



**Survey of
2014-2015
pre-registration
pharmacist tutors**

Summary of findings
January 2017

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Background and introduction

For the last three years we have been conducting surveys to better understand trainee and tutor perceptions of pre-registration training. The surveys conducted were targeted at pre-registration trainee pharmacists, pre-registration pharmacist tutors and pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians. This document discusses the second of two surveys of pre-registration pharmacist tutors. The first survey covered the 2013-2014 training year and the second, which we are releasing now, covers 2014-2015.

The surveys were developed and run by the University of Bradford and Information by Design.

The surveys were run online and pre-registration pharmacist tutors were invited to respond via email. The overall response rate was 22 per cent.

We expect the results of this analysis to be of interest to pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, pre-registration pharmacist tutors and trainees, pharmacy representative bodies, pharmacy educational providers, the departments of health, the NHSs and other employers.

The survey is accompanied by one infographic: a comparison of pre-registration pharmacist tutor responses 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

Summary of findings

There were 811 pre-registration pharmacist tutors who completed the survey. The majority (88 per cent) of respondents were based in England and London, with 12 per cent from Scotland and Wales. Most tutors who responded work in community pharmacy (72 per cent) with 27 per cent reporting they worked in hospital pharmacy and less than one per cent work in the pharmaceutical industry. Overall 55 per cent of respondents were white, 33 per cent Asian or Asian British, six per cent black or Black British and one per cent from other ethnic groups. Four per cent did not disclose their ethnic group.

Over three fifths of tutors (70 per cent) had been qualified for 11 years or longer, with only 30 per cent qualified for 10 years or less. Two thirds (67 per cent) of respondents reported that they had been a tutor for up to five pre-registration trainee pharmacists since becoming a tutor and over half of tutors (61 per cent) had been a pre-registration tutor for five years or less. Three quarters (75 per cent) were responsible for the same trainee for the full 12 months. This was similar to the 2013-2014 survey, which found that 78 per cent of tutors were responsible for the same trainee for the full 12 months.

Most tutors (86 per cent) reported no unplanned changes during the training year. Of the tutors that did report unplanned changes, four per cent said the change was due to the trainee permanently moving to another site, four per cent of respondents said they themselves had permanently moved to another site and seven per cent had an unplanned change for another reason.¹ Overall, in comparison to the 2013-2014 tutor survey, pre-registration tutors in 2014-2015 were more likely to report an unplanned change. However, in both surveys tutors working for large organisation (national chain) community pharmacies were more likely to report an unplanned change than respondents from other types of organisation.

¹ Does not add to 14 per cent due to rounding

Tutors were asked whether overall they thought they had access to sufficient support during the training year. Nearly three quarters (74 per cent) agreed that they did; however, 11 per cent disagreed. Most tutors (92 per cent) reported they had access to a pre-registration training programme provided by the NHS, their community pharmacy employing organisation or another provider. Just over a third (35 per cent) of tutors had access to a regional or national NHS pre-registration scheme, 33 per cent had access to a community pharmacy pre-registration programme provided by their employing organisation, and 32 per cent had access to a community pharmacy pre-registration training programme from an external provider. Tutors who had access to a pre-registration training programme provided by the NHS, their community pharmacy employing organisation or another provider were more likely to agree or strongly agree that as a tutor they had access to sufficient support.

Close to three quarters (67 per cent) of respondents also told us that they had received sufficient support from their employing organisation during the 2014-2015 training year, although 13 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed that the support was sufficient. Fewer tutors agreed that their workload allowed them to provide appropriate supervision of their trainee. Only 57 per cent agreed, 22 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 20 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

A large number of respondents were aware of the GPhC Guidance on Tutoring for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, with 76 per cent reporting they had used the guidance during the 2014-2015 training year. Over four fifths (84 per cent) of tutors were aware of the changes that the GPhC was making to the registration assessment in 2016 and 57 per cent had used the GPhC website to check for information about these changes.

Most tutors (95 per cent) agreed that they were confident in assessing their trainee as a professional. Likewise, 93 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they could provide effective feedback following assessment. Those who had been a tutor for six or more years were more likely to agree or strongly agree that they felt confident in assessing how a trainee is performing as a professional.

When asked how their trainee/s would have rated the overall quality of their training experience in 2014-2015, 89 per cent of tutors thought they would have rated it as good or very good and two per cent thought they would have rated it as poor or very poor. This is similar to the ratings given by tutors in the 2013-2014 survey with 93 per cent thinking their trainee would have rated their training experience positively (good/very good or excellent) and only one per cent rating it as poor or very poor. Tutors who had been a tutor for six years or more were more likely to think that their trainee would have rated their training experience positively.

Tutors were also asked about how they thought their trainee would have rated the quality of support they received during their training. Nearly all tutors (91 per cent) thought their trainees would have rated it as good or very good, and only two per cent rated it as poor or very poor. This was very similar to the results in the 2013-2014 tutor survey.

Points for consideration

Having conducted two surveys of pre-registration pharmacist tutors, we are now in a position to draw some preliminary conclusions about tutor views of pre-registration training. We have identified three areas in particular that are common to both the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 surveys:

1. Experience as a tutor;
2. Differences between tutor and trainee satisfaction; and
3. The impact of unplanned changes.

1. Experience as a tutor

Like the 2013/14 survey of pre-registration pharmacist tutors, the 2014-2015 survey highlighted significant differences between responses to questions based on the number of years a respondent has been a tutor. Once again, most respondents (70 per cent) had been registered for 11 years or more as a pharmacist, but over half (61 per cent) had only been a tutor for five years or less. In 2013-2014, 57 per cent had been a tutor for five years or less.

In the 2014-2015 survey, respondents who had been a tutor for five years or less were less likely to think their trainee would have rated the quality of support they received positively. They were also less confident in assessing their trainee as a professional and were more likely to want training on managing a trainee in difficulty, giving effective feedback and coaching and mentoring. These were the same areas highlighted in the 2013-2014 survey of pre-registration tutors.

2. Differences between tutor and trainee satisfaction

In the 2013-2014 survey we asked tutors to rate how they thought their trainee would have rated the quality of the training they provided. These questions were repeated in 2014-2015 and the ratings were similar between the two groups of tutors that were surveyed, although slightly lower than those in 2013-2014. When comparing this with the ratings of quality provided by pre-registration trainee pharmacists in our previous surveys, there is still a large gap between how trainees rated the quality of their training in comparison to the perceptions of tutors. Like last year, the widest gaps were regarding perceived quality of educational supervision, perceived quality of the support provided, and perceived coverage of the GPhC assessment syllabus.

3. The impact of unplanned changes

The analysis of trainee dissatisfaction has identified that dissatisfied pre-registration trainee pharmacists are more likely to have had an unplanned change in tutor during their training year. Unplanned changes have also been shown to have an impact on the experience of pre-registration tutor pharmacists. Tutors who rated the quality of support they received from their organisation as neither good nor poor, poor or very poor (11 per cent of respondents) were more likely to have had an unplanned change in their tutoring arrangements. Additionally, when asked about whether they had access to sufficient support in 2014-2015, the small number of tutors who disagreed or strongly disagreed were also more likely to have had an unplanned change in their tutoring arrangements. Like the 2013-2014 survey, unplanned changes were reported more frequently by those who worked in large organisation (national chain) pharmacies.

Our survey work

What we have done so far

Over the last three years we have surveyed the following three groups:

1. Pre-registration trainee pharmacists (twice);
2. Pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (once); and
3. Pre-registration pharmacist tutors (twice).

In addition to this we have commissioned two analyses of the pre-registration trainee pharmacists who identified themselves as being 'dissatisfied' with aspects of their pre-registration training.

The data we have gathered has contributed to us developing a far richer picture of pre-registration training and it will feed in to our development of revised initial education and training standards for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in 2016-2017.

We will issue a summary analysis of all the survey and analysis findings in 2017.

This initial cycle of survey work has now come to an end and we will pause for a while before considering how best to undertake survey work in the future.

Next steps

The data we have gathered from our surveys and analyses has enabled us to begin to develop a far richer picture of pre-registration training for both registrant groups but we know that there is further work to be done. Our analysis of this research will feed into our policy development and further engagement with our stakeholders about pre-registration training and initial education and training standards.

Revising our initial education standards, including those for pre-registration training, is a key priority for us and is one means by which we can ensure that members of the pharmacy team are equipped to work flexibly alongside other health and care professionals to respond with confidence to the changing needs of people and populations needing care. By doing this, the best use is made of the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of every member of the team to deliver pharmacy services and improve them. Further work will be undertaken in these areas in 2017-2018.