Public business

Education and quality assurance continuity

Purpose
To consider the adoption of two further RPSGB existing education documents

Recommendations
The Council is asked to agree to:

i. adopt the RPSGB’s Standards of proficiency for pharmacist prescribers (with only consequential revisions)

ii. adopt the RPSGB’s Code of Conduct for Pre-registration Pharmacy Technicians (with only consequential revisions).

1.0 Summary

1.1 Previously the Council has agreed to adopt existing RPSGB documents when they are fit for purpose and need little more than consequential revisions. Council is asked to do so again for:

Standards of proficiency for pharmacist prescribers (see Appendix 1)
Code of Conduct for Pre-registration Pharmacy Technicians (see Appendix 2).

2.0 Equality and diversity implications

2.1 Equality and diversity issues are at central to the standards discussed in this document.

2.2 Standards of proficiency for pharmacist prescribers: equality and diversity is most evidence in standard 7. ‘demonstrate a shared approach to decision making by assessing patients' needs for medicines, taking account of their wishes and
values and those of their carers when making prescribing decisions’ and the syllabus section ‘Consultation, decision making, assessment and review’, which emphasises the need to care to me given through mutual understanding and with due regard to patient and carer needs.

2.3 *Code of Conduct for Pre-registration Pharmacy Technicians*: From an equality and diversity perspective, this *Code* challenges technicians trainees in the same way the *Code of Conduct for Pharmacy Students* challenges pharmacy students (as described in a previous paper).

3.0 **Communications implications**

3.1 Providers of prescribing courses will be informed that the RPSGB’s standards remain in force if this is what is agreed.

4.0 **Resource implications**

4.1 There are no budgetary or other resource implications arising out of this paper.

5.0 **Risk implications**

5.1 The GPhC must have standards of proficiency for pharmacist prescribers on day 1 to clarify the standards required on pharmacists with a prescribing annotation on the GPhC’s Register.

**Recommendations**

The Council is asked to agree the recommendations on page 1.

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Appendix 1

Standards of proficiency for pharmacist prescribers

(1) Standards of proficiency

Following qualification, pharmacist independent prescribers will be able to:

1. understand the responsibility that the role of independent prescriber entails, be aware of their own limitations and work within the limits of their professional competence – knowing when and how to refer / consult / seek guidance from another member of the health care team
2. develop an effective relationship and communication with patients, carers, other prescribers and members of the health care team
3. describe the pathophysiology of the condition being treated and recognise the signs and symptoms of illness, take an accurate history and carry out a relevant clinical assessment where necessary
4. use common diagnostic aids e.g. stethoscope, sphygmomanometer
5. able to use diagnostic aids relevant to the condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe, including monitoring response to therapy
6. apply clinical assessment skills to:
   - inform a working diagnosis
   - formulate a treatment plan
   - the prescribing of one or more medicines if appropriate
   - carry out a checking process to ensure patient safety.
   - monitor response to therapy, review the working/differential diagnosis and modify treatment or refer / consult / seek guidance as appropriate
7. demonstrate a shared approach to decision making by assessing patients’ needs for medicines, taking account of their wishes and values and those of their carers when making prescribing decisions
8. identify and assess sources of information, advice and decision support and demonstrate how they will use them in patient care taking into account evidence based practice and national/local guidelines where they exist.
9. recognise, evaluate and respond to influences on prescribing practice at individual, local and national levels
10. prescribe, safely, appropriately and cost effectively
11. work within a prescribing partnership
12. maintain accurate, effective and timely records and ensure that other prescribers and health care staff are appropriately informed
13. demonstrate an understanding of the public health issues related to medicines use
14. demonstrate an understanding of the legal, ethical and professional framework for accountability and responsibility in relation to prescribing
15. work within clinical governance frameworks that include audit of prescribing practice and personal development
16. participate regularly in CPD and maintain a record of their CPD activity
(2) Indicative content

It is expected that education providers will use the indicative content to develop a detailed programme of study which will enable pharmacists to meet the learning outcomes.

Consultation, decision-making, assessment and review

- Autonomous working and decision making within professional competence.
- Understanding own limitations
- Accurate assessment, history taking, and effective communication and consultation with patients and their parents/carers
- Patient compliance and shared decision making
- Building and maintaining an effective relationship with patients, parents and carers taking into account their values and beliefs
- Effective communication and team working with other prescribers and members of the health care team
- A knowledge of the range of models of consultation and appropriate selection for the patient
- Formulating a working diagnosis
- Development of a treatment plan or clinical management plan, including lifestyle and public health advice
- Confirmation of diagnosis/differential diagnosis – further examination, investigation, referral for diagnosis
- Principles and methods of patient monitoring
- Chemical and biochemical methods for monitoring the treatment of the condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe on qualification and responses to results.
- Clinical examination skills relevant to the condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe. Use of common diagnostic aids for assessment of the patient’s general health status; e.g. stethoscope, sphygmomanometer, tendon hammer, examination of the cranial nerves.
- Assessing responses to treatment against the objectives of the treatment plan/clinical management plan
- Working knowledge of any monitoring equipment used within the context of the treatment/clinical management plan
- Identifying and reporting adverse drug reactions
- Management options including non-drug treatment and referral

Influences on and psychology of prescribing

- Patient demand versus patient need including partnership in medicine taking, awareness of cultural and ethnic needs.
- External influences, at individual, local and national levels.
- Awareness of own personal attitude and its influence on prescribing practice.
Prescribing in a team context

- The role and functions of other team members
- Communicating prescribing decisions to other members of the team.
- The responsibility of a supplementary prescriber in developing and delivering a clinical management plan.
- The professional relationship between pharmacist prescribers and those responsible for dispensing.
- Interface between medical and non-medical prescribers and the management of potential conflict
- Documentation, and the purpose of records
- Structure, content and interpretation of health care records/clinical notes including electronic health records
- The framework for prescribing budgets and cost effective prescribing

Applied therapeutics

- Pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics
- Changes in physiology and drug response, for example the elderly, young, pregnant or breast feeding women and ethnicity
- Adverse drug reactions and interactions, to include common causes of drug-related morbidity
- Pathophysiology of defined condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe.
- Selection and optimisation of a drug regimen for the patient’s condition
- Natural history and progression of condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe.
- Impact of co-morbidities on prescribing and patient management

Evidence-based practice and clinical governance

- Local and professional clinical governance policies and procedures
- Development and maintenance of professional knowledge and competence in relation to the condition(s) for which the pharmacist intends to prescribe.
- The rationale for national and local guidelines, protocols, policies, decision support systems and formularies – understanding the implications of adherence to and deviation from such guidance
- Prescribing in the context of the local health economy
- Principles of evidence-based practice and critical appraisal skills
- Reflective practice and continuing professional development, support networks, role of self, other prescribers and organisation
- Auditing, monitoring and evaluating prescribing practice
- Risk assessment and risk management
- Audit and systems monitoring
- Analysis, reporting and learning from adverse events and near misses

Legal, policy, professional and ethical aspects

- Policy context for prescribing
- Professional competence, autonomy and accountability of independent and supplementary prescribing practice
- GPhC’s Standards of Conduct, Ethics and Performance
- Legal frameworks for prescribing, supply and administration of medicines e.g. patient group directions, supply in hospitals.
- Medicines regulatory framework including Marketing Authorisation, the use of medicines outside their product licence.
The law applied to the prescribing, dispensing and administration of controlled drugs and appropriate counselling of patients
Compliance with guidance arising from the Shipman enquiry
Ethical considerations of the supply and administration of medicines
Application of the law in practice, professional judgment, liability and indemnity
Accountability and responsibility to the employer or commissioning organisation, awareness of local complaints procedures
Consent
Prescription pad administration, procedures when pads are lost or stolen
Writing prescriptions
Record keeping, documentation and professional responsibility
Confidentiality, Caldicott and Data Protection, Freedom of Information
Suspicion, awareness and reporting of fraud or criminal behaviour, knowledge of reporting and ‘whistle blowing’ procedures

Prescribing in the public health context

- Patient access to health care and medicines
- Duty to patients and society
- Use of medicines in populations and in the context of health priorities
- Public health policies, for example the use of antibiotics, antivirals and vaccines
- Inappropriate use of medicines including misuse, under and over-use
- Inappropriate prescribing, over and under-prescribing

Note: The standards of proficiency for supplementary prescribers are included in the standards for independent prescribers.
Appendix 2

Code of Conduct for
Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians

Introduction

Your pharmacy technician training is preparing you to enter a profession. Pharmacy technicians are one of the registered healthcare professions, and this carries both privileges and responsibilities. As a trainee you must demonstrate you are able to exercise those privileges and bear those responsibilities. This means you must conduct yourself professionally at all times. This Code of Conduct applies to you from the first day of your training to the day you qualify. Remember that wherever you are, you are representing the profession of pharmacy.

Pharmacy technicians registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) must abide by its Standards of conduct, ethics and performance. When you register as a pharmacy technician they will apply to you. They are based on seven principles. Applying the seven principles is central to the way you conduct yourself and is what being a professional is about.

This Code of Conduct is based on the principles in the GPhC’s Standards. It will help you as you develop your understanding of what it is to be a pharmacy technician. This Code of Conduct gives an indication of how the principles apply to you now and shows what is expected of you during your time as a trainee.
Code of Conduct for Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians

The seven principles

1. Make patients your first concern
2. Use your professional judgement in the interests of patients and the public
3. Show respect for others
4. Encourage patients and the public to participate in decisions about their care
5. Develop your professional knowledge and competence
6. Be honest and trustworthy
7. Take responsibility for your working practices

1. Make patients your first concern

The health and wellbeing and safety of patients must be your main concern. Even when you are not in direct contact with patients, you will be developing values, attitudes, knowledge and skills that you will use as a pharmacy technician. As a trainee you must:

- always bear in mind your future role as a pharmacy technician when studying: this applies equally to the knowledge elements of the course as to pharmacy practice
- apply your learning for the maximum benefit of patients
- promote the health of patients
- ensure your beliefs do not compromise patient care

2. Use your professional judgement in the interests of patients and the public

You will need to use professional judgement at all times: your course is designed to help you understand what this means. As a trainee you must:

- consider and act in the best interests of patients and the public
- make sure your judgement is not influenced by personal interests
- be prepared to challenge the judgement of others if you have reason to believe that their decisions could compromise the safety or care of others

3. Show respect for others

Demonstrating respect for the dignity, views and rights of others is fundamental in forming and maintaining appropriate professional relationships with patients, carers, colleagues and other individuals with whom you come into contact. As a trainee you must:

- recognise diversity and respect the cultural differences, values and beliefs of others, including patients and other members of staff
- treat others politely, considerately and with respect
- listen to, and respect, others’ opinions and be non-judgemental in your attitude
- maintain proper professional boundaries in the relationships you have with others, especially with vulnerable adults and children
- recognise and respect the rights of patients
- respect patient confidentiality and consent but disclose relevant information as required

4. Encourage patients and the public to participate in decisions about their care

Patients and the public have the right to be involved in decisions about their treatment and care. Pharmacy technicians should respect this and help patients and the public to take part in decisions which affect their health and wellbeing. As a trainee you must:

- learn how to listen to patients and their carers and communicate effectively with them in a way they can understand
- learn how to give patients and the public information and advice so they can take part in decisions about their care, including recognising their right to refuse care
- learn how to work in partnership with patients, their carers and others

5. Develop your professional knowledge and competence

At all stages of your pharmacy career you must take responsibility for ensuring your knowledge and skills are up-to-date and that you maintain your competence. As a trainee you must:

- reflect on and develop your professional knowledge and competence throughout your course
- recognise and stay within the limits of your competence
- make rational and informed decisions
- engage constructively with assessments, which are an opportunity to reflect on your learning
- ensure you are aware of the continuing professional development requirements for pharmacy technicians

6. Be honest and trustworthy

People trust healthcare professionals, and at all times pharmacy technicians must justify that trust. As a trainee you must:

- act with honesty and integrity
- honour your commitments and take responsibility for your work
- not plagiarise
- use information honestly, ethically and with proper regard to confidentiality, seeking permission to use information as required
- supply accurate information on request and update information as necessary
- respond honestly, openly and courteously to complaints and criticisms concerning yourself or others
- cooperate with formal investigations about you or others
- abide by the rules and regulations of all other organisations linked to your training

7. Take responsibility for your working practices

Pharmacy technicians, like all healthcare professionals, must take responsibility for their work. As a trainee you must:

- obey the law
- follow standard operating procedures where these apply
- adhere to any rules and procedures specified by your employer, including dress codes
- take responsibility for your learning and your actions and work constructively with others
• take responsibility for your own health, especially if it may impact negatively on other people
• tell your employer and training provider if there is anything that could impair your ability to train
• ask for help when you need it and respond appropriately
• plan and use your time effectively
• attend training events and classes that are available to you
• conduct yourself appropriately
• be punctual
• be contactable
• ensure you have adequate English language skills
• abide by health and safety requirements at all times
• maintain accurate and timely notes and records

Useful contacts and further reading

If you are unsure about how this guidance applies to you as a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician, speak to your supervising pharmacist or contact the training provider with whom you are training.

General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)

020 3365 3400 129 Lambeth Road
info@pharmacyregulation.org London SE1 7BT
www.pharmacyregulation.org

Association of Pharmacy Technicians, UK (APTUK), http://www.aptuk.org/
Standards of conduct, ethics and performance (General Pharmaceutical Council, 2010)

For detailed information on support, health and safety requirements, dress codes, rules and regulations and other relevant information speak to your supervising pharmacist or contact the training provider with whom you are training.