

STANDARD 5.0 MEDICINES EXPERTISE

The pharmacy team provides expertise and advice to support the safe and effective use of medicines by patients.

5.1 EXPERTISE FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Healthcare professionals prescribing, administering, and monitoring the effects of medicines have relevant, up-to-date, evidence-based information and pharmaceutical expertise available to them at the point of care.

Wishaw General Hospital – NHS Lanarkshire

The Scottish Patient Safety Programme has strict requirements around Medicines Reconciliation (MR). Every week, 10 case notes are checked to see if MR has met the appropriate criteria and the standard of 95% of all patients have MR undertaken within 24 hours of admission. A monthly audit is carried out across the hospital to see if this standard has been met and prove that the hospital is achieving patient safety. The pharmacy department regularly provide training for pharmacists to undertake MR and ensure that the service is meeting the required standards.

Evelina London Children's Hospital, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS FT

The pharmacy and medical teams have developed an electronic dose calculator for staff working in Paediatric Intensive Care Units (PICU), which gives prescribers access to a safe way of calculating doses on a mg/kg basis. It does not however provide any decision support. The Trust are currently developing an application that accesses the organisational paediatric formulary, providing a quick reference to important issues to around drugs in paediatrics as well as giving the dose. Information is easily accessible to prescribers and future developments will look to incorporate drug calculations as well.

Aintree University Hospitals NHS FT

Full implementation of the electronic document management system on the Trust intranet supports the electronic prescribing system, by providing all Trust prescribing guidelines; Trust formulary and antibiotics formulary. All formulary choices are visible ahead of non-formulary agents. The local Drugs and Therapeutics Committee ratifies all medicines related guidelines for publication on intranet, with senior clinical/specialty pharmacists as part of the development team.

5.2 EXPERTISE FOR PATIENT CARE

Pharmacists are integrated into clinical teams across the organisation and provide clinical care direct care to patient.

Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT

Since the introduction of independent pharmacist prescribing, the pharmacy department at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust has encouraged all their pharmacists to become independent prescribers. All newly appointed pharmacists are also expected to become independent prescribers. The Trust has now reached a critical mass of independent prescribers, with the skills and confidence to work across the service within their field of expertise. Independent pharmacy prescribers now work on all wards and services (known internally as the 'any time any place' model) with most prescribing carried out during medicines reconciliation. Pharmacists can prescribe for all patient groups, for any medication within their scope of practice and across the organisation; new medicines are also initiated where required e.g. more pain relief.

The feedback from clinical teams has been very positive with doctors and nurses valuing these skills. Recent data shows that pharmacists prescribe for 44% of all patients who are admitted, accounting for 12% of all items prescribed, with an error rate of 0.3%.

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

There are a number of independent pharmacist prescribers at City Hospitals Sunderland, who manage pharmacy led clinics in specialities such as haematology, heart failure, chronic pain and diabetes. Pharmacists are encouraged to become independent prescribers following completion of their clinical diploma and undergo a supported mentoring programme, until they are skilled and competent to prescribe independently. The department works with the organisation to set up appropriate funded clinics, which are pharmacist led. Each pharmacist has their own caseload of patients and works as a member of the multidisciplinary team.

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

To help reduce the number of operations cancelled due to a high INR, Leeds Hospital has introduced a pharmacist-led pre-admission clinic. Pharmacists work alongside surgical teams to identify patients who take warfarin/anticoagulants and are coming in for surgery. Several days prior to surgery, the patient is seen in a pre-admission clinic by the pharmacist and transferred to a low molecular weight heparin. Pharmacy staff liaise closely with the patient's GP and district nurses to ensure medicines supply and administration is robust. The pilot service has also reduced the number of cancelled operations and, to date, zero patients have had their surgery cancelled due to problems with anticoagulation.

The use of pharmacist transcribing/prescribing in the Same Day Admissions area has also reduced the number of errors and omissions markedly. Previously approximately 70% of patients had an error or omission with their usual medicines. Over the past few months, this error rate has reduced to zero.

Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

At Central Manchester University Hospitals, independent pharmacist prescribers work closely with clinical teams, especially in areas where complex prescribing regimes are required e.g:

- Clinical Haematology; the pharmacist prescriber works with the clinical team to set up a chemotherapy regime. They then continue to prescribe the regime, inclusive of chemotherapy and any adjunct medications such as anti-emetics. Liaising closely with the aseptics team in the pharmacy department, the pharmacist can ensure that therapy is ready for the patient when they arrive.
- Neonatal Total Parenteral Nutrition; as previously, the pharmacist prescriber works closely with the clinical teams to set up a suitable regime, which they continue to prescribe and ensure that it is ready for patients at the point of need.

By having independent pharmacist prescribers in these complex areas, there is better, more streamlined, coordination between departments, resulting in more efficient patient care.

Sussex Community NHS Trust

In Sussex Community NHS Trust, a specialist community pharmacist provides care for patients with long-term conditions, in their homes. Following a community nurse referral, the pharmacist visits the patient in their home and conducts a full clinical review of their medication. GP notes and patient laboratory data support this. The outcomes and any recommendations are sent to the GP, community pharmacist and the original referrer. The service is targeted at high intensity users of primary and secondary services and aims to identify medication issues that could result in unplanned hospital admissions; to reduce prescribing costs and to provide education and support to patients and carers in order to help them with taking their medicines ([The Pharmaceutical Journal 2009;282:83](#)).

The Trust is looking to expand this service for other areas, such as a pharmacist on the rapid response team. The vision is patients that stay well, stay out of hospital.

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has standards for the structure and content of pharmacy entries and communications in medical notes to ensure that pharmacist contributions to patient care are effectively recorded.

University Hospitals Bristol NHS FT

Pharmacists help to optimise high risk medicines across the Trust via a number of routes including a 'High risk Medication' policy which identifies high risk areas e.g. storage ordering etc. Pharmacy led training sessions for many areas around safe medicines use including: training for paediatric staff on the use of gentamicin; IV skills training session for all new nurses and return to practice nurses; mandatory training sessions for doctors and nurses on intrathecal drug safety issues; drug issues as part of the Trust cytotoxic training day.

Many of these areas are common to most Trusts, however it is helpful to actively offer these training sessions as part of the drive to improve the safe use of high-risk medicines.

Additional Examples to demonstrate this standard in practice are available on the RPS 'Map of Evidence' for the following titles:

- Hospital Standards (5.1) – Expertise for Healthcare Professionals – Prescriber Training.
- Hospital Standards (5.2) - Expertise for Patient Care - Admissions Pharmacist Prescribing