



NI Centre for
**Pharmacy Learning
& Development**

/Newsletter/October 2009/

Keynote lectures

High-risk medicines

The focus of this term's keynote lectures is on three commonly used high-risk medicines. Each lecture will examine the use of specific high-risk medicines in practice and highlight strategies to manage and reduce the risk associated with such medicines.

Methotrexate (Dr Gary Meenagh, October 6)

Anticoagulants (Dr Kathryn Boyd, October 13)

Insulin (Dr Roy Harper, October 20)

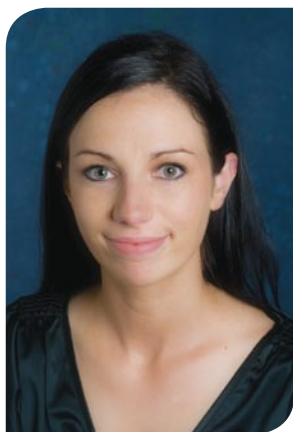
Lectures will be held at NICPLD, School of Pharmacy, and will run from 8.00pm – 9.30pm. Full details of these lectures can be found on www.nicpld.org and in the latest course brochure.

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.



Moving e-Learning forward



In the recent needs analysis survey the most requested addition to our educational programme has been for more online courses. Currently we offer online courses on controlled drugs, medicines governance and the responsible pharmacist.

In order to increase this provision Maureen McCann has been appointed as the Lead for e-Learning at NICPLD. Maureen, who provided maternity cover for Heather Bell, started in September 2009 and initially will be developing online courses on antibiotics, patient medication records and pharmaceutical services to care homes.

From April 2010 we intend to develop online courses for advanced therapeutics on diabetes, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease.

e-Learning has a number of advantages to print-based courses. For example, with e-Learning you do not have to apply for a course in the same way you do for print-based and live courses – it can be accessed anytime and anywhere. It also enables us to use other online resources, such as clinical studies, videos and virtual patients, which makes the course more interactive.

With the rapid changes in healthcare, e-Learning enables us to easily keep courses up-to-date with the latest information and developments. Finally, because e-Learning courses take less time to develop than print-based courses, it will enable us to respond more quickly to changes in healthcare issues.

NICPLD has over 20 years experience with distance learning courses and e-Learning will become part of this programme. However, e-Learning will not replace print-based courses, which many pharmacists use as part of their CPD, and which we will continue to develop.



Distance learning MCQs

As distance learning courses (and COMPASS notes) become out-of-date they are replaced with new versions. Six months after a course becomes obsolete we 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.

We will post news items regarding courses that are about to become out-of-date to give you plenty of time to submit your answers.

From August 2009 pharmacists applying for distance learning courses must submit their MCQ answers online. You can enter your answers and save them as you go along, which means you can complete the questions over a number of sessions, before submitting your answers for marking. You can also print a paper copy of the questions, and, if you wish, enter your answers on the paper copy and submit them to NICPLD for marking.

Similarly the course evaluation has been moved to an online-only format and the evaluation form will appear on your screen once you have submitted your answers.

CPD Grants

NICPLD facilitates other opportunities for CPD by contributing towards fees (up to 50%) to enable pharmacists to participate in courses, workshops or conferences related to their professional development. Funding is not limited to formal university courses – applications are encouraged for attendance at short courses or conferences related to your practice. Funding covers course/conference fees, but does not cover travel and subsistence.

Application forms for CPD grants can be downloaded as word documents from the NICPLD website. Applications can be made at any time of the year.

Beyond the VT programme

In 2008 NICPLD introduced the vocational training (VT) programme for newly qualified pharmacists working in hospital practice.

This programme entails workplace learning, complemented by workshops and online resources, during which pharmacists rotate through four key areas in their hospital:

- dispensary
- technical services
- clinical/medicines management
- clinical effectiveness

However, this programme is only the first step in the career progression of hospital pharmacists. NICPLD is currently developing a follow-on programme that will enable those completing the VT programme to train to become an advanced practitioner, in-line with the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF).

Like the VT programme, pharmacists will engage in workplace learning in four therapeutic areas and will also train as independent prescribers. They will have the opportunity to specialise in an area of their choice by undertaking a research project and maintaining a practice portfolio in that area.

We anticipate this two-year programme will start in September 2010 and that those completing it will be awarded an MSc in Advanced Practice.



Independent Prescribing

Recruitment starts for the next course

The next independent and supplementary prescribing course for pharmacists will start in April 2010. While this may seem a long time away, there are some arrangements that you will need to make prior to starting the course; for example, getting the support of your employer, obtaining a designated medical practitioner and deciding which therapeutic area(s) you wish to prescribe in. This all takes time and will require discussion with a local GP practice or hospital consultant.

How do I become an independent 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. 9 day workshops and 18 days distance learning) plus a minimum of 12 days in-practice training.

Full eligibility criteria can be downloaded from the NICPLD website, however in summary, all entrants to the course must:

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

What does the course involve?

NICPLD will provide the course in independent prescribing and it is free of charge to pharmacists. The qualification gained will be a postgraduate certificate in independent prescribing and will allow pharmacists' names to be added to the PSNI annotated register of prescribers. Pharmacist independent prescribers will also be able to practise as supplementary prescribers. There will be no separate supplementary prescribing course.

The curriculum will consist of 6 modules (listed opposite) that will be delivered by the internet, book-based distance learning and live workshops, and is run

over a six-month period. The PSNI require continuous assessment throughout the course, although there is no final examination.

Pharmacy independent and supplementary prescribing course

Module 1	Development of a clinical management plan (CMP) as part of a multidisciplinary approach to patient care
Module 2	Influences on and psychology of prescribing
Module 3	Disease management
Module 4	Physical examination skills and patient monitoring
Module 5	Evidence-based practice and clinical governance in relation to supplementary prescribing
Module 6	Legal, policy, professional and ethical aspects

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 undertaken in one block of time. Nonetheless, pharmacists must keep a log of their activities during the in-practice training, at the end of which they must be signed off by their designated medical practitioner as being competent to prescribe.

What next?

You can download more detailed information about independent prescribing and the course from the NICPLD website. Application forms may also be downloaded from the website and completed applications should be returned to NICPLD by 20th November 2010.

Our Freepost address is: **FREEPOST NICPLD**. That's all there is, no road name or postcode