



**18 March 2021**

Dear Tutor

**Introducing reforms to the initial education and training of pharmacists – what you can expect in 2021/22**

As you will now be aware, new standards for the initial education and training of pharmacists have been introduced by the Pharmaceutical Society NI and the General Pharmaceutical Council. The new standards cover the first five years of the training continuum which consists of the four-year MPharm degree, followed by one year of foundation training. Key changes mandated by the new standards include a much higher proportion of experiential learning integrated across the continuum of undergraduate education and foundation training. This will prepare pharmacists to work at a higher clinical level across all sectors of the profession and, importantly, newly qualified pharmacists in the future will also register as independent prescribers. These changes will begin to be introduced in July 2021 with full application of the new standards anticipated by 2026/2027.

Within Northern Ireland, a phased approach to reforms will be adopted to ensure a smooth and gradual transition to the new Foundation Training Year (currently known as the Pre-registration training year). As Tutors are crucial to this reform process, we wanted to communicate directly with you to help you understand more about these changes and, specifically, those that will be introduced in 2021/2022.

At present, the pre-registration training year is managed by the Pharmaceutical Society NI. As of 2021, this role will move to the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development (NICPLD) who will oversee the delivery of the Foundation Training

Year. The Foundation Training Year will be approved by The Pharmaceutical Society NI.

In 2021/22, the Foundation Training Year will not be subject to significant change as outlined below.

### **What is staying the same in 2021/2022?**

- **Tutor/Educational Supervisor requirements** - all Tutors currently accredited by the Pharmaceutical Society NI will be known as Educational Supervisors. The term 'Educational Supervisor' will be adopted nationally within the pharmacy profession and is used across the healthcare professions to refer to someone with mentoring responsibility. Educational Supervisors will not have to be Independent Prescribers and trainees will not become Independent Prescribers upon joining the Register in 2022.
- **Tutor/Educational Supervisor accreditation** -The Pharmaceutical Society NI will continue to operate the accreditation events for pharmacists wishing to supervise a trainee in 2021/2022. Pharmacists who wish to gain accreditation to act as a Tutor/Educational Supervisor for the first time, or those who wish to renew their accreditation and who were last accredited in 2016, will need to attend an accreditation event in 2021. Further details about accreditation events will follow in the coming weeks. Those pharmacists who are currently accredited from 2017 onwards will not need to attend a re-accreditation event in 2021.
- **The application process** – the Pharmaceutical Society NI will administer the application process to the Foundation Training Year in 2021/22 which will closely follow the process from previous years. Further information about the application process, including key dates, will follow in the coming weeks ensuring future trainees, Educational Supervisors and employers can understand what needs to happen and by when.

- **Intake of prospective trainees** - training organisations should continue with their normal arrangements for intake of prospective trainees.
- **Duration** - the Foundation Training Year will continue to be 52-week workplace-based training with trainees supervised by Educational Supervisors.
- **Appraisals** - quarterly appraisals will continue to be used to review progress and to identify ongoing development needs.
- **eLearning** - completion of eLearning and specified workshops/webinars will remain mandatory elements of the Foundation Training Year.
- **ePortfolio** - completion of the current ePortfolio by trainees, to evidence developing competence against the performance standards via learning cycles, will continue.
- **Common Registration Assessment** - the Common Registration Assessment will remain. NICPLD will continue to support trainees through an enhanced education and training development programme similar to the Pre-registration Development Programme currently offered.

### **What will change in 2021/2022?**

- **Terminology** - the Pre-registration Training Year will be called the Foundation Training Year from July 2021. Tutors will be called Educational Supervisors from July 2021.
- **Provider** - NICPLD will deliver the Foundation Training Year from July 2021. PSNI will undertake the application process and NICPLD will be the main point of contact for trainees, tutors and employers thereafter.

- **Introduction of Supervised Learning Events** - A small number of supervised learning events (SLEs) to evidence competence will be introduced. SLEs are commonly used in workplace training across healthcare professions to provide a structured and supportive approach to training for both trainees and Educational Supervisors. Examples of SLEs include keeping a log of prescription clinical checks, undertaking a medication review or addressing a medicine-related query. In 2021/22, a limited number of SLEs will be introduced to allow Educational Supervisors to become familiar with this form of evidence.
- **Support for Tutors and Trainees** - Prior to the beginning of the Foundation Training Year 2021, training will be provided by NICPLD to both trainees and Educational Supervisors to provide an overview of the Foundation Training Year.

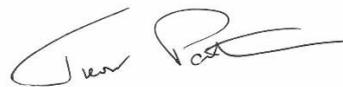
You can find more information on the overall reform programme by visiting the dedicated [page](#) on the Pharmaceutical Society NI's website.

We look forward to working with you and supporting you through this period of change and will keep you informed and up to date with plans for further reform.

Yours faithfully



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