



NI Centre for  
**Pharmacy Learning  
& Development**

/Newsletter/February 2009/

## Keynote lectures

# Update on the management of arthritic conditions

The focus of this term's keynote lectures is on arthritis. Each lecture will examine best practice in managing these conditions, emphasising an evidence-based approach to therapy with a view to improving patient care.

### **Osteoarthritis**

17 February 2009

Dr Gary Wright, Consultant Rheumatologist, Belfast

### **Rheumatoid arthritis**

24 February 2009

Dr Adrian Pendleton, Consultant Rheumatologist, Belfast

Lectures will be held at NICPLD, School of Pharmacy, and will run from 8.00pm – 9.30pm. Full details of these lectures can be found on [www.nicpld.org](http://www.nicpld.org) and in the latest course brochure.

The car park of the Medical Biology Centre (MBC) is available to those attending the keynote lectures and is accessed by turning into Jubilee Road (this road leads to the City Hospital). When you turn into Jubilee Road take the first driveway entrance on the left side, situated about 10 yards from the traffic lights. This takes you into the MBC car park and you are able to park at the rear car park, outside NICPLD.

A map showing the location of NICPLD is available on our website.



# Independent Prescribing

## Funding to support pharmacist prescribers

To date, almost 100 pharmacists have qualified as supplementary or independent prescribers in Northern Ireland. The majority of these are hospital pharmacists, with around 40 working in community pharmacy/primary care. Reasons for this difference are probably linked to the existing infrastructure and lack of funding to support pharmacist prescribing in primary care.

From April 2009, DHSSPS will fund pharmacist prescribers in primary care and will also evaluate this service. The project will run for an initial two-year period.

The date for funding applications in 2009 has passed, however, pharmacists who enroll for the supplementary and independent prescribing course starting in April 2009 will be eligible to apply for funding when they qualify in January 2010. Places are still available for the prescribing course starting in April 2009 and application forms can be downloaded from the NICPLD website.

The DHSSPS-funded project is open to pharmacists who are registered with the PSNI as supplementary or independent prescribers. The funding is to enable them to set up and run specific clinics in primary care. During the first year of the pilot it is anticipated that clinics will be situated within GP practices, although other settings such as community pharmacies may be considered if they meet the requirements.

While the scope and running of clinics is left to the GP practice and pharmacist, they must meet the clinical governance standards of the individual GP Practice, Pharmacy Regulators, and HSS.

Funding is available to provide protected time to allow a pharmacist prescriber to undertake the clinic and to cover any initial set-up costs that the pharmacist or GP practice may encounter. It can also be used to provide for pharmacy locum cover for an estimated one half-day session per week.

More information on this project can be found in the News section of the NICPLD website.



[www.nicpld.org](http://www.nicpld.org)

# NVQs for support staff

Since 2007, the NVQ Level 3 has been the recognised qualification for anyone wishing to become a pharmacy technician in Northern Ireland. The NVQ Level 3 comprises the BTEC (underpinning knowledge), requiring one day and one evening of study per week, together with a completed portfolio of evidence demonstrating that the student has achieved the required competencies in their workplace.

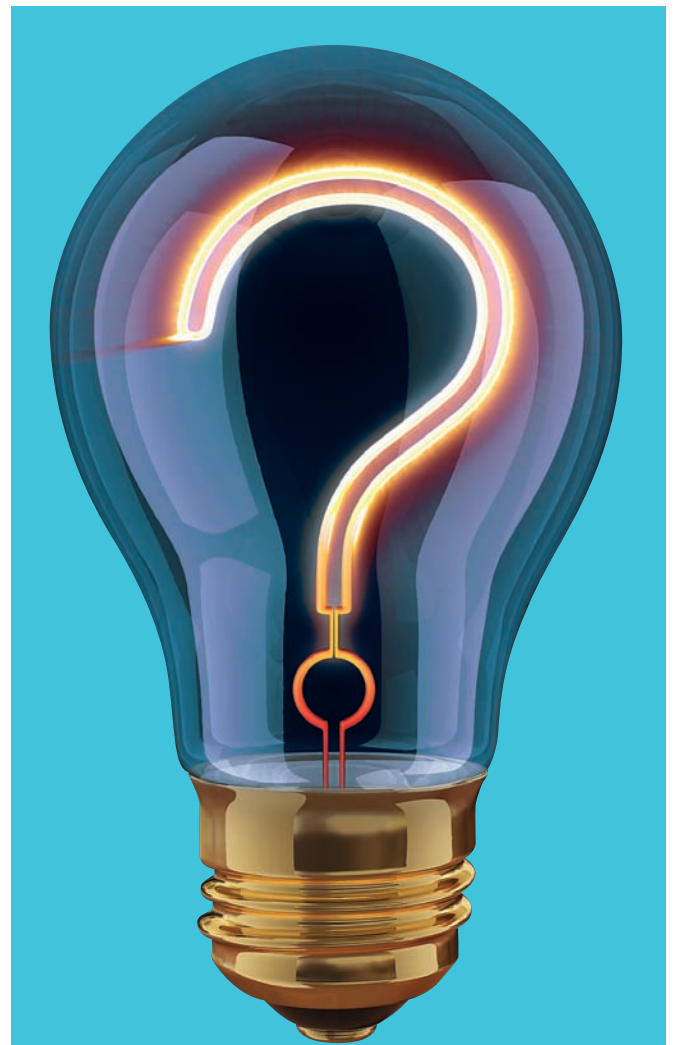
Congratulations to the first cohort of Northern Ireland student pharmacy technicians in gaining their NVQ Level 3 in Pharmacy Services. The class, based at Southern Regional College in Newry, were part of the original cohort of students qualifying with a Level 2 NVQ in June 2006. All students were based in community pharmacy.

The NVQ Level 3 is currently delivered locally by the South Eastern Regional College ([www.serc.ac.uk](http://www.serc.ac.uk)) and the Southern Regional College ([www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk)). You can find out more about the NVQ requirement for pharmacy technicians from their websites. An NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 can also be undertaken by distance learning through the National Pharmacy Association and details on these courses can be found on their website ([www.npa.co.uk](http://www.npa.co.uk)).

## Forthcoming courses April – June 2009

Respiratory disease  
Anxiety and depression  
ACT mentor training  
Breast cancer  
Changing behaviour  
GP systems: EMIS  
Heart and lung assessment  
Hypertension and stroke  
Making an impact at interview  
Medication review  
MS Excel (advanced)  
New pharmaceutical products  
Patients with learning difficulties  
Summer ailments

*Course brochures will go out in mid-March*



## Distance learning MCQs

When a distance learning course become out-of-date it is replaced with a new version. Therefore, from 1 January 2009 when a course has been out-of-date for 6 months we will remove its MCQs from our database. This means that you will no longer be able to submit your answers to an out-of-date course for marking.

As the majority of pharmacists and technicians have now registered for the NICPLD website and over 80% of people complete their MCQs online, we would like to move away from paper-based submissions of MCQ answers to online submission only. This would enable us to keep the questions, answers and feedback up-to-date. You will be able to print out the questions from [www.nicpld.org](http://www.nicpld.org). We anticipate introducing this change from September 2009.

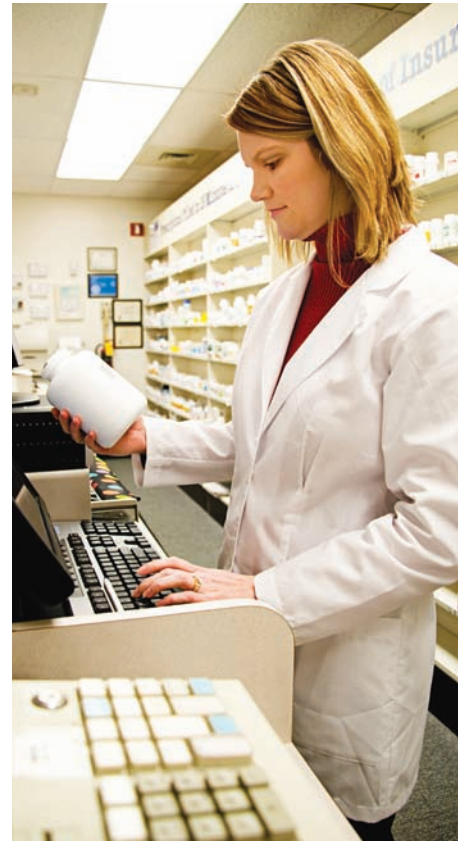
# Return to practice

From time-to-time NICPLD organises a return to practice course for pharmacists who have taken a career break and now wish to take up practice again. In the last two years, however, we have not had enough demand to make this programme viable. One of the problems is that when we schedule a return to practice course it may not take place at a time that you need it.

Thus, we feel there is a need to develop a more flexible programme that pharmacists returning to practice can participate in when it suits them.

We are currently developing a programme that would involve participation in an induction workshop, together with 3-5 days work-shadowing a pharmacist in community pharmacy. The induction workshop will highlight recent changes in community pharmacy and will run three times per year, thereby providing ample opportunity for those returning to practice to participate at a time suitable for them. During the period of work-shadowing participants will complete a portfolio to demonstrate they have achieved the competences in the workplace. This will enable pharmacists to regain their confidence, after a period of absence, and discuss specific issues they may have with their mentor.

We anticipate that this course will run between April - June 2009 and it will be advertised in the March/April newsletter.



## Your account



[www.nicpld.org](http://www.nicpld.org)

You will, no doubt, have noticed that we now send email reminders for the regional programme in addition to the paper-based reminder. From time-to-time we also send out email reminders for other NICPLD events. It is important to us that the email address we have for you

is up-to-date. Could we ask, therefore, that if you have changed your email address you update your address in the My Account menu on the NICPLD website.

Most community pharmacists have already completed at least one accredited course (e.g. PMRs). You can find out which accredited courses you have completed on the Accredited Courses link (under My Account). When you complete all parts of an accredited course we automatically send an email informing you of this.

It is important that the Health and Social Services Boards, as commissioners of healthcare, are informed when a pharmacist has been accredited to provide a pharmaceutical service. Under the Data protection Act, we cannot give this information to the Boards without your permission. But, in the link to My Accredited Courses you can give permission for your name to be added to the register of service providers, which can then be accessed by the Health and Social Services Boards.



Pharmacists who sign up to the Chemist and Druggist Update series in 2009 can have their registration fee reimbursed by NICPLD. You must pay the fee to the Chemist and Druggist when you register for Update and this will be reimbursed directly to you by NICPLD when you complete at least one Update module.

When you complete the MCQs associated with an Update module you will receive 1 hour of learning towards your CPD.