only encompasses manufacture but also planning and scheduling manufacture, validations, qualifications and staff training. I am the first point of contact for the service, providing information to healthcare professionals (HCPs), engineers, quality control, quality assurance staff, and other members of the pharmacy. My role also involves troubleshooting problems, investigating errors, managing changes and responding to production related queries. My role is varied and specialised and the field is growing which is exciting.

What is the most challenging part of your role?

Training and teaching radiopharmacy knowledge and skills, as a niche area of pharmacy it is difficult to recruit operators with experience or understanding of what radiopharmacy is before they start. This is definitely the most challenging part of my role.

What surprised you the most moving from a traditional pharmacy technician role?

The additional skills required for radiopharmacy, specifically around