



Return to Practice guidance for Pharmacy Technicians formerly accredited in Medicines Management or Final Accuracy Checking

Covid-19 preparedness – March 2020

The Association of Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom (APTUK) leads, advocates, and represents the Pharmacy Technician profession for the benefit of patients, the public and their members.

APTUK provide advice, information and support to members; championing and safeguarding the pharmacy technician profession.

It is recognised that for pharmacy technicians returning to the emergency register or patient facing roles, after a break in practice, a period of re-familiarisation with processes, local policies and procedures will be necessary. It is important for individuals and Responsible/Chief Pharmacists (RP/CP) to mutually agree the scope of practice and identify if further assessment or training is required, particularly for medicines management and final accuracy checking.

Pharmacy technicians must be covered by vicarious liability or have adequate indemnity cover to carry out these roles.

Pharmacy technicians must adhere to the GPhC professional standards.

A probationary period designed to ensure that the pharmacy technician can demonstrate competence in these roles before resuming autonomous practice is recommended.

Probationary Period

The probationary period should take place over a mutually agreed period and must include a continuous log of activity (including any corresponding error report documentation). It is advised that this is second checked by an accredited pharmacy technician or Pharmacist.

The length of the probationary period will depend on the individual and their circumstances. For example, a pharmacy technician returning to practice in a pharmacy, in which they have worked before and are familiar with the processes, may feel confident and demonstrate competence in a shorter timeframe. Individuals who are returning to practice in a completely new environment, may require a longer probationary period.



If a pharmacy technician makes an error during their probation period they should:

- Record and report the details of the error using the organisations error reporting processes and documentation
- Discuss the error with their line manager and reflect on why they think the error happened and the potential consequences of the error for the patient
- Decide if there is anything that can be done to improve their process to avoid this error happening again
- Continue the probationary period as agreed with the RP/CP.

Should the individual make multiple errors during this period it would be necessary to extend the probationary period until both the individual and RP/CP are satisfied that evidence of competence has been demonstrated.

Autonomous practice

Ultimately, the decision to progress from the probationary period to undertaking the activity independently should be made between the individual and the Responsible Pharmacist/Chief Pharmacist. As a registered pharmacy professional, the individual should use their professional judgement to indicate when they feel confident and competent to resume autonomous practice. The RP/CP can then choose to delegate this activity to the individual based on a demonstration of competence during the probation period.

Liz Fidler
President

Ellen Williams
Vice President

On behalf of the Board of

Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK