



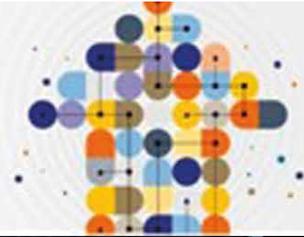
PHARMACY TECHNICIAN JOURNAL

AUTUMN 2025

Journal of the Association of
Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom



APTUK 2025 ADVANCING PRACTICE
ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
19 - 20 SEPTEMBER HILTON NEWCASTLE, GATESHEAD



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- Accessing Research



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THE ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK
APTUK 2026
EXPANDING HORIZONS

Following the success of APTUK 2025, we are delighted to announce that in 2026 we will be holding the APTUK Professional Conference and Exhibition on 18th and 19th September 2026 at the Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow, London.
More details of how to submit research abstracts, nominate for our prestigious pharmacy technician awards, and of course how to buy tickets, will be announced shortly.
For now, save the date and we will look forward to seeing you there!

18 – 19 SEPTEMBER | LONDON

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The Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition

Pharmacy Technician-Led Housebound Polypharmacy Reviews – A Feasibility Study

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INTRODUCTION
Pharmacy Technician-Led Housebound Reviews have been shown to be a cost-effective way of reviewing polypharmacy in a number of ways, with the aim of reducing medication-related hospital admissions, preventing medication-related hospital admissions, and identifying medication-related hospital admissions. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feasibility of pharmacy technician-led housebound polypharmacy reviews in the community.

METHOD
The study was conducted in August 2023 with one Pharmacy Technician conducting the reviews. The study was conducted in a number of ways, with the aim of evaluating the feasibility of pharmacy technician-led housebound polypharmacy reviews in the community. The study was conducted in a number of ways, with the aim of evaluating the feasibility of pharmacy technician-led housebound polypharmacy reviews in the community.

RESULTS
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CONCLUSION
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APTUK

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Reflections On APTUK 2025

Welcome to the conference edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal.

In this edition we bring you all the highlights of the APTUK 2025 Conference 'Advancing Practice' which took place in Newcastle on the 19th and 20th September. If you were able to join us, you would have hopefully had two wonderful days of learning, networking and celebrating APTUK and the pharmacy technician profession. It was lovely to see so many pharmacy technicians coming together to share their passion for the profession and to highlight the work being done to advance our practice.

It was great to catch up with old faces and to meet lots of new people, many who were attending conference for the first time, some who had been pharmacy technicians for some time and others who were just starting out. I met people from all over the UK and from all sectors of pharmacy.

The APTUK awards celebration was an evening of good food, great music, lots of laughter (and a few very happy tears) - inside you will find photographs of the winners as well as pictures of APTUK's two newest Fellows, Shelly-Ann French and Kristy Garton.

We have the winning posters from the Katherine Miles Innovation Award, and we will be sharing some of the other posters in future editions. We also have some reflections from delegates as well as from members of the executive committee. All in all, it was a wonderful time, and we have already started planning for next year, so watch out for further announcements.

Did you know that this year it has been 20 years since we trademarked the name 'The Pharmacy Technician Journal'? APTUK has been producing newsletters and journals since its inception in 1952, but it was only in 2005 that we formally registered the name.

We want to celebrate this in our next edition so I am reaching out to all of you to ask if anyone has any pre-digital copies of the PTJ that you would be willing to share with the editorial team so we can look back at how the Pharmacy Technician Journal has evolved over the years. Or if you have been featured in a previous edition and would like to write an update, we would love to hear from you. As always you can contact me at editor@aptuk.org

Legal Disclaimer

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PTJ 2025 timeline

Edition	Copy Deadline
2025 : 4	31st December 2025

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AMY LAFLIN MAPHARM^T – ACTING APTUK PRESIDENT
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President's Column

As acting President, it is both an honour and a pleasure to welcome you to this special bumper edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal (PTJ).

Autumn is upon us – the season of transformation. The trees are cloaked in vibrant shades of amber and gold, casting a warm glow even as the air turns crisp. And with the falling leaves comes a familiar rhythm: conference season. A time to reconnect, reflect, and reimagine our collective future.

We kicked off this season with the APTUK Annual Conference, held on 19th and 20th September 2025 in the dynamic city of Newcastle Gateshead. What a phenomenal event it was! From inspiring keynote speakers to engaging breakout sessions, the energy was palpable. This year marked a milestone with the introduction of oral presentations for the Katherine Miles Poster Awards – an exciting evolution that showcased the depth of research and innovation within our community. We were also thrilled to welcome our sponsors and exhibitors, whose support continues to elevate our profession. Most importantly, it was heartening to see so many of our member delegates in person, sharing ideas, forging connections, and celebrating our shared purpose.

As we reflect on the progress made, it's clear that our profession is moving forward with strength and clarity. One area we continue to monitor closely is the evolving supervision legislation. We remain committed to keeping you informed as updates emerge from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). These developments are pivotal, and your voice will remain central to shaping the future landscape.

Since our last edition of the PTJ, we've also made significant strides in resource development and strategic advocacy. If you haven't yet explored the UK Post-Registration Career pathway for Pharmacy Technician practice, research and report, I encourage

you to do so – it's a vital tool for mapping out professional growth and opportunity. You can access it here: [Career pathway for post-registration pharmacy technician practice](#)

In addition, we've recently gathered insights from pharmacy technicians across the UK, with support from the NHSE Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Pharmacy Technician Advisory Forum. These voices have been instrumental in shaping a new strategy report that outlines what pharmacy technicians need and expect from professional leadership. This report has now been submitted to the UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board (UKPPLAB) and will play a key role in informing the development of the Royal College and its support for our profession. You can read the strategy here: [APTUK Professional Leadership- A view from the Pharmacy Technician Profession](#)

As we enter the final quarter of 2025, we do so with renewed pride and purpose. Pharmacy Technician Day was a resounding success – an inspiring celebration of the impact our professionals make every day. The stories, photos, and videos shared across the country were a testament to the dedication, compassion, and excellence that define our workforce.

Looking ahead, let us continue to champion each other, advocate for our profession, and build on the momentum we've created together. Thank you for being part of this journey.

**Best wishes,
Amy**

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

Reflection on Attending the APTUK 2025 Conference and Exhibition

Attending the APTUK 2025 Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead was an incredibly enriching experience. As Membership Director, I found the event not only professionally stimulating, but also deeply affirming of the vital role pharmacy technicians play in advancing healthcare practice across the UK.

This year's theme, "Advancing Practice," resonated strongly throughout the two-day programme. The sessions were thoughtfully curated to reflect the evolving scope of pharmacy technician roles, with a strong emphasis on leadership, education, clinical practice, research, and regulation. I was particularly inspired by the plenary talks and workshops that explored the Four Pillars of Practice; Clinical, Leadership, Education, and Research. These provided a robust framework for professional development and encouraged attendees to reflect on their own career trajectories and aspirations.

One standout session was led by Mary J. Carter in collaboration with CPPE, which delved into how pharmacy technicians can harness the Four Pillars to identify growth opportunities and progress with confidence. Another memorable presentation by Victoria DiMartino focused on supporting learners in the workplace, especially those with neurodiverse needs. Her insights into creating inclusive learning environments were both practical and thought-provoking, and I've already begun considering how these strategies could be implemented within our own membership development initiatives.

The exhibition space was equally engaging, offering a chance to connect with industry partners, training providers, and fellow professionals. It was heartening to see the diversity of organisations represented and the shared commitment to enhancing pharmacy technician practice. These interactions sparked ideas for future collaborations and reinforced the importance of community and shared learning in our profession.

A highlight of the event was the APTUK Pharmacy Technician Awards Dinner, where excellence across the sector was celebrated. The sheer number of nominations, 97 in total, spoke volumes about the dedication and innovation within our profession. Witnessing colleagues receive recognition for their contributions was both moving and motivating. It reminded me of the importance of acknowledging and celebrating achievements, something I hope to bring more prominently into our membership engagement strategy.

Beyond the formal sessions, the conference provided invaluable networking opportunities. Conversations with peers from various regions and sectors offered fresh perspectives and reaffirmed the collective challenges and triumphs we face. These exchanges have already led to follow-up discussions that I believe will foster meaningful partnerships.

The APTUK 2025 Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition was a powerful reminder of the dynamic and essential role pharmacy technicians play in healthcare. It reignited my passion for professional development and left me with a renewed sense of purpose in my role as Membership Director. I look forward to applying the insights gained to enhance our membership offerings and to continue advocating for the advancement of our profession.



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Branch Update - APTUK/CMHP Mental Health Branch

The APTUK/CMHP Mental Health Branch has had a busy summer, and things show no signs of slowing down.

On 3rd July we were joined by 22 pharmacy technicians for the latest APTUK/CMHP branch meeting, and we were delighted to welcome new members to the meeting.

Our speaker was Orla MacDonald, Pharmacist at Oxford Health NHS Trust, who delivered a passionate presentation on supporting people with learning disabilities, LeDeR Review (Learning from lives and deaths – people with a learning disability and autistic people) and STOMP.

It highlighted the importance of person-centered care and the impact of language and associated stigma on people with a learning disability. The session included helpful tips on working with people with a learning disability, including using simple language, understanding the importance of communication passports and reasonable adjustments, and involving the individual in conversations and decisions about their care. The discussion at the end of the presentation gave attendees the opportunity to share their experiences and reflect on the

experiences of people with a learning disability when accessing healthcare services.

At the meeting we launched our member voice survey to help us understand what people want from the branch and how we can best celebrate and support our branch members. We have also been exploring how the mental health branch can support pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians and will be collaborating with the PTPT branch.

As well as our branch meeting we have been busy at various events with the branch attending a Sussex Pharmacy Conference and the APTUK conference where we were delighted to shine a light on the opportunities available to pharmacy technicians in mental health and celebrate the successes of pharmacy technicians working in mental health through the awards. We are delighted to be hosting an in-person branch meeting at the CMHP Conference in Liverpool and Claire and Ciara will be joining a panel at Clinical Pharmacy Congress North, discussing post-graduate education for pharmacy technicians.

Scotland Update

Attending the APTUK 2025 Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition was a truly inspiring experience that highlighted the evolving and expanding role of pharmacy technicians within the healthcare system. The conference theme, “Advancing Practice,” was explored through the lens of the four pillars of practice – Clinical, Leadership, Education, and Research – offering a comprehensive framework for professional growth and service development.

The conference made it clear that pharmacy technicians are increasingly stepping into roles that require advanced skills, critical thinking, and a proactive approach to patient care. The four pillars provided a structured way to reflect on how our practice can evolve and how we can contribute more meaningfully to multidisciplinary teams and patient outcomes.

The **Clinical** pillar was a central focus, with numerous sessions showcasing how pharmacy technicians are supporting medicines optimisation, chronic disease management, and patient safety initiatives. It was encouraging to see examples of pharmacy technicians working in integrated care settings, contributing to clinical decision-making and supporting patients more directly. These developments reflect a shift in expectations and a growing recognition of the clinical value pharmacy technicians bring to healthcare delivery.

The **Leadership** pillar was explored in depth, with discussions around how leadership is not confined to formal titles or roles. Instead, it was presented as a mindset and a set of behaviours that can be demonstrated at all levels. Whether leading a quality improvement project, supporting a team through change, or advocating for service development, pharmacy technicians are increasingly expected to step into leadership roles. The emphasis on “everyday leadership” was particularly empowering, reinforcing the idea that influence and impact can come from any position within a team.

The **Education** pillar was another key theme, highlighting the dual role of pharmacy technicians as both learners and educators. Sessions explored how pharmacy technicians can support the development of others, including students, apprentices, and new colleagues. There was also a strong focus on inclusive education practices and the importance of creating supportive learning environments. This pillar underscored the value of continuous professional development and the

responsibility we have to share knowledge and build capacity within our teams.

The **Research** pillar, often the least familiar to many in the profession, was brought to life through practical examples of audits, service evaluations, and quality improvement initiatives. The message was clear: research is not just for academics – it’s about asking questions, gathering evidence, and using data to improve practice. Pharmacy technicians were encouraged to engage with research in ways that are accessible and relevant to their roles, helping to build a stronger evidence base for the profession.

Beyond the formal programme, the conference provided valuable opportunities for networking and peer learning. Informal conversations revealed a shared enthusiasm for advancing the profession and a collective commitment to delivering high-quality care. There was a strong sense of community and mutual support, which was both motivating and reassuring.

Reflecting on the experience, the conference reinforced the importance of the four pillars as a guide for personal and professional development. It challenged attendees to think critically about their own practice and to identify areas for growth. More importantly, it celebrated the achievements of pharmacy technicians while also setting a clear vision for the future.

In conclusion, the APTUK 2025 Conference was a powerful reminder that advancing practice is a continuous journey. By embracing the four pillars, Clinical, Leadership, Education, and Research pharmacy technicians can shape their careers, enhance patient care, and contribute meaningfully to the wider healthcare system. The event left me feeling inspired, informed, and ready to take the next steps in my own professional development.



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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.

England Update

As I sit and wait for my flight home I have some quiet time to reflect on the last two days of our APTUK conference and what a conference it has been! Our profession has come so far since I began my career, then we were only just beginning to discuss final accuracy checking and now look at where we are! As a pharmacy technician I have been inspired. As Professional Lead - England, I am proud. Incredibly proud of how far our profession has come, proud of what pharmacy technicians are achieving, and inspired and excited for the future.

The agenda for me represented a fundamental shift in our profession. This was clear from the off when Liz Fidler identified in her keynote that no longer do people 'stumble' into pharmacy. PTPTs now are actively selecting pharmacy technician as a career, recongising the vast opportunities that now exist for growth and development, many of which were fantastically showcased at the conference. Whilst Google still believes we 'work under a pharmacists supervision', as a profession we are confidently challenging this definition and recognising in ourselves that we are autonomous clinical professionals and this weekend we celebrated that with aplomb!

Over the two days we heard from pharmacy technicians who all demonstrated that we now confidently move within the four pillars of clinical practice.

Clinical: I was fortunate enough to chair Chandra Maraj's session where she demonstrated that pharmacy technicians can practice autonomously, in a clinical area where we have acutely unwell patients - cancer services. Chandra's scope of practice highlighted that activities that were traditionally undertaken by a pharmacist can successfully and safely be undertaken by a pharmacy technician. This was just one of several examples of where pharmacy technicians are now moving to work to their top of their licence with many now validating/screening prescriptions.

Education: Education in all its forms was celebrated this weekend. There were some fantastic sessions on PGDs and

clinical career pathways and signposting to so many resources to enable and empower pharmacy technicians in the workplace. I saw wonderful examples of colleagues supporting each other by sharing their experience and knowledge.

Leadership: As always leadership was prevalent throughout the agenda, but I felt there was also a transformative change. No longer are we talking about how to become a senior leader with a defined leadership role. We are now talking about how we are all leaders and how to confidently lead the charge to broaden our scope of practice.

Research: Whilst for many this is still a new concept for pharmacy technicians and perhaps a scary one, we had not just one, but three fantastic sessions on research. I was privileged to be able to chair one of these and everyone left that session inspired to press on with their research projects. I look forward to seeing their works published in the future.

The energy this weekend has been incredible and so to borrow the phrase from our Director of Education; let us continue to be avant garde and move forward. Let us do it in collaboration with our pharmacist colleagues, there is space for all of us to grow and develop together. Let us all be leaders, and not be defined by our job titles. Let us celebrate being pharmacy technicians, use our title with pride and continue to expand our horizons!

'The future is not a place we are going to, but rather a place we are creating. The paths are not to be found but to be made and the activity of them changes both the maker and destination.'
(John H Schaar)



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New Executive Committee Member

Louise Kasparian, Business Development and Communications Lead

I have worked within the pharmacy sector since 2002, starting in community pharmacy then onto specials manufacturing and later to technical services. I joined hospital pharmacy 18 years ago and qualified as a pharmacy technician in 2012. Upon registration I began working in a medicine's optimisation role within mental health across Devon. I changed roles in 2021 to join a PCN where I focus on patient safety, medication optimisation, organisational development whilst creating a collaborative working approach within primary care.

I also hold a role with Pharmacy Workforce Development South (PWDS) as a Programme Support Officer, supporting learners through a variety of medicines optimisation programmes. In 2024 I graduated from the University of Exeter, with a degree in Responsible Business Management enabling me to expand my career. In July 2025 I joined APTUK in a part time role alongside my other employment. Working at APTUK is a tremendous achievement for me, I am so proud to contribute my experience, skills and knowledge to this new role within APTUK to drive our business development opportunities. Since joining

the team, I have actively supported the planning and delivery of our communications and engagement strategies for APTUK events. This has included contributing to the promotion of key initiatives and ensuring our messaging reaches and resonates with our members. Looking ahead, I am committed to building on this foundation by working more closely with the Executive Committee and our wider APTUK membership. Together, I aim to strengthen our communication channels, increase member engagement, and support the ongoing development of APTUK.



LOUISE KASPARIAN
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Elevating Pharmacy Technician Education: APTUK's Vision in Action

The pharmacy technician profession is undergoing a dynamic transformation, fuelled by a collective drive for excellence, innovation, and patient-centred care. At the forefront of this evolution stands the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK), whose strategic leadership and educational initiatives are shaping a future-ready workforce.

From the rollout of post-registration frameworks to the celebration of professional achievements at the APTUK Annual Conference 2025, the momentum is unmistakable.

Advancing Education: APTUK's Strategic Commitment

Education is the bedrock of APTUK's Professional Leadership Strategy, which continues to align pharmacy technician development with the demands of modern healthcare. Key achievements include:

- **Expanded learning pathways** that promote lifelong professional development.
- **Collaborative partnerships** with academic institutions and healthcare stakeholders to ensure consistent, high-quality training.
- **Advocacy for professional recognition**, positioning pharmacy technicians as autonomous, accountable members of multidisciplinary teams.

APTUK's initiatives have fostered a culture of continuous learning, enabling technicians to take on enhanced roles in medicines optimisation, clinical services, and digital transformation.

Post-Registration Framework: Mapping Career Progression

A landmark development has been the development of a UK post-registration pharmacy technician career framework (Phase 1), designed to guide pharmacy technicians beyond initial qualification. This framework will offer:

- **Structured progression routes** across clinical, educational, and leadership domains.
- **Competency-based benchmarks** aligned with NHS workforce priorities.
- **Support for advanced practice roles**, enabling deeper contributions to patient care and service delivery.

This framework has been widely embraced across sectors, providing clarity and inspiration for technicians aiming to expand their scope and influence.

APTUK Annual Conference 2025: Celebrating Excellence

Held in Newcastle this September, the APTUK Annual Conference 2025 brought together pharmacy technicians from across the UK to share insights, celebrate achievements, and shape the future of the profession. Highlights included:

- **Keynote sessions** on integrated care, digital innovation, and workforce transformation.
 - **Interactive workshops** exploring the four pillars of practice: clinical, leadership, education, and research.
 - **Panel discussions** featuring voices from NHS England, education providers, and pharmacy technicians themselves.
- The conference reaffirmed APTUK's role as a unifying force, fostering collaboration and driving progress across all sectors of pharmacy practice.

Educational Awards: Honouring Dedication and Impact

A highlight of the conference was the APTUK Educational Awards Ceremony, which celebrated individuals and teams who have shown exceptional dedication to pharmacy technician education.

These awards not only honour excellence but also serve as a beacon, inspiring others to pursue leadership and innovation in education.

Looking Ahead

APTUK's steadfast focus on education, leadership, and career development is reshaping the pharmacy technician landscape. As the profession continues to grow in scope and influence, these strategic efforts ensure that pharmacy technicians are equipped, empowered, and recognised as essential contributors to healthcare delivery.

For more information on APTUK's initiatives and upcoming educational opportunities, visit [aptuk.org](https://www.aptuk.org)

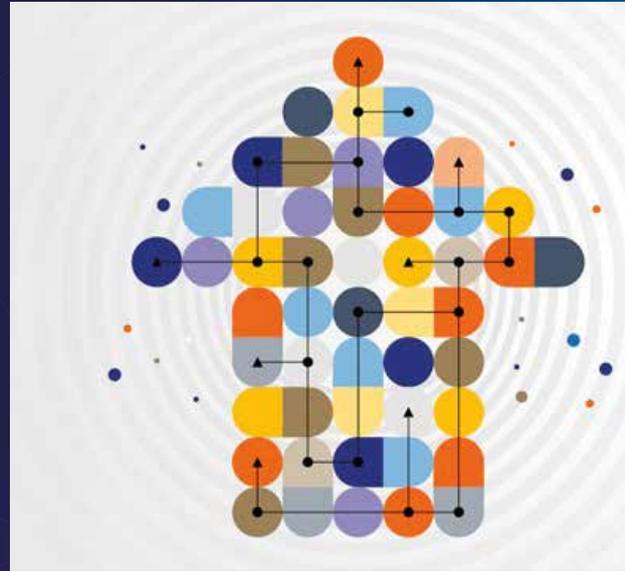


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- In the next edition of the Pharmacy Technician Journal:

- More posters from APTUK 2025
- Unlocking your potential
- Contraception services
- Celebration: 20 years of 'The Pharmacy Technician Journal'





THE ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK

APTUK 2025

The Association Of Pharmacy Technicians UK Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition

ADVANCING PRACTICE

19 - 20 September
Hilton Newcastle, Gateshead





The Katherine Miles Award For Innovation

This year we re-named the Katherine Miles Poster Award so that instead of just submissions for posters showcasing research projects and innovation in pharmacy, there would be an opportunity for short oral presentations to be submitted for the first time.

The award helps to support creative thinking, to illustrate latest research and generation of new and valuable ideas. The award was made to the entrants who best showcased their projects, research or achievements.

We had over 60 submissions for this award with over 50 shortlisted. Four research projects were showcased as oral presentations at the conference, and we would like to congratulate Amanda Metcalfe, Bharti Parmar, Carly Tarry and Claire Kelty for presenting their work. Some of them were presenting for the first time to such a large audience but their enthusiasm for their work and the pharmacy technician profession shone through despite the nerves.

We also repeated last year's Delegate's Choice Award, allowing attendees at conference to vote for their favourite poster.



1st place – Leanne Johnstone MPharmT
Lead Pharmacy Technician
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I have worked in pharmacy for the last 24 years across three sectors, but pharmacy was not an initial career choice for me. On leaving high school, I studied podiatry at Glasgow Caledonian University where I completed a Bachelor of Science with Honours degree. When I completed my degree, there was a shortage of podiatry jobs in Scotland, so I started looking for any health-related jobs. I started a position as a trainee dispenser in an independent community pharmacy a couple of months after finishing university and have never looked back. I worked in community pharmacy for over five years and attained my NVQ Level 3 Dispenser qualification.

I then moved into hospital pharmacy as a student pharmacy technician, so that I could undertake my National Certificate in Pharmacy Services. After about three years working across two Glasgow hospital sites, I joined the primary care team in Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) as a senior pharmacy technician. My remit was cost efficiencies and waste reduction in care homes and cost efficiencies within GP practices. A year after moving to primary care an opportunity for me to undertake a further qualification arose and due to already having an undergraduate degree, I was lucky to be given the opportunity of undertaking my Master's degree in Primary Care at The University of Glasgow. I moved into a team leader role around ten years ago to develop and lead a home visiting

Pharmacy Technician-Led Housebound Polypharmacy Reviews – A Feasibility Study
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
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INTRODUCTION
Pharmacist Led Polypharmacy Reviews have been a focus within Primary Care Pharmacy Teams for a number of years, with the aim of achieving cost effective and clinically appropriate prescribing. Pharmacist Polypharmacy reviews are generally carried out at a clinic, with the GP practice or the telephone consultation, therefore patients are not registered as housebound or often discharged due to time.

METHOD
The study commenced in August 2024 with one Pharmacy Technician undertaking reviews on an ad-hoc basis around other work commitments. The Pharmacy Technicians involved had extensive experience working with housebound patients and they are qualified to Masters Level with 20 plus years post-qualification experience. The GP practice Pharmacists identify patients via the Scottish Therapeutics Utility (STU) tool which identifies patients who would benefit from a Polypharmacy review. The Pharmacists then check for any patients coded as housebound on the GP practice system and refers on via an email referral list spreadsheet to a Microdosage Teams clinician.

AIM
To improve access to Polypharmacy review for housebound patients in Renfrewshire HSCP.
To test a Pharmacy Technician Led Polypharmacy Review model.
To audit review outcomes.
To inform a decision on whether to roll out these reviews more widely within the HSCP/Health Board.

RESULTS
To date, there have been 33 referrals. Of these, 2 patients declined review and 1 patient passed away before a review could be arranged. Therefore data reported relates to 20 reviews (Table 1) summarised in Figure 1.

Age Range	Number of Patients	Average Rockwood Score
18-24yrs	2	6
25-34yrs	1	6
35-44yrs	14	6
45-54yrs	5	5

Table 1: Patient demographics

Medication stopped were those that were either no longer indicated or were causing side effects including headache, insomnia, dizziness and constipation. All medications stopped were essential or replacement of varying calcium rivastigmine tablets included due to poor mobility.

Medication changes included an education to situation switch as per GPC secondary alternatives to avoidable tablets due to side effects, withdrawal to management tablets due to poor symptomatic control, guideline dose reductions to lower ADR effects, Patient education to correct potential drop and replacement with an correct medication and monitoring period.

ANNUAL COST SAVING FROM 30 REVIEWS ESTIMATED
In all 30 of the patients reviewed by the Pharmacy Technician the suggestions put forward to the pharmacist for any changes have accepted and followed through.

Medication reviewed took 30-60 minutes depending on complexity with a further 10 minutes per patient to discuss prescribing decisions with the pharmacist.

Educational advice around medication given to all 30 patients with a specific focus on their medication, side effect and management of pain medications.

CONCLUSION
Although a small service since this study so far has demonstrated valuable health outcomes for patients, cost saving through effective prescribing and better use of staff within the pharmacy team. In all 20 patients reviewed suggestions put forward to the Pharmacist were followed through suggesting that with the correct training and support the work is suitable for a Pharmacy Technician to undertake.

Suggestions for future work would be to 1) test this methodology with other Pharmacy Technician experience, levels, and 2) begin to capture some qualitative data on the patients' experience and thoughts on this service.

REFERENCES
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Figure 1: Medication interventions
This pie chart summarises the types of medication interventions that resulted from the Pharmacy Technician review. It shows that 47% of patients reviewed had a change to their medication, 33% had a medication stopped and 20% had a medication started.

- 14 (47%) Medication changed
- 10 (33%) Medication stopped
- 6 (20%) Medication started

Feedback from pharmacists referring to the pilot:
"Fully comprehensive review with focus on cost savings and suggestions for next steps."
"The reviews have saved me hours of time."

medicines compliance service within our HSCP and at that point, I took on the line management of 3 staff members. In the time since, our pharmacy team has grown significantly, and we now have over 41 technical staff which I and two other part-time team leaders have been managing. Within this time, I have led on the setup and on-going development of our Pharmacotherapy Hub service and the recruitment, training and development of the pharmacy technician team to support this.

In the last year I have taken a step back from the Hub Lead role and have been concentrating on upskilling of the Senior Pharmacy Technician in our Medicines Compliance team, expanding the technical provision of Care Home Services within our HSCP and education and training of our technical team around professional frameworks and career pathways. I have

also been working on my clinical pillar by undertaking pharmacy technician-led housebound polypharmacy reviews. I have led on this work which has been very rewarding and is meeting a gap in patient access within Renfrewshire HSCP while testing a model for introducing level 2 medication reviews into our Senior Pharmacy Technician job role. In the last few weeks, I have been appointed the Lead Pharmacy Technician for Renfrewshire HSCP and I have begun to work on further service developments both locally and nationally.

I am delighted to have received 1st place for the Katherine Miles Innovation Award for my work with Housebound Polypharmacy Reviews. I am proud of this work and the difference it is making to patients. I am also excited to be able to share this work with my pharmacy technician peers across the UK in the hope that it will inspire others to share all the excellent and innovativework they are involved in going forward.

Pharmacy Technician-Led Housebound Polypharmacy Reviews - A Feasibility Study

The introduction of Pharmacy Technician-led polypharmacy reviews for housebound patients was identified as a way to improve access to housebound patients within the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

Aims:

- * To improve access to polypharmacy review for housebound patients within the HSCP
- * To test a Pharmacy Technician-led polypharmacy review model.
- * To audit review outcomes.

Method: The study ran from August 2024 until January 2025 and was limited to one Pharmacy Technician (PT) undertaking reviews on an ad-hoc basis.

The Scottish Therapeutics Utility (STU) tool was run to indicate a list of patients who would benefit from a polypharmacy review. Patients coded as housebound were referred to the PT.

At review the 7 steps approach to medication review (1) was used. Prescribing decisions were made on discussion with the practice Pharmacist.

Data captured included Rockwood frailty score (2), pre/post review Anticholinergic Burden (ACB) scores (3), number of medications stopped/started/changed (same metrics used in Pharmacist reviews), Pharmacist agreement with suggested changes, and cost savings made.

Results: Data was collected from all 15 patients referred. Rockwood score ranged from 3-7 with 8 out of 15 patients scoring 5 or above. ACB score reduced in 1 patient.

With regards to medications; 3 stopped, 5 started and 3 changed. In all 15 reviews the Pharmacist agreed with all changes suggested. £645.04 in savings were made.

Conclusion: This study demonstrated valuable health outcomes for patients, cost saving through effective prescribing and better use of skill mix within the pharmacy team.

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2nd place – Sarah Sharman MPharmT

Chesterfield Royal Hospital Foundation Trust

I am honoured and ecstatic to have received second place for my poster submission for the Katherine Miles Innovation Award. Having seen the fantastic work submitted by my peers at this year's conference, I am truly blown away.

There is so much meaningful work being carried out by pharmacy technicians that is making a real impact on the profession. To be recognised as part of this movement means a great deal to me. I'm especially proud that something so close to my heart was viewed positively and selected for recognition.

Ensuring the language in our guidelines is inclusive of all identities is a small but powerful change that can have a significant impact on certain population groups. It's a step towards not only delivering patient-centred care but also creating an inclusive environment for the peers and colleagues who use and read these guidelines.

Discovering that the duration of Gender Affirming Hormone Therapy (GAHT) can significantly affect antimicrobial dosing is both an important and fascinating finding. I believe this area needs further research and discussion to establish a standardised approach to accurate dosing for patients.

Addressing Gender Inequalities within our Antimicrobial Guidelines
 Author Sarah Sharman, Senior Pharmacy Technician for Chesterfield Royal Hospital (CRH) NHSFT

1. Background

- Number of trans and non-binary patients are increasing.
- At least 1 in 200 people aged 16 and over in the UK identify as a gender different from that assigned at birth (ONS, 2023).
- Equality Act 2010: sex and gender reassignment is a protected characteristic from discrimination – regardless of stage of transition.
- Antimicrobial guidelines within healthcare often assume binary categories – male and female, which poses two issues to address:
 - Language is not inclusive of people's gender identity.
 - Risk of discrimination and disengagement from binary patients.

2. Aims and Method

Aims

- Explore trust's antimicrobial guidelines for gender inclusivity
- Assess appropriateness of guidelines for trans & non-binary patients
- Develop a best-practice model for wider adoption

Method

- Review CRH trust's current antimicrobial guidelines
- Identify language that is not gender inclusive
- Identify areas where wording requires update to be inclusive of gender
- Identify areas where wording requires update to be inclusive of gender
- Review all ESR's guidelines
- Review all ESR's guidelines (AMR) regarding antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) including local, regional and national.

3. Results

Total of 44 instances were identified where non-gender inclusive language was used or wording needed to be amended.

Common terminology changed to be gender inclusive

- Male
- Female
- Trans
- Non-binary
- Gender diverse
- Gender affirming
- Gender inclusive

4. Therapeutic Decision Making

Key areas were identified where the gender identity and the gender affirming care history of the patient was detrimental to prescribing.

Calculations of Creatinine Clearance (CrCl) and Ideal Body Weight (IBW)

- CrCl uses Cockcroft-Gault formula which has different calculations for male and female binaries.
- Correction factor is nearly 20% higher for male, so using the wrong correction factor could have a marked difference on dose.
- Literature review showed that a person's CrCl and IBW is significantly affected by gender-affirming hormone therapy (GAHT).
- Research on renal function has shown creatinine clearance approximately 5-10 µmol/L in transsexual women after gender-affirming care has taken place.
- A person who has had GAHT for 4+ months is likely to have a CrCl and IBW closer to their gender identity, and not their gender assigned at birth.
- Patients who have recently started GAHT (including one shown to therapeutically single-blind to gender assigned at birth).
- Patients who are gender non-conforming may also be receiving hormone therapy, which needs to be taken into consideration.

Important to assess the patient using an individualised person-centred approach, as treatment will depend on what gender-affirming care the patient has received

Use of Fosfomycin and antibiotic course length

- Course length and dosages are higher for males than females.
- Reasoning is that UTIs in men are less common and tend to be more complicated, involving deeper structures of the body, and so require higher doses for effective treatment.
- It is important to take into consideration what gender-affirming surgery patients have undergone. Not all transmen have had genitourinary surgery, and so giving the higher dose would not be necessary.
- Patients who have undergone gender-affirming surgery are more likely to get recurrent UTIs and so should be treated as complicated UTI from the onset, regardless of gender.

Author details

Sarah Sharman - sarah.sharman@cheffield.ac.uk
 Scan the QR code for my LinkedIn profile
 Please contact me for further information about the project or if you would like to network
 My professional contact details are on my profile page

Addressing gender inequalities in our antimicrobial guidelines

Background: Current antimicrobial guidelines used don't use language or terminology that is inclusive of all gender identities. For example, common words used to describe patient groups are "male" or "female", but this isn't inclusive of those who identify as non-binary. Furthermore, where antibiotic choice is differentiated if the patient is pregnant, terminology used is often "pregnant women" which is not inclusive of non-binary individuals who are pregnant.

Method: I carried out an investigation to see what local and national guidance there was on this matter to make my own trusts antimicrobial guidelines inclusive in its language. I gleaned from this search that much needs to be done, both nationally, and locally, through individual trusts' guidelines, to address the inequalities I have mentioned.

I then carried out a project on my trusts antimicrobial guidelines to pick out non-gender inclusive wording that needed to be addressed.

Finally, I put forward suggested appropriate terminology and phrasing that was inclusive while still be clinically appropriate. I backed up my suggestions using the research I carried out at the offset.

Results: At the time is submitting this extract, the project is still in progress, but it is planned that all amendments will be made to our antimicrobial guidelines, and then I will be presenting the project at local and regional AMS meetings to encourage other trusts and teams to implement this inclusive change.

I hope to use the results of this project to further impact a wider variety of medicinal and treatment guidelines.

enjoyable experience. As it was my first time presenting a poster at a national event, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. However, I quickly realised what a fantastic opportunity it was, not just to share our own work, but also to learn from the experiences of others. Meeting pharmacy technicians from across the UK and hearing about the diverse range of projects they are undertaking was hugely inspiring. It reminded me how much we can learn from one another, and how important it is to share knowledge and ideas across different trusts and specialities.

The experience has also given me fresh motivation and a renewed sense of purpose. Antimicrobial stewardship is a vital part of modern healthcare, and it is rewarding to see growing recognition of the role pharmacy teams can play in this area. Insights I gained at the conference have sparked ideas for how we might expand it further and explore related initiatives. It reinforced my belief that small, focused changes can make a big difference when it comes to patient safety and the responsible use of antimicrobials.

I feel privileged to work in a role that allows me to directly contribute to improving patient outcomes while also supporting the long-term effectiveness of antimicrobials. Protecting these vital medicines for future generations is a responsibility that healthcare professionals share, and I am proud to play a part in this effort. Receiving this recognition has been a huge encouragement, both for me personally and for our team. I am excited to continue building on this success, working alongside my fantastic colleagues at ROH, and contributing to further improvements in antimicrobial stewardship.

A Review of Penicillin Allergy Documentation within an Elective Orthopaedic Hospital

Background: Approximately 6% of the general population carry a penicillin allergy label¹, affecting an estimated 2.7 million people in the United Kingdom. When tested, approximately 95% of penicillin allergy labels are incorrect². Inaccurate penicillin allergy labels can lead to suboptimal antimicrobial therapy and

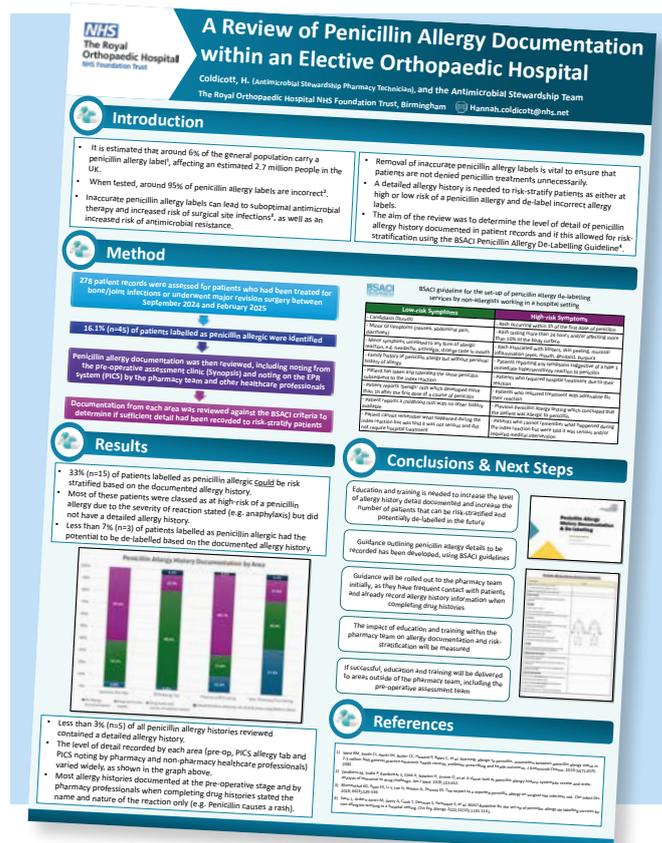


Joint 3rd Place – Hannah Coldicott MPharmT
Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacy Technician
The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Hannah.coldicott@nhs.net

When I learned that the poster had won third place in the Katherine Miles Innovation Award, it was an incredibly proud moment, both personally and professionally. The standard of posters at the conference was extremely high, with so many innovative projects from across the country being showcased, so I was absolutely over the moon that ours had been chosen. To know that the work of the antimicrobial pharmacy team at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (ROH) has been recognised in this way means a great deal. It reflects the dedication, collaboration, and commitment that has gone into the project, and highlights the value of pharmacy-led initiatives in improving patient care and driving positive change.

The project itself focused on reviewing penicillin allergy documentation, an area that has a real impact on clinical decision-making. Clear, accurate documentation helps ensure that patients receive the most appropriate antibiotics, reduces the risk of unnecessary restrictions, and supports safer prescribing. By improving the quality of this information, we are not only helping to provide better care for patients but also playing a part in protecting the effectiveness of antibiotics for the future.

Presenting the poster at the conference was a thoroughly



increased risk of surgical site infections³. Removal of inaccurate labels is vital to ensure that patients are not denied penicillin treatments unnecessarily. A detailed penicillin allergy history is needed to risk stratify patients as either at high or low risk of a penicillin allergy and de-label incorrect allergy labels.

Method: 278 patients on long-term antibiotic regimes were reviewed between September 2024 and February 2025. 45 patients were identified as having a penicillin allergy label. Allergy history documentation from electronic records was reviewed against the BSACI Penicillin Allergy De-Labeling Protocol Criteria⁴ to establish if patients could be risk stratified based on the level of detail documented.

Results: 33% of patients labelled as penicillin allergic could be risk stratified using the BSACI Protocol. Most of these patients were classed as unsuitable for drug provocation testing due to the severity of reactions stated. Under 3% of allergy histories documented contained a thorough allergy history.

Conclusions: Education and training are needed to improve penicillin allergy history documentation and increase the number of patients that can be risk stratified and potentially de-labelled in the future. Future work aims to measure the impact of education and training within pharmacy on penicillin allergy history documentation and risk stratification.

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Our pharmacy technicians supported pharmacists by engaging with patients newly initiated on mental health medicines, allowing pharmacists to focus more on clinical and multidisciplinary team (MDT) activities. The project enhanced our pharmacy technicians' confidence and knowledge in mental health medicines, giving them a greater sense of purpose and impact.

Looking ahead, we are incorporating patient feedback and plan to implement the Glasgow Antipsychotic Side Effect Scale (GASS) to assess side effects in patients starting antipsychotics. Pharmacy technicians will refer these assessments to pharmacists, supporting MDT decision-making and personalised care.

I'm proud that our work was recognised by APTUK and hope it encourages other mental health pharmacy teams to empower their pharmacy technicians in similar ways—enhancing both patient care and professional development.

PHARMACY
 Increase mental health pharmacy technician patient counselling activities on inpatient wards
 Joy Grange – Principal Pharmacy Technician (Medicines Optimisation)
 Email: joy.grange@swlstg.nhs.uk

INTRODUCTION
 > **Background:** The pharmacy business strategy focused on enhancing the experience of service users in relation to their medication, particularly within inpatient mental health settings
 > **Purpose:** This initiative aims to increase patient access to pharmacy technicians for direct, patient-facing activities such as medicines counselling and optimisation. This service supports improved patient outcomes and a more person-centred approach to care.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES
 > To 'Improve The Adult Patient Journey' – Trust objective
 > Increase patient access to more pharmacy staff through medicines counselling and identifying concerns prior to discharge, particularly for mental health (MH) medicines
 > Embed medicines counselling service into day-to-day practice for pharmacy technicians on inpatient wards

METHOD

- Protected time allocated to pharmacy technicians for patient counselling
- Appointments scheduled with patients
- Consultations conducted and recorded in clinical notes
- Service integrated with ward activities:
 - Medicines reconciliation
 - Patients' own medicines assessments
 - Medicines supply and management
 - Ward queries - Nurse training
- Activity scheduled around afternoon dispensary operational slots

RESULTS
 Following implementation of the counselling initiative over a three-month period, the following outcomes were achieved from a baseline of zero pharmacy technician-led discharge consultations:
 40 more patients were counselled than when pharmacists alone were counselling patients
 3 consultations focused on newly initiated mental health medications
 12 clinical interventions were made as a direct result of these consultations, contributing to safer and more effective patient care

CONCLUSIONS
 > Additional pharmacy pathway for patients to discuss ideas, expectations and concerns about medicines
 > Interventions in optimization of prescribed medicines
 > Pharmacy Technician job satisfaction based on feedback from staff
 > Maintained more effective communication between pharmacy staff regarding patient care

RECOMMENDATIONS
 > Increase number of pharmacy technicians to support the medicines counselling service
 > 2025/26 – implementation of patient feedback surveys
 > Identify side effects of MH medicines earlier using side effect rating scales in 60% of patients where a rating scale is appropriate
 > Better utilization of pharmacy technician skills

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Avelin Ryan, Clinical Pharmacist and Marysia Hazanah, Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist

Joint 3rd Place – Joy Grange MAPharmT

Principal Pharmacy Technician – Medicines Optimisation South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
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As Principal Pharmacy Technician (Medicines Optimisation) at South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, I led a project aligned with our Trust's objective of "Improving the Adult Patient Journey". The initiative focused on enhancing how we provide medicines information to patients, particularly prior to discharge, to support their recovery and improve adherence.

This was my first time presenting a poster at an APTUK conference, and I was honoured to jointly receive 3rd place for the Katherine Miles Innovation Award. The recognition reflects the dedication of our medicines management pharmacy technician team, who played a key role in delivering this project.

Increase mental health pharmacy technician patient counselling activities on inpatient wards

Purpose: To provide patients increased access to pharmacy technicians to discuss expectations, ideas and concerns about medicines.

The pharmacy business strategy – to improve patient experience related to medication across the Trust on inpatient wards.

Trust deliverables:

- Increase quality years for patients
- Reduce health inequalities for patients
- Improve the Adult Patient Journey
- Great place to work

Methods:

1. Protected time allocated to pharmacy technicians to counsel patients on medicines before discharge, particularly mental health medicines
2. Appointments made with patients, and consultations carried out and recorded in patient clinical notes

3. Service embedded in practice alongside ward-based activities such as medicines reconciliation, patients own medicines assessments, medicines supply and management, ward related queries, nurse training, audits and service improvement. The activity was factored around afternoon dispensary operational slots

Results: From a baseline of zero consultations by pharmacy technicians on discharge, the following results were obtained after implementation:

- 40 patient consultations undertaken
- 3 patient consultations on newly initiated mental health medicines
- 12 interventions made after consultations

Conclusions:

- 40 additional patients counselled with pharmacy technicians
- Impact on patients - additional pathway to discuss ideas, expectations and concerns about medicines – resulting in interventions such as optimization of medicines prescribed
- Pharmacy technicians provided counselling on newly initiated mental health medicines
- More pharmacy technicians required to support the service
- Utilisation of pharmacy technician skills, further development and job satisfaction.

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Highly commended Sarah Shergold MPharmT

Chief Medicines Management Pharmacy Technician Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust



The last two years have been a whirlwind since I began my critical care role at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH), returning to the UK after working as a Civilian Pharmacy Technician for the Ministry of Defence. My time in Europe gave me pharmacy experiences I'll never forget – from taking medicines to a quarantined warship during COVID-19, to securing Vitamin K at 2am with a police escort for a baby born unexpectedly one night!

My pharmacy journey began at 16, when I was unsure of my career path. My mum signed me up for a Saturday position at our local community pharmacy and I haven't looked back since. I quickly completed the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) counter assistant and dispensers' qualifications, moving between community and hospital pharmacy before qualifying as a pharmacy technician in 2015. Over the last 10 years I've worked in both rotational and specialist roles, including Surgical Dispensary Lead and as a Medicines Management Technician in the Emergency Department.

Further study helped me build confidence and broaden my horizons. Completing the Level 4 Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy Sciences alongside an ILM Affiliateship in Leadership and Management gave me the drive to apply for a new opportunity

back in the UK. In May 2023, I returned to the hospital where I was born to begin my journey in Critical Care and Theatres.

Since then, I've been fortunate to demonstrate the real impact pharmacy technicians can make on the critical care team. I've been supported to expand our team to two full-time pharmacy technicians and cross-train two specialist theatres pharmacy technicians to complete MMT training and support across our critical care areas. This allows us to provide more consistent pharmacy technician cover across our three sites throughout the week.

Our focus has been on pharmacy technicians taking ownership of all operational tasks – managing stock, managing procurement challenges, safeguarding medicines through automated cabinets, and ensuring accurate and detailed medicines histories. We also support clinical decision-making by investigating requests such as vaccination histories or anticoagulant indications. This has freed pharmacists to spend more time on direct clinical care and patient facing activities.

I was honoured to receive the Highly Commended Award at the APTUK conference for my poster "*Impact of introducing Pharmacy Technicians to Adult Critical Care.*" The recognition was particularly special after seeing the outstanding projects displayed across the conference, I left with new ideas and plenty of inspiration for future projects.

The poster project highlighted two key benefits:

- **Measurable cost savings** generated through recording and reducing medicines wastage and optimising stock holdings across three units and enhanced peri-operative wards.
- **Time released for pharmacists** to focus more on clinical activities and direct patient care, as pharmacy technicians have taken ownership of essential operational tasks.

Creating the poster was a first for me, and I am grateful for the input of our two Advanced Pharmacist Practitioners in Critical Care and the support of our IT Analyst, Hannah, who designed a brilliant system for data collation and analysis of the trends and workloads of our team.

I am passionate about promoting innovation and advancing pharmacy technician practice. Working in critical care has given me countless opportunities and a series of exciting "firsts"; co-delivering a session at this year's APTUK Conference, being part of the first-ever pharmacy technician panel to open the UK Clinical Pharmacy Association (UKCPA) Conference, and next month, joining a panel at the Clinical Pharmacy Congress (CPC) North Conference on advancing pharmacy technician roles.

Sharing experiences and ideas is key to driving our profession forward. I wholeheartedly recommend critical care as a career path. It is a dynamic and rewarding environment where pharmacy technicians can make a tangible impact. If such a role doesn't exist in your area – or in an area that interests you – ask why not?

If you'd like to connect, share ideas or need support with a poster project, I'd love to hear from you at sarah.shergold@nhs.net

Time-release impact of introducing Pharmacy Technicians into adult critical care

Background: Pharmacy teams in critical care proved invaluable during COVID-19, leading to the introduction of Pharmacy Technicians in trusts across the UK. Pharmacy Technicians have been in post for 18 months in Critical Care, prompting an assessment of their impact.

Aim: This poster highlights time and cost savings, releasing Pharmacists' time, allowing a focus on clinical activities and improving medication safety.

Methods: Data from an 18-month period was collected via EPMA systems, supported by ICT analysts. This data was compared

before and after Pharmacy Technicians' introduction, presented graphically. A separate study estimated time saved by examining drug history times in technician-led units.

Omnicell systems were reviewed, and 1,000 accounts were removed.

Intervention logs highlighted errors identified by Pharmacy Technicians during medicines histories.

An anonymous questionnaire, conducted with Pharmacists, assessed the value of Technicians, and impact of their accurate histories. Pharmacy Technicians now report high-cost drug data as required by NHS England¹.

Results: Data showed the volume of tasks managed by Pharmacy Technicians. The output has grown exponentially following recruitment of additional technicians, with Q1 2025 results already matching Q1-Q4 2024.

Pharmacy Technicians released over 340 hours² and £10,000 of Pharmacist time³, prevented £50,000 in medicines wastage and over 50% of medicine orders were amended or cancelled by Technicians.

Conclusions: Pharmacy Technicians in Critical Care have successfully freed up time for Pharmacists to focus on patient care. Further data collection is needed to quantify additional patient-facing time as the role expands.

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Delegates Choice Poster Winner Emma Williams MPharmT

Velindre University NHS Trust



I am proud to have worked at Velindre University NHS Trust since 2007. Starting as a Senior Assistant Technical Officer before completing my training to become a registered pharmacy technician in 2009.

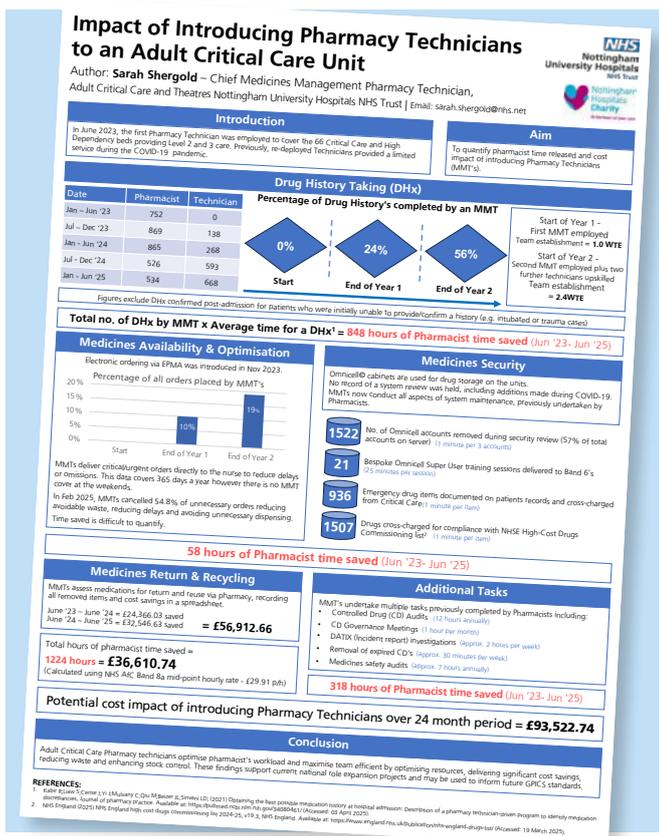
Now working as a senior pharmacy technician in a Virtual Assessment Pre-SACT clinic. My role includes carrying out clinical assessments for patients receiving systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT), authorising prescriptions and lead on new patient bookings as well as training new staff—an aspect of my role that I find especially rewarding. I am also an accredited accuracy checking pharmacy technician, medicines management trained and have completed the BOPA SACT passport, which enables me to clinically verify selected SACT regimens.

Receiving the Delegates' Choice Poster award at the recent APTUK conference was a truly special moment for me. It was an honour to be recognised by my peers and I'm proud that our service development at Velindre resonated so strongly with colleagues. I am grateful for the recognition and excited to continue developing the service. Pharmacy technicians play such a vital role in patient centred care, and I am so proud to play a part in a community that continues to innovate, educate and inspire.

Managing capacity in systemic anti cancer therapy assessment clinics by utilising the multidisciplinary team in a virtual clinic setting

Background: Velindre Cancer Centre has an over-pressurised Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy service facing increasing demand along with prescriber resource and space constraints, necessitating a move to virtual consultations, especially for rural patients. The Virtual Assessment Pathway Clinic was established to improve efficiency by transferring pre-SACT assessments from consultant clinics, enabling clinical prioritisation and reducing patient disruption. Decoupling clinic days from SACT administration also improved booking flexibility.

Method: A five-day multi-cancer site clinic - Colorectal, Breast, Urology, Gynae, Cancer of Unknown Primary and Skin is staffed by Pharmacy Technicians and Nurses assessing patients on specific SACT regimens, with NMP/IPs prescribing treatments based on toxicity and blood results. A Senior Pharmacy Technician manages new patient bookings, staff training, authorising treatments and running clinic in the NMP's absence. Data on toxicities and blood results are collected via site specific check sheets and patient surveys to audit satisfaction.



“Managing capacity in SACT Assessment clinics by utilising the multi-disciplinary team in a virtual clinic setting”
The Virtually Assessed Pathway (VAP) Service at Velindre Cancer Centre

1 Introduction
 Velindre Cancer Service (VCS) has an over-pressured SACT service that is proving challenging to meet the ever-increasing demand in terms of prescriber resource. Coupled with this was the need to increase virtual consultations due to space constraints and a rural population. The innovative solution was to set up the VAP Clinic to address these two issues. A unique clinic, one of a kind in the UK - Independent Prescriber led, multi cancer site and multidisciplinary.

2 Aims

- Run a 5 day/week virtual multi-cancer site, multi-disciplinary IP-led, pre- SACT assessment clinic to assess and prescribe SACT for patients
- Reduce the disruption to patients lives by adopting virtual consultations administration days
- Expand to be a pan oncology multi-cancer clinic covering Breast, Urology, Colorectal, Gynae, HPB, Skin, Upper GI and Lung
- Develop and embed the roles of Pharmacy Technicians in pre SACT assessment clinics

3 Method

- VAP clinic led by an Independent Prescribing Nurse and staffed by Pharmacy Technicians and SACT nurses
- Senior Pharmacy Technician working in clinic for assessments, lead for new staff training, in charge of new patient bookings, authorising treatment and running the clinic in the absence of the IP
- Pharmacy Technicians to provide medicines optimisation advice, identify potential drug interactions and highlight supportive care needs
- Telephone and video consultations to assess patients on specific well tolerated, routine SACT regimes
- Pharmacy technicians play a key role in data gathering, medicines reconciliation, toxicity reporting and contribute to patient education for SACT
- Data on SACT toxicities, patient outcomes and feedback is continually gathered and reviewed to maintain safety and improve the service

4 Results

- Over 23,000 patients assessed in 5 years
- 11,500 hours of an outpatient clinician's time saved
- VAP clinic is half the cost of a medical clinic
- Satisfaction score 9.4/10
- 100% of patients happy to continue
- No serious clinical incidence reported. Patient safety & clinical governance are paramount
- Low rate of Discordance assessment (0.28%)
- Enhanced recruitment and retention of pharmacy technicians by including VAP duties in job roles
- Keep the Safe APP developed and implemented. ePROMs has helped the patient to feel more involved in their care

5 Conclusion
 The VAP Clinic demonstrates that resource and capacity challenges faced by VCS for pre-SACT assessments can be effectively addressed through virtual, multi-disciplinary working, with pharmacy technicians playing a crucial role in supporting safe, efficient and patient-centred care. Referring patients on well tolerated/routine SACT to VAP enables clinical prioritisation within the medical clinics. By embedding pharmacy technicians within the VAP model, VCS has enhanced skill mix utilisation, offered career development opportunities and delivered value-based healthcare for patients on systemic anti-cancer therapy.

Authors: Emma Williams - emma.williams5@wales.nhs.uk
 Tej Quine - tej.quine@wales.nhs.uk

Cancer Sites

Cancer Site	Main SACT regimens in VAP	Cancer Site	Main SACT regimens in VAP
Colorectal	Xelox, OxAM5GI/M5G, Irinotecan/Cape, Capecitabine, Cetuximab/ Panitumumab	Skin	Nivolumab, Cemiplimab, Avelumab, Dabrafenib & Trametinib, Pembrolizumab, Binimetinib & Encorafenib
Breast	Palbocicb, Ribocicb, Abemacicb, Emertu, Capecitabine, Kexyla	Upper GI	Nivolumab, FLOT, OX, Herzuma, Pembrolizumab
Urology	Abiraterone, Apalutamide, Docetaxelamide, Enzalutamide	Lung	Osimertinib, Alectinib, Atezolizumab, Pembrolizumab
Gynae	Carboplatin +/-Taxol, Epirubicin, Olaparib, Niraparib, Rucaparib	HPB	Capotecicb, Folfitrex, Durvalumab, Regorafenib, Sorafenib, Lenvatinib

Results: This unique NMP-led, multidisciplinary SACT assessment clinic has assessed over 17,000 patients (September 2020 – January 2025), saving 8500 outpatient clinician hours. Patient survey participation was 58%, with a satisfaction score of 9.4/10 and 100% respondents willing to continue. Reported benefits included reduced stress, travel and waiting times, particularly for working patients. No serious clinical incidents occurred and discordance in assessments was 0.28%.

Conclusion: VAP Clinic demonstrates a significant service improvement, optimising capacity by shifting routine/well-tolerated SACT assessments to virtual models. Supporting clinical prioritisation, reduces consultant clinic growth and enhances value-based healthcare. The VAP “Keep Me Safe” app is being trialled to further engage patients through ePROMs.

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CURRENT FEES

To join APTUK follow this link:
www.aptuk.org/about-us/join-aptuk/
 The current annual fees are
 Pharmacy Technician: £60 or £6 per month
 Early Years: £60 for 18 months or £4 per month
 Trainees are FREE of charge

Monthly fees are only available when setting up payment via the website: aptuk.org.

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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



APTUK 2025 Pharmacy Technician Awards

We are delighted to be able to recognise all sectors of pharmacy practice and individual excellence through these awards.

Prizes include an engraved trophy and an educational bursary towards attendance at APTUK Annual Conference 2026.

This year we received an amazing 97 nominations, across all the awards. Competition was very high, but after

deliberation and review of each nomination by at least 3 independent judges, we announced the winners at the APTUK 2025 Conference and Awards Dinner on Friday 19th September at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead.



Pharmacy Technician Team of the Year Award

Sponsored by Boots, the APTUK Pharmacy Technician Team of the Year Award focuses on the pivotal role that outstanding teams of pharmacy technicians have on influencing positive person-centred patient care. This can be through innovation, service development or research.

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Pharmacy Technician Team	
Nominated by	Lead Pharmacy Technician Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Nomination Summary	The pharmacy technician team at Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust delivers innovative, person-centred care across mental health services. From improving clozapine safety and education, to transforming medicines supply and leading workforce development, the team's collaborative and forward-thinking approach is driving real change locally and nationally. Their work supports safer, more informed care for patients and carers, while championing the pharmacy technician profession across Sussex and beyond.

Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award

Sponsored by Buttercups Training, the APTUK Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award acknowledges the commitment, dedication and achievement of Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technicians. The award was given to a trainee who, in the opinion of the judges, demonstrated outstanding effort and commitment.

Sereita Carnagie MAPharmT	Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technician, Barts Health NHS Trust
Nominated by	Lead Education, Training and Development Pharmacy Technician, Barts Health NHS Trust
Nomination summary	Sereita faced many challenges during her time as a PTPT but was determined to complete the course and achieve her dream of being a pharmacy technician. Additionally, she was newly-diagnosed with dyslexia during the early days of her training and engaged meaningfully with the resources to support this. She shared her experience of this openly with others to encourage them on their own journeys, determined to use her story to potentially help others.

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Excellence in Pharmacy Education Award

The APTUK Excellence in Pharmacy Education Award recognises an outstanding pharmacy technician, team or project that has made a significant contribution to education, training and development of pharmacy technicians or pharmacy teams in the UK.

Gemma Bartlett MAPharmT	Specialist Anticoagulation Pharmacy Technician, Royal Glamorgan Hospital Pharmacy
Nominated by	Clinical Pharmacist, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Nomination Summary	The nominee has significantly advanced the skills and confidence of pharmacy technicians across diverse practice areas through mentorship, targeted education, and consultation skills training. Their work includes supporting pre-registration technicians in coronary care, developing an anticoagulation education resource, and delivering essential consultation skills teaching. This impactful project has empowered technicians to adopt more clinically focused roles, contributing to the professional growth of pharmacy teams across the UK.

“I was deeply honoured to receive the APTUK Excellence in Education Award at this year’s conference. To be recognised for something I am so passionate about was an incredibly proud and emotional moment. Standing alongside so many inspiring colleagues reminded me of the dedication that pharmacy technicians bring to patient care, education and development of the profession every day.

I work as a Specialist Anticoagulation Pharmacy Technician at Cwm Taf Bro Morgannwg UHB in South Wales, within a supportive team of pharmacists and admin support. I provide a medicines management service to the Coronary Care Unit but primarily my role involves supporting patients receiving anticoagulation therapy. I conduct warfarin clinics, where I assess patients, interpret INR results and make appropriate dosing decisions to improve patient outcomes.

Alongside my clinical responsibilities, I am passionate about education and training. I support pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians and undergraduate pharmacists, helping them gain confidence to deliver enhanced consultations on high-risk medications such as warfarin, DOACs, amiodarone, to name a few. This enables them not only to provide safer patient care but also to share their knowledge with others, spreading best practice throughout teams. Watching my learners grow in confidence from their first clinical experience is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job.

Receiving this award reinforces my belief in the power of education to shape the future of our profession. It motivates me to continue creating engaging, supportive learning opportunities and to champion the vital role of pharmacy technicians as educators, clinicians and leaders in patient care.”



APTUK Advancing Clinical Practice Award

Sponsored by Bradford College, the APTUK Advancing Clinical Practice Award is open to pharmacy technicians, pharmacy teams or a project that has contributed to significant clinical advancement over the past 12 months.

Abigail Stirling MAPharmT	Senior GP Pharmacy Technician, Sunlight Group Practice
Nominated by	President – Primary Care Pharmacy Association (PCPA)
Nomination Summary	Abbie is redefining pharmacy technician practice! A natural leader, clinical innovator, published author, and national chair for PCPA. She champions patient-centred care and research-led practice in primary care. From heart failure clinics, CVD management to research studies - Abbie drives quality, safety & professional excellence. A mentor, national speaker, and trailblazer for advanced roles, her impact is local, regional, and national- and unstoppable. Abbie embodies the future of Pharmacy Technicians: clinical, confident, and inspiring!

“I am absolutely delighted to have been awarded the APTUK Advancing Clinical Practice Award at this year’s APTUK conference. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to APTUK, the selection panel, PCPA, and my employer for their nomination and support.

This award has had a profound personal and professional impact. Beyond my own joy, it is incredibly rewarding to see that my colleagues in practice recognise the significant role a pharmacy technician can play in clinical care and value my contributions as part of the multidisciplinary team within General Practice. My colleagues were delighted I returned from conference winning the award, to which my GP partners said was “Richly deserved”.

The announcement has been shared widely through local and regional newsletters – not only to celebrate this achievement but also to highlight the vital role pharmacy technicians can have in clinical care in PCN/General practice. My hope is that this recognition will inspire other pharmacy technicians, as well as employers, to embrace pharmacy technicians in more patient-facing roles – overcoming barriers that many currently face.

I am hopeful that this award will encourage others to be bold and confident in advancing their own clinical practice.”



APTUK Inspirational Leadership Award

The APTUK Inspirational Leadership Award is open to pharmacy technicians who have shown inspirational leadership within their team over the past 12 months.

Simon Plant MAPharmT	Associate Head of Pharmacy - Operations, Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust
Nominated by	Chief Pharmacist and Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust
Nomination Summary	Simon Plant from Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust is nominated for the APTUK Inspirational Leadership Award for his work, dedication and leadership in the design of our Pharmacy estate across 3 sites, changes to our workforce diversity, development of our services and the move of our patients, medicines and teams from 2 acute sites to the UK's newest large scale super hospital - Midland Metropolitan University Hospital.

“Being shortlisted for and winning the award for Inspirational Leadership came as a surprise, but it is truly an honour. Over the past 12 months at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, my service has undergone significant changes and faced numerous challenges. We moved into a new acute hospital (MMUH), implementing new ways of working, including first of its kind end-to-end medication administration processes and central pharmacy automation in the UK. We also developed new career pathways, establishing progression and training from volunteers to pharmacy technicians.

Looking back, it's clear we achieved a great deal, and while there were highs and lows along the way, one of the most memorable moments was meeting His Majesty King Charles III at the grand opening. Throughout these challenges and successes, I felt it was important that everything we do must be in the best interests of our staff and the colleagues and patients we serve. Something I'm hope we all do every day in healthcare.

Winning this award is a privilege, but I want to stress that I wasn't alone in this achievement. I've had the fortune of leading an incredible team and being part of a very supportive and talented senior leadership team at SWB. A special mention goes to two exceptional pharmacy technicians: Pritiben Narshi, whose outstanding organisational skills and attention to detail helped turn vision into reality, and Benjamin Seal, who overcame technical challenges to implement cutting-edge technology, ensuring our digital applications were operationally effective.

None of what we achieved would have been possible without the amazing staff in the department who worked alongside me, taking on challenges, adapting to new ways of working, and consistently maintaining high levels of service and patient care.

I am incredibly proud to have received this award, and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to APTUK for selecting me.”



APTUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion of the Year Award

Sponsored by Pharmacy Workforce Development South (PWDS), the APTUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion of the Year award recognises an outstanding pharmacy technician who has championed the values of equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace over the past 12 months.

Sarah Sharman MAPharmT	Senior Pharmacy Technician Antimicrobial & Ward Services, Chesterfield Royal Hospital
Nominated by	Pharmacy Workforce Lead Joined Up Care Derbyshire
Nomination Summary	Sarah has significantly advanced Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in pharmacy by auditing antibiotic guidelines for gender inclusivity, adding pronouns to name badges and forming the APTUK Pride branch. Her work has improved patient care for trans and gender non-conforming individuals, set new standards in pharmacy practice and raised the profile of pharmacy technicians. Sarah's dedication and leadership make her a deserving candidate for the EDI Champion of the Year Award.

“Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is something very close to my heart, and I am passionate about promoting it within the pharmacy profession – not only for our patients, but also for our peers.

My interest in EDI began when I started my journey into research as a pharmacy technician. The best piece of advice I ever received was to choose a topic that truly meant something to me. From there, my passion for improving EDI for LGBTQ+ individuals evolved into both a professional and personal identity.

I began locally, advocating for the inclusion of pronouns on name badges and urging my trust to establish an LGBTQ+ staff network. I also led a project in my role as an Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacy Technician to ensure our antimicrobial guidelines were gender-inclusive.

Wanting to connect with fellow LGBTQ+ pharmacy technicians, I discovered that no regional or national network existed – so I co-founded the **Pride Branch** with Jason Benning, supported by APTUK. This platform offers a dedicated LGBTQ+ staff networking and development space for pharmacy technicians.

This year, I am beginning an academic research project focused on improving the education of Gender Affirming Care within pharmacy technician training. The aim is to support our professional development and enhance the patient-centred care model championed by the GPhC.

In my current role at the University of Sheffield, I serve as the EDI Lead for the School of Pharmacy. I work to ensure our curriculum is delivered in a way that is inclusive and equitable for all students. I'm also embarking on a pedagogical research project to assess the impact of delivering pharmacy-specific

EDI training to MPharm students – training that goes beyond the often generic, mandatory modules provided by employers. The goal is to evaluate whether this more tailored education improves students’ professional practice and attitudes toward minority populations.

We live in uncertain times. This year alone has seen far too many events that have incited fear and anxiety in minority communities. But no matter what changes or challenges arise, I believe firmly that: our patients are still our patients; our peers are still our peers; our friends, families, and customers are still people who deserve the same respect and dignity as anyone else.

When I deliver talks or presentations on EDI, LGBTQ+ rights, and inclusive practice, I always close with the same quote by Gandhi: *“Be the change you want to see in the world.”*

That’s why I do what I do – and why I will continue working to improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in our profession.”



APTUK Branch of the Year – Runner up

I was both delighted and overwhelmed when our branch was awarded Runner-Up for the Branch of the Year Award at the APTUK Annual Conference. As a relatively new branch, I never imagined we would receive such recognition so soon, and it was such an honor to be acknowledged alongside so many well-established and inspiring branches.

This achievement is a true reflection of the hard work, enthusiasm, and dedication of our branch committee and our members, who have supported us and helped the branch grow from the very beginning. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together in such a short space of time, and I want to thank everyone who has contributed their time, ideas, and energy.

Receiving this award has not only filled me with pride, but also with excitement for what lies ahead. It has given me renewed motivation to continue building on our foundations, to expand our reach, and to create even more opportunities for our members to connect, learn, and thrive.

I am so grateful for the support from APTUK and the wider community, and I can’t wait to see what the future holds for our branch. A special thank you goes to Dan, Lauren, and Shan, our branch committee – this would have been impossible without their dedication and commitment.

Emma Hall Branch Chair



Technical Services Branch – Branch of the Year 2025

The Technical Services Branch is delighted and deeply honoured to have been awarded Branch of the Year for 2024–2025. This recognition reflects the sustained dedication (despite ongoing challenges) to support the professional development and knowledge exchange across the Technical Services community.

Throughout 2024-2025, the branch hosted a diverse series of virtual meetings, covering a range topics. These included:

- NHS Recruitment and Retention Challenges (May 2024)
 - Monoclonal Antibody Safety and Handling (August 2024)
 - Considerations When Building a New Cleanroom (November 2024)
 - PTPT Specialist Training Pathway (February 2025), focusing on the development of trainees based within aseptic units
- Attendance has been consistently strong, averaging around 30 participants per session. Our most popular meeting to date, held in May 2024, attracted an impressive 46 attendees – perhaps reflecting the widespread urgency and shared interest in addressing recruitment and retention challenges across our services.

While 2025 has brought some challenges in maintaining the same pace of activity – owing to personal and operational pressures affecting the committee and planned speakers – significant progress has been made behind the scenes to ensure the branch continues to thrive. Plans are now underway to strengthen the committee and reinvigorate our programme of events.

Looking Ahead

The branch recently completed a recruitment round to expand the committee. A planning meeting will take place shortly to define priorities and set a clear action plan for the coming year.

Get Involved

We are still open to applications from colleagues to join the committee and help shape the future of the Technical Services Branch. Whether you would like to contribute to organising events, propose discussion topics, or present your own work, your input is invaluable.

To express your interest or share ideas for future sessions, please contact us at asepticvirtual@aptuk.org.

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APTUK 2025 ADVANCING PRACTICE
ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
19 - 20 SEPTEMBER HILTON NEWCASTLE, GATESHEAD



APTUK 2025 Fellowship Awards



APTUK Fellowship Award Shelly-Ann French, FAPharmT

As a longstanding member of APTUK and a passionate advocate for its work, I actively promote the organisation through departmental inductions, sharing information about meetings, and encouraging colleagues to attend conferences and submit posters abstracts. I am proud to serve as a professional advocate and a regular point of contact in the London region for developing and expanding pharmacy technician roles. In addition, I act as

a professional ambassador, raising awareness of the protected title and encouraging leaders to think differently about the opportunities within our profession.

I am truly honoured to have received the APTUK Fellowship Award in recognition of my service and contributions to the pharmacy technician profession. Reflecting on my journey, I could never have imagined my career would bring me here.

When I finished my A Levels, my goal was to become a midwife. At the time, applicants needed to be 21 to begin the course, and at 18 I was too young. As a temporary step, I applied for a role I spotted in the local newspaper – a pharmacy technician post. It sounded interesting and seemed like a great way to begin a career in healthcare.

In 1998, I joined Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup as a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician – the same year the dual qualification route was introduced: the BTEC in Pharmaceutical Science and the NVQ Level 3 in Pharmacy Services. It was a challenging time, as no one had completed the NVQ3 before. Between four or five large A4 folders of evidence and 24 months of assessments, it often felt never-ending. But completing it was a real achievement, and in hindsight, the time flew by.

I later joined Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust as an MTO2 on their rotational programme, which was a fantastic learning experience. I discovered what I enjoyed (and what I didn't) and, after 15 months, secured a role at St Thomas' Hospital in the Harrison Wing as a Specialist HIV Pharmacy Technician. During this time, I also achieved my ACPT qualification in 2002 – a rigorous process requiring a 1,000-item log with zero margin for error.

When my Senior Pharmacy Technician moved on, I applied

for and secured the MTO3 post. I loved the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of HIV, contribute to a satellite pharmacy service, develop patient counselling skills, and work within an excellent multidisciplinary team.

In 2004, I progressed to an MTO4 role at Newham University Hospital, where I led the development of a new medicines management service on the wards. I thrived on launching new services, building teams, and managing people for the first time.

After maternity leave in 2005, I moved into an Education and Training role (Band 7 under Agenda for Change) and discovered a new passion: supporting and developing the next generation of pharmacy technicians. That same year, I voluntarily joined the newly formed GPhC register for pharmacy technicians, which later became mandatory in 2011.

This period was incredibly rewarding. I had the chance to design training programmes, mentor learners, and watch them grow. Supported by an inspirational Chief Pharmacist who championed innovation, I was able to lead on projects that shaped services and advanced the role of pharmacy technicians. During this time, I also gained a project management qualification, the A1 Assessor award, Internal Verifier (IQA), and ILM Level 3 in First Line Management.

After my second child in 2008, I returned to a much leaner team due to organisational pressures. Our band 7 pharmacy technician team was reduced from five to two, which meant my role expanded to cover medicines management, dispensary oversight, and education and training lead duties. This tested my resilience and broadened my expertise in people management, finance, and service delivery.

In 2013, when Newham University Hospital merged into Barts Health NHS Trust, I successfully secured a trust-wide Band 8a role as Head of Pharmacy Technician Development. In the years that followed, I trained as a mediator, became a peer vaccinator, and gained a CMI Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership. In 2019, I was proud to receive the UKCPA Pharmacy Together Award for Best Pharmacy Technician Poster on the "Assessment of the Quality of Medicines Information on Hospital Discharge Summaries."

In 2023, I took on additional responsibilities, and the role was subsequently re-banded to 8b. In 2025, the position was retitled Workforce Development Lead, reflecting both the expanded scope and the evolving needs of the organisation. This year, I also began the ILM Level 3 in Coaching to further enhance my ability to support and develop others.

Over the past decade, my role has continued to evolve – shaped by new Chief Pharmacists, national NHS priorities, and the changing workforce landscape. Each stage has demanded adaptability, resilience, and forward thinking. Working at Barts Health is both challenging and rewarding, and I remain passionate about developing our pharmacy workforce.

Supporting the next generation of pharmacy technicians is a privilege. The role is demanding and ever-changing, but it remains as exciting as ever – and I look forward to what the future holds.

APTUK Fellowship Award Kristy Garton, FAPharmT



When I first started out as a pharmacy technician, I can honestly say I struggled to find my place. I didn't see a long and fulfilling career ahead of me, it was just a job. A job I did well, but one that came with its fair share of frustrations, barriers, and ceilings. For years, I carried those feelings without really knowing what to do with them, or how to move forward.

I could see the potential of pharmacy technicians and had heard of small pockets of innovation, pharmacy technicians making incredible strides elsewhere, but I didn't feel part of that movement. I wasn't sure how to be. So the years rolled on, still working as a pharmacy technician, until... I met Kate Postle.

Kate is a pharmacy technician with incredible drive and passion. She believed deeply in the profession and shared that passion with me. She mentored me in one of my many roles and introduced me to the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK). She was a powerful advocate for our profession, and the one who helped me begin to see pharmacy technician work not just as a job, but as a profession, and even a calling.

Through her mentorship, I started to see the value of supporting other pharmacy technicians. I realised that by helping others thrive, I was giving them the start they deserved in a career that often goes unrecognised.

When I joined APTUK, I never imagined that journey would lead to receiving an APTUK Fellowship. The idea of being recognised in this way felt far beyond my reach. Today, standing here as a Fellow, I'm reminded that every small step, every patient counselled, every colleague supported, builds a career. And sometimes, if you're lucky, a legacy.

I'm truly honoured to have received the highest accolade that APTUK can bestow. For those who were there when I received the award, you probably saw how shocked I was. That feeling still hasn't quite worn off. The work I've done, the championing, the supporting, the relentless push to make space for others to shine, has always come from a place of passion and purpose.

Sometimes, that work has meant giving others a leg up; sometimes, it has meant kicking down doors. And while that image makes me wince a little, because kicking down doors should be painful, it's often a pain that clears the way for others to walk through without injury.

This recognition from APTUK is deeply humbling. It reflects not only my own efforts but also the encouragement, wisdom, and belief of those who've supported me along the way.

But with this award comes a responsibility, to keep making the path clearer and more welcoming for those who follow. My Fellowship isn't just a milestone; it's a call to action: to keep learning, keep sharing, and keep lifting others along the way.

I will be forever grateful to Claire Dearden and Kate Preston for nominating me, and to APTUK for this incredible honour. I also want to thank every pharmacy technician, past, present, and future, who has offered me words of encouragement, strength, and motivation. Because of you, I've been able to do the same for others. **Thank you.**

APTUK Honorary Member Matthew Shaw MPharmT



"Let me take a few moments of your time to express my thanks at being made an honorary member of APTUK. I really am thrilled and hugely grateful at this award. It is hard to put into words just how much it means to be one of only a few pharmacists who have received this award. It is both exciting and humbling.

From the start of my career in pharmacy I have had huge respect for pharmacy technicians and have learned so much working alongside them. And APTUK do so much to drive pharmacy technicians forwards, raising their profile, supporting their development and being a constant presence and advocate across a range of national and strategic meetings. To be invited in as an honorary member isn't just a personal achievement for me, it feels like a real celebration of what we can accomplish when we support and learn from each other.

Gaining this award as a pharmacist is a reminder that teamwork really does make a difference. I have always believed that the best outcomes arise when pharmacy technicians work side by side with their colleagues, sharing ideas, solving problems together and making a real difference to patient care. This award, for me, sums up the power of that collaborative approach.

I also know that honorary membership isn't given out lightly. It means that my efforts so far have been recognised but it is also a stimulus for me to keep contributing. I am fully committed to backing pharmacy technicians, being an advocate for APTUK and making sure that I play my part in driving the profession forwards. I am excited that I can play an active role – whether that's sharing my experience, offering support or simply being part of the conversation.

On a personal note, this award means a lot. I was so touched not just by my team and those I know who came to congratulate me, but by all those members who I wasn't aware my work had impacted. It's incredibly rewarding to learn that my contributions have been valued, and it pushes me to keep doing my best, stay open to new ideas and help people to reach their own goals. I don't take the responsibility that comes with this honour for granted.

I want to say a huge thank you to the APTUK directors, their team, professional leaders and everyone who has been involved in nominating and supporting me for this award. The welcome I have received has been so warm and genuine, and I am looking forward to more opportunities to connect and collaborate with you all.

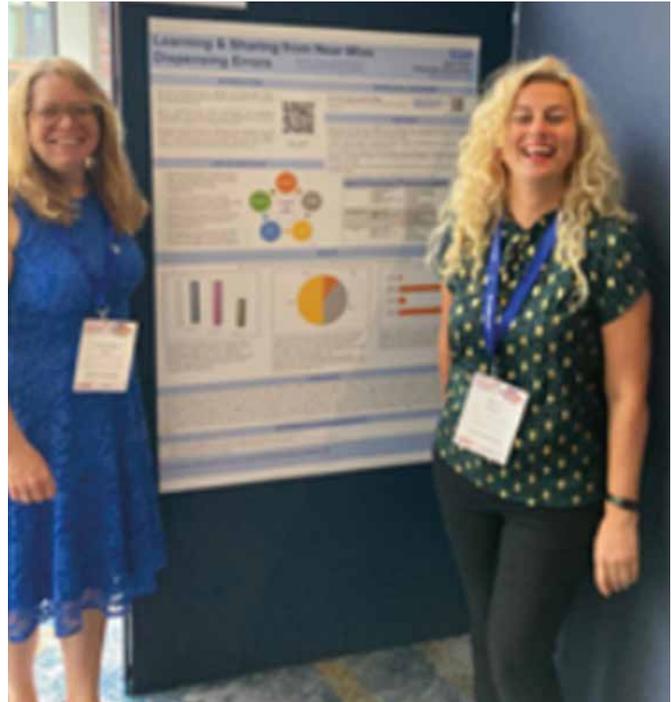
All in all, I feel so pleased – and incredibly honoured – to have been made an honorary member of APTUK. I will treasure this award and wear my badge with pride. It has given me even more motivation to keep giving my best to the profession. Thank you again for this amazing recognition."

Bursary Winner – Sue Jones MPharmT

Deputy Chief Pharmacy Technician Operations/Education & Training. Education Programme Director (EPD) for PTPTs East Kent Hospitals

I was thrilled to receive a bursary for this year’s conference. It was also my first visit to Newcastle, staying in a lovely venue. The theme of ‘Advancing Practice’ was particularly relevant to me given the current workforce priorities. The Four Pillars approach provided valuable insights, prompting me to reflect on how the four professional pillars - Clinical, Education, Leadership, and Research - connect with my own experiences. The conference highlighted the swiftly evolving roles of pharmacy technicians, and David Webb’s session on the 10-year health plan will assist me in enhancing our education strategy within the department. The selection of parallel workshops posed a challenging decision due to the abundance of excellent sessions available! I left feeling inspired, my mind buzzing with projects and abstract ideas for the upcoming year!

It has also prompted me to get in touch with my local APTUK branch committee and make plans for the year ahead. This year, my team and I submitted an abstract centered around one of the four pillars of pharmacy practice. I found this aspect enjoyable, as I explored posters and engaged with other pharmacy technicians regarding their projects. I always appreciate attending APTUK conference, as it allows for networking and reconnecting with colleagues. I am eager to share the insights gained back at work. A date is already planned. With my



revalidation approaching at the end of the year, I find myself with numerous options to consider! I highly encourage you to apply for a bursary next year. Do not let this opportunity pass you by!

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Voices of Advancing Practice:

APTUK Annual Conference Through the Eyes of Pharmacy Technicians

The Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) annual conference has become a cornerstone event for our profession – a time to meet colleagues, share knowledge, and celebrate the progress we are making together across the healthcare industry. This year's conference was no exception.

Advancing practice was the theme with keynote speakers and workshops shaped around the four pillars of advanced practice – clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research. It brought together pharmacy technicians from across the UK and showcased the dedication, expertise, and innovation that continue to shape our evolving role within healthcare.

We are both pharmacy technicians working in a Medicines Optimisation in Care Home (MOCH) team based in East Sussex. Our roles include supporting annual medication reviews for care home residents, providing advice and guidance on medicines management processes within the care home, and work alongside Primary Care multi-disciplinary teams.

The conference opened with Amy Laffin warmly welcoming everyone to the conference. Sir Hugh Taylor spoke about pharmacy professional leadership and co-creating the future, followed by Liz Fidler who discussed propelling pharmacy technician professional practice. The morning sessions reminded everyone in the room why events like this matter: they provide a moment for reflection on our journey so far with change in mindset and legislation, while also setting a vision for where we are heading. It was a reminder that leadership is not reserved for a few; it is something every pharmacy technician can embrace in their own way.

This highlighted just how far the profession has come. A room filled with pharmacy technicians who share the same challenges and aspirations felt like an affirmation of the profession's strength and purpose. Speaking with colleagues, they shared this sense of excitement, noting how valuable it was to be surrounded by likeminded colleagues committed to shaping the future of pharmacy technicians within the industry.

The keynote addresses were among the most impactful parts of the programme. Speakers offered perspectives on the future of pharmacy services, the integration of technology, and the impact of national healthcare strategies from the 10 Year NHS Health Plan. A clear message ran through these sessions: pharmacy technicians are no longer just supporting the healthcare system – they are helping to drive it forward.

The workshops and masterclasses provided opportunities to explore specific areas in more depth, from setting up clinical practice in your area of work to supporting learners. We attended the 'Research and why it matters to Pharmacy Technicians' workshop facilitated by Alison Hemsworth and Melanie Boughen. An opportunity to explore what research can look like within pharmacy and how pharmacy technicians can support research programs.

We were especially inspired by the discussions on the role of clinical pharmacy technicians by Emma Lowe, Abigail Stirling, Dalvinder Moman and Leanne Johnstone. Hearing how colleagues are stepping into advancing roles in community pharmacy, primary and secondary care that had not seemed possible before, and how they can work alongside the transitioning role of other pharmacy professionals. The sessions gave us practical ideas and the motivation to explore what

progression could look like within our own MOCH service and supporting the wider care home setting. Across the whole two days, we came away with strategies and insights to bring back to our workplaces. Enhance efficiency, strengthen services, and improve patient outcomes.

Besides the learning, the conference created valuable opportunity for networking and connection, and these were just as important as the keynote speeches and workshops. Conversations over coffee and pastries with peers from hospital, community, and primary care settings offered perspectives and practical advice that could be taken back to our work.

One of the most inspiring and rewarding part of the conference was the annual award dinner and recognition of individuals and teams through acknowledgements and recognition. Seeing colleagues celebrated for their contributions to patient safety, education, and service innovation reinforced the joy many feel in being part of this profession.

As the conference ended, and we were travelling the long drive home, we reflected on the weekend with the focus soon turning towards the future. With opportunities opening across healthcare, pharmacy technicians are taking on broader and more complex responsibilities than ever before. There was a renewed sense of optimism in the car and a stronger belief in the potential of the pharmacy technician profession.

We were motivated to pursue new avenues of professional growth, while continuing to push the boundaries of the pharmacy technician role. For both, the conference reinforced the importance of staying engaged, adaptable, and confident as the role of pharmacy technicians continues to evolve.

The APTUK annual conference was more than just a professional event. It offered knowledge, inspiration, and networking. The pharmacy technician's professional future lies not only in individual contributions but in the collective journey. We've returned to our workplace with creativity and the opportunity to put learning into action, to share our insights with colleagues, and to continue pushing advancing practice of pharmacy technicians.



ALAN HOPKINS MPharmT

JOANNE MAGENNIS

Senior Pharmacy Technicians, Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust

Insights and Inspiration at APTUK Conference 2025

I was really looking forward to attending the APTUK Conference this year, and it absolutely lived up to my expectations. I'd like to share my thoughts and experience from the two inspiring days I spent there.

The event began with a warm and engaging welcome speech from the Acting President, Amy Laflin, which set a positive tone for the conference. One of the first sessions I attended was "Pharmacy Professional Leadership – Co-Creating the Future". It was incredibly inspiring to hear about how pharmacy professionals can work together to shape a better future, and how pharmacy technicians play a vital role in that journey. The session highlighted the importance of leadership and how technology is supporting our profession to be the best it can be.

The first day was full of informative sessions and opportunities to explore new ideas for growth. Throughout the conference, there were different workshops available, and I was able to choose the ones most relevant to my role, which made the experience even more valuable.

A particularly helpful session was on the Four Pillars Approach delivered by Mary Carter and Bianca Glavin. They explained the model clearly and showed how it can support our professional development across clinical practice, education, leadership, and research. It gave me a structured way to think about my own career progression and how I can support my team's growth as well.

I especially enjoyed the workshop "Blueprint for Tomorrow: Learning from Critical Care Pharmacy for Technicians". As I am about to start an enhanced level course, this workshop provided me with essential information and helped clarify many of my questions. It was both informative and practical, exactly what I needed.

I also took the opportunity to connect with training providers and gather resources about career progression for my team. It was great to find several valuable opportunities that I can share with them.

Another standout workshop for me was "Why Does Research Matter for Pharmacy Technicians?". I wasn't sure how research applied to my role, as I had mostly done audits in the past. This session gave me a clear insight into how research contributes to our profession and what resources are available to get involved. It really opened my eyes to new possibilities.

The poster displays were extremely well done, and I genuinely wondered

how the judges picked the winners—they were all impressive in their own way.

One of the best parts of the conference was networking. It was my second time attending, and I really enjoyed meeting and exchanging ideas with other pharmacy technicians. It's such a supportive and energising environment.

As the quote goes: *"The future depends on what you do today."* – Mahatma Gandhi.

And after this conference, I feel more ready than ever to make a difference.



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THE ASSOCIATION OF
PHARMACY TECHNICIANS UK

APTUK 2026

EXPANDING HORIZONS



Following the success of APTUK 2025, we are delighted to announce that in 2026 we will be holding the APTUK Professional Conference and Exhibition on 18th and 19th September 2026 at the Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow, London.

More details of how to submit research abstracts, nominate for our prestigious pharmacy technician awards, and of course how to buy tickets, will be announced shortly.

For now, save the date and we will look forward to seeing you there!

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