



NI Centre for  
**Pharmacy Learning  
& Development**

# news

/Newsletter/June 2016/

## Locum and travel payments

On page 2 of this edition of NICPLD news we report that there has been a continuous increase in annual programme uptake over the last 24 years. While our budget has been frozen since 2008, we have increased programme provision to meet the demand through greater efficiency and the use of information technology.

It is not possible to continue this pace without additional funding and this is unlikely to happen in the near future. Indeed, other government-funded training providers have had their budgets cut during the same period. It is, therefore, with reluctance that the Department of Health and NICPLD have decided it

necessary to discontinue locum and travel payments for community pharmacists from 1 August 2016. Even though only 20% of pharmacists attending a workshop claim the locum allowance it represents considerable expenditure from NICPLD's budget. While NICPLD is the only government-funded training provider in the UK, within and without pharmacy, to make such payments, we realise this decision will be disappointing, but feel it is the only way to increase training capacity in the current climate.

We will continue payments to those community pharmacists currently training as independent prescribers (Cohort 10) for the few workshops remaining after August 2016, as they are already committed to this programme of study.

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

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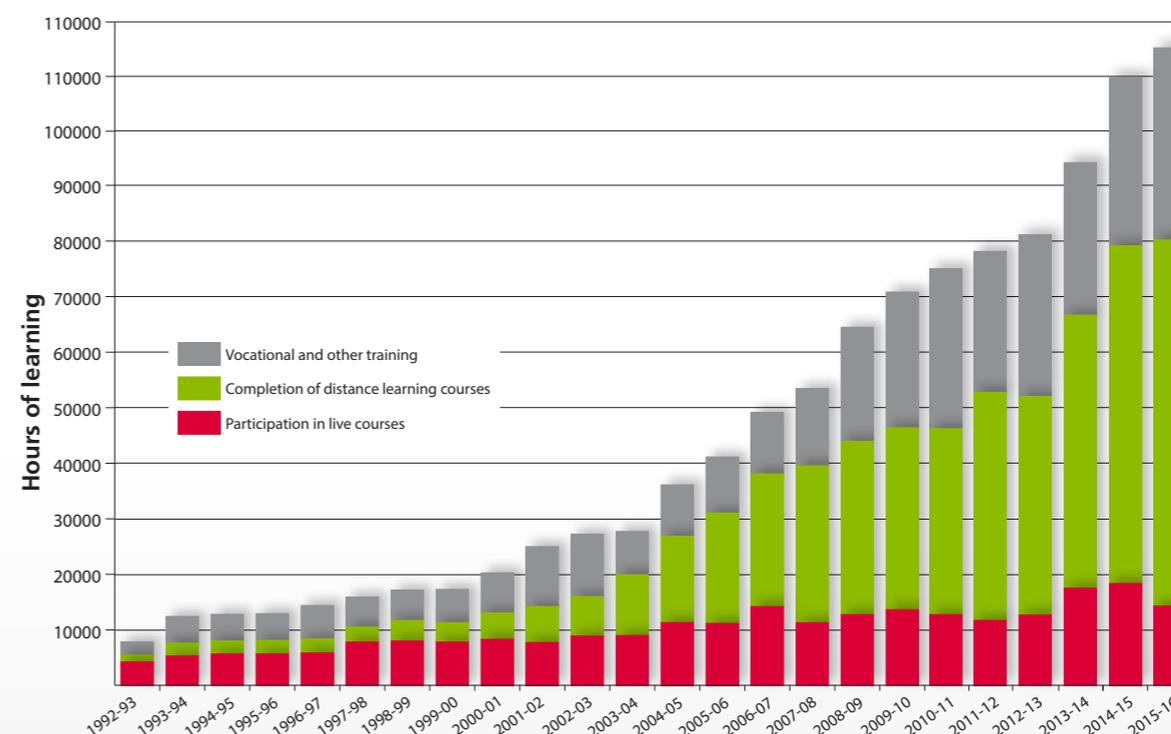


# Review of 2015/16

During this year, 2,264 hours of education opportunity were provided by NICPLD. The trend of increasing programme uptake has continued in 2015/16 with 115,127 hours of learning and 15,315 participations by 2,241 unique pharmacists. A further 1,829 other healthcare professions (primarily from general practitioners, practices nurses and foundation doctors) participated in CPD via [www.medicinesNI](http://www.medicinesNI). Figure 1 shows the participation by pharmacists in NICPLD's programmes over the past 24 years. These data are increased by 5% compared with data for 2014/15.

The Foundation Programme continues to be successful, with 69 pharmacists currently enrolled. NICPLD has applied to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to be accredited as a Foundation School and we are awaiting the outcome of this process. Forty hospital pharmacists are currently enrolled in the Advanced Pharmacy Practice MSc, which adopts a practice-based approach that includes prescribing. Independent prescribing continues to attract interest from all areas of practice, with thirty-three pharmacists in Cohort 9 having completed their training.

In 2015, DHSSPS policy focused on increasing capacity in primary care by developing the role of the practice-based pharmacist. It is expected that these pharmacists will either be prescribers at the time of appointment, or will become prescribers as soon as possible after appointment. In anticipation of this initiative, we planned to double capacity on the Independent Prescribing course.



Additionally, we developed a programme for the initial training of pharmacists working in primary care. In the first instance, this training was available to pharmacists with some experience of working in primary care, but will be made available to a wider group of pharmacists from September 2016.

The financial outlook for training remains challenging as budgets continue at their 2007 level. NICPLD has been able to offset financial stagnation through its information technology strategy, however we are approaching the limits of these efficiencies. As we focus more on programme to support pharmacist career development these challenges will only increase.

# Practice-based pharmacists

Between 2000 and 2005 NICPLD received two National Training Awards for demonstrating the impact of pharmacists working in general practice. Since that time pharmacists have been working in general practice, but often funded for short-term initiatives. In 2015 the Minister for Health announced an initiative in which the 360 GP practices would be organised into 17 federations and each practice would employ a pharmacist on a permanent basis.

It is anticipated that recruitment for these posts will take place in three waves, with full recruitment planned by early 2017. Examples of the type of work practice pharmacists will undertake include:

- develop, implement and manage the repeat prescribing system within GP Practices
- review medication requests, repeat prescriptions and hospital discharge summaries
- improve prescribing quality through implementation of and compliance with the NI Formulary
- facilitating implementation, monitoring and evaluation of disease management guidelines and related prescribing policies
- create care plans for patients with long term conditions
- reduce levels of prescribing expenditure as appropriate in accordance with targets.
- produce regular detailed reports on practice progress on reducing prescribing cost and
- undertake regular clinical audit
- contribute to incident reporting and participate in risk management systems



NICPLD has been running programmes to prepare pharmacists for these roles. Initially these were open to independent prescribers or those with limited experience in primary care. The next programme will start in September 2016 and full details will be emailed to pharmacists later in June.



# Pharmacist independent prescribing

NICPLD will be accepting applications from September 2016 for the prescribing course, starting in April 2017. The closing date for applications is Friday 4th November 2016.

We anticipate significant interest from pharmacists who wish to become an independent prescriber as a result of the practice-based pharmacist initiative. There are a number of arrangements you will need to make prior to applying for the course, such as obtaining a medical mentor to supervise your in-practice experience. Therefore, we would advise you not to leave your application to the last minute.

Details about the course and how to apply are given on the next page.



# Pharmacist prescribing

## How do I become a pharmacist prescriber?

Pharmacists who wish to become independent prescribers must undertake an accredited training course. The course must follow the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI) outline curriculum and consist of a minimum of 27 days training (approx. 7 day workshops and 20 days distance learning) plus a minimum of 12 days in-practice training.

Full eligibility criteria can be downloaded from the non-medical prescribing section of the NICPLD website, however in summary, all entrants to the course must:

- be registered with the PSNI as a practising pharmacist in Northern Ireland
- have at least two years post-registration experience in a patient orientated practice in hospital, community or primary care
- identify a clinical area in which to practise as a prescriber
- have up-to-date clinical knowledge in the area they wish to prescribe.

## What does the course involve?

NICPLD provides the course on independent prescribing free of charge to pharmacists in Northern Ireland. On successful completion of the course, pharmacists are awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Independent Prescribing from Queen's University, Belfast and this allows pharmacists' names to be added to the PSNI annotated register of prescribers.

The curriculum consists of six modules that will be delivered by elearning, print-based distance learning and live workshops, over a six-month period. There is continuous assessment throughout the course, but no final examination.

## How does in-practice training work?

Completion of training is dependent upon a minimum period of 12 x 7.5 hour days mentorship by a designated medical practitioner (GP or hospital consultant). This need not be completed in one block of time, but you must maintain a portfolio of your activities during the in-practice training.

The closing date for applications is Friday 4th November 2016.

[View full details on training to become an independent prescriber](#)

# Foundation programme for pharmacist practitioners

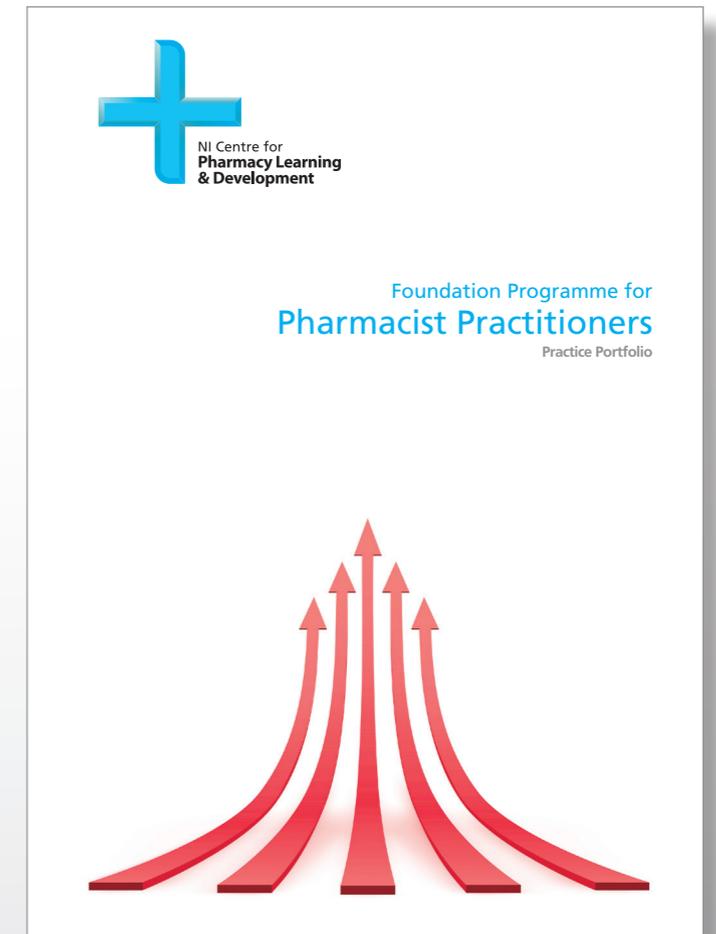
The Foundation Programme is in-line with changes in pharmacy training, nationally and internationally. The programme will be open to any pharmacist working in a patient-facing role in the hospital, community or primary care sectors in Northern Ireland. The aim of the Foundation Programme is to provide structured work-based training and experience, enabling pharmacists to deliver safe and effective pharmaceutical care to individual patients.

The Foundation Programme is two years in duration, but may be completed in a shorter time for those with additional experience.

Pharmacists joining the Foundation Programme will maintain a portfolio and undertake practice activities in the workplace, which will help them to develop and demonstrate their competence based on the foundation framework of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Areas of practice covered by the programme are shown in the table opposite.

Pharmacists will be supported by a mentor, while in the workplace local trainers may facilitate learning on a day-to-day basis in each of the rotational areas. Workplace learning will be complemented by workshops and online resources.

Patient and pharmaceutical care	Professional practice	Personal practice	Management and organisation
Patient consultation	Professionalism	Gathering information	Clinical governance
Need for the medicine	Organisation	Knowledge	Service provision
Provision of medicine	Effective communication skills	Analysing information	Organisations
Selection of the medicine	Team work	Providing information	Budget and reimbursement
Medicine specific issues medicines information and patient education	Education and training	Follow up	Procurement
Monitoring medicine therapy		Research and evaluation	Staff management
Evaluation of outcomes transfer of care			



The next Foundation Programme for pharmacists will start in September 2016, while community pharmacists will start in early 2017. Those considering applying for the programme should contact Laura O'Loan (Hospital) or Heather Bell (Community). View details of NICPLD's Foundation programme.

# Advanced hospital pharmacist practitioners

Hospital pharmacists interested in the MSc in Advanced Pharmacy Practice starting in September 2016 should speak to their line manager about NICPLD funding.

Pharmacists working in the hospital sector in Northern Ireland who have completed the Foundation/VT Programme (or who can demonstrate competence in the four areas of the Foundation/VT Programme) are eligible to undertake the (QUB) MSc in Advanced Pharmacy Practice.

The MSc in Advanced Pharmacy Practice has 2 stages:

## Stage 1 (Diploma)

Like the Foundation/VT Programme, pharmacists will engage in workplace learning in four therapeutic areas (respiratory, antimicrobials, cardiovascular and diabetes). They will also train as independent prescribers in those four areas. Thus, pharmacists completing this stage of the course will be 'generalist prescribers' who will be able to optimise and prescribe medicines for complex patients with multiple disease states.

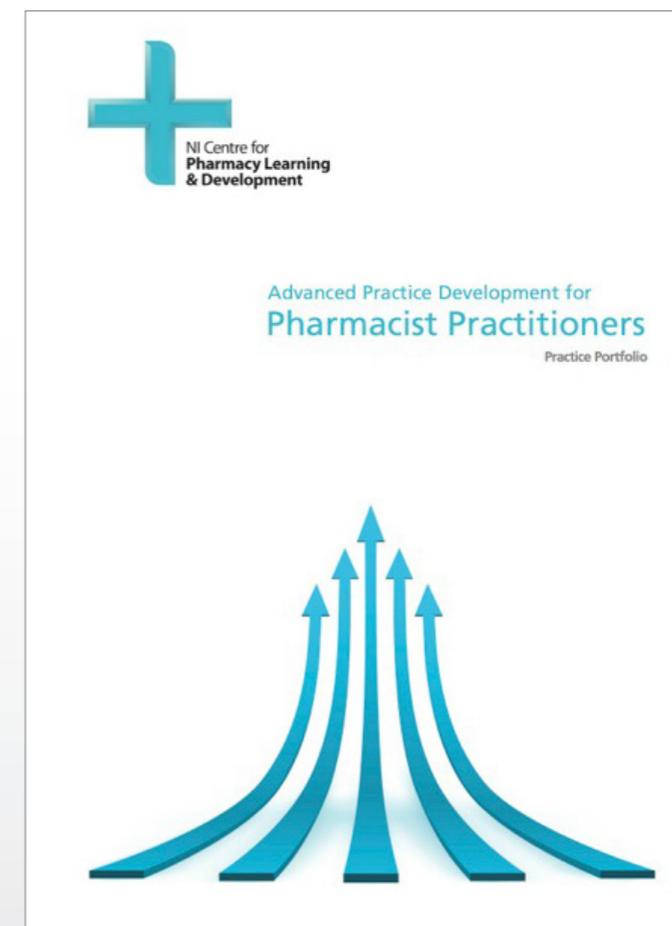
This will enable them to provide holistic pharmaceutical care to patients in areas such as general medicine, care of older people, and medical/surgical admissions;

differentiating them from medical and nurse prescribers, who tend to prescribe in one specialist area only.

## Stage 2 (MSc)

Pharmacists will undertake a research project, and will also build on their sound generalist knowledge to develop as an advanced practitioner in an area of their choice. In addition, they will be given the opportunity to develop skills in training and developing others, and in leadership and management.

The Foundation/VT Programme is the pre-requisite for this course, but applicants with comparable experience may be considered.



Recruitment is underway for the next intake to the MSc in Advanced Pharmacy Practice. If you are interested in participating, please speak to your line manager. Click [HERE](#) for full details.