



NI Centre for
**Pharmacy Learning
& Development**

ENHANCED PHARMACIST

Frequently Asked Questions



These FAQs bring together questions raised at the programme launch and additional questions about eligibility, supervision, learning and assessment. Read them alongside the Programme Overview, Pharmacist Handbook and current cohort information.

1 About the Programme

1.1 What is the Enhanced Pharmacist programme?

The NICPLD Enhanced Pharmacist (EP) programme supports prescribing pharmacists in patient-focussed roles across Northern Ireland to develop the knowledge, skills, experience and confidence required for enhanced practice. It combines formal learning with workplace activities, supervision, feedback and reflection.

1.2 Is the programme solely about prescribing?

No. Prescribing is a central part of the programme, but it covers all five curriculum domains: person-centred care and collaboration; professional practice; leadership and management; education; and research and evaluation. Your evidence should demonstrate development across these areas. We are pharmacists first and foremost with the ability to prescribe.

1.3 Can my wider work as a pharmacist count towards the curriculum outcomes?

Yes, all work can count as evidence. Relevant work such as medicines advice, collaborative working, patient safety, teaching, supporting colleagues and audit or quality improvement can contribute. The evidence must demonstrate the relevant outcome at enhanced level, with appropriate corroboration and reflection. Routine completion of a task alone does not establish the required standard.

1.4 Is this similar to the CPPE pathway in England?

The EP programme is Northern Ireland's approach to supporting development against the new Enhanced Pharmacist Curriculum. Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales address the same enhanced practice direction, but their delivery, eligibility and assessment arrangements may differ. An older CPPE pathway should not automatically be treated as equivalent to this new programme.

1.5 How does EP compare with APP or APD?

EP supports development at enhanced level and provides a foundation for future progression towards advanced practice. APP and APD relate to advanced practice development. The EP curriculum has been specifically designed to sit between the Foundation training year curriculum and the advanced practice curriculum. Current plans for advanced practice provision are available on the NICPLD website.

1.6 Should new pharmacists complete enhanced training before advanced training?

Enhanced practice provides a foundation for progression towards advanced practice. The appropriate route depends on your current capability, experience and the entry requirements of the advanced pathway. If it's not obvious please contact NICPLD to discuss the sequence that fits your development.

1.7 Is EP suitable if I have been prescribing for several years?

It may be. The programme is particularly designed for pharmacists in the early stages of their prescribing career, but suitability depends on your development needs and current level of practice, rather than years of prescribing alone. Discuss your experience with your work place and/or NICPLD to determine whether EP or an advanced practice route is more appropriate.

2 Eligibility and Applications

2.1 Who can apply?

You must be a registered pharmacist working in a patient-focussed role in Northern Ireland, annotated as an independent prescriber with the PSNI by the application closing date, and able to actively prescribe throughout the programme. You also need appropriate supervision, access to workplace learning and capacity to attend the monthly learning and development day.

2.2 Do I need to be in a permanent post?

A permanent contract is not the determining requirement. You must be working in the practice setting in which you will undertake the programme at the time of application and have suitable opportunities and support to meet the requirements. Pharmacists in temporary posts should discuss continuity of prescribing, workplace learning and supervision with NICPLD. A pending or future start date alone does not meet the stated application requirement.

2.3 Can locum pharmacists apply?

Locum pharmacists can apply where they meet the eligibility requirements and have suitable practice and supervision arrangements. If you do not have a line manager, you must confirm how you will access prescribing, required practice activities, observation, feedback and supervision. Contact NICPLD if your arrangements span several workplaces or may change.

2.4 Can I apply if I have already completed a CPPE programme?

Previous CPPE study does not automatically exclude you. Contact NICPLD with details of the programme completed, its curriculum and your current role. The team can advise on eligibility and the appropriate development route. Previous study should not be assumed to confer exemption from EP requirements without confirmation.

2.5 Can pharmacists working only in private healthcare apply?

The Programme Overview asks pharmacists employed by organisations providing only private healthcare services to contact NICPLD for further information. Pharmacists whose prescribing practice is limited to aesthetic medicine only are not eligible.

2.6 Can I use my independent prescribing qualification before completing EP?

EP is a development programme for pharmacists who are already qualified and annotated as independent prescribers. Completing EP is not what confers that qualification. You may use your prescribing qualification before and during EP where you meet the relevant professional, clinical and organisational requirements and practise within your competence. Any employer or service-specific requirements still apply.

2.7 When do applications open and when does the first cohort start?

For the January 2027 cohort, applications open on 7 October 2026 and close on 25 November 2026. The programme starts on 13 January 2027. Apply through the NICPLD Enhanced Pharmacist programme webpage. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee a place; places are limited. Applications will be accepted twice per year with cohorts starting in January and September.

3 Supervision and Workplace support

3.1 Does my ES or PS need to be a prescriber?

Ideally, your Educational Supervisor (ES) should be a qualified prescriber. If your ES is not a qualified prescriber, you must also have access to a Practice Supervisor (PS) who is a qualified prescriber.

3.2 What is the difference between the ES and PS roles?

Your ES provides continuity and holistic support across the programme, including development planning, evidence review and formal progress reviews. Practice supervision supports day-to-day learning and safe clinical and prescribing development through guidance, teaching, observation and feedback.

3.3 Does the ES mark my work and decide whether I have passed?

Your ES reviews progress and evidence, gives feedback and completes a final declaration confirming readiness for assessment. The ES does not make the final assessment decision. NICPLD arranges independent assessment of your submitted ePortfolio by a trained pharmacist prescriber from the same sector who works outside your workplace.

3.4 How often should I meet with my ES?

During the 18-month programme, engage with your ES approximately monthly and undertake formal intermediate progress reviews every six months. If you are not ready to submit after 18 months, continue developing your ePortfolio and meet with your ES at least every six months until submission.

3.5 Can educational supervision be provided remotely?

Yes. The ES role may be delivered remotely. Agree how you will meet, share evidence and obtain feedback. Remote educational supervision must be supported by suitable access to clinical and prescribing supervision and any activity-specific observation requirements.

3.6 Will learning sessions and support be available for supervisors?

Yes. ES preparation includes the NICPLD Effective mentoring eLearning course and reading the Programme Overview and ES Guide. Bi-annual webinars are offered to educational and practice supervisors, and regular drop-in sessions are available through the EP programme Senior Leads.

3.7 Is supervisor accreditation transferable from FTY or another NICPLD programme?

FTY training is different and possibly considered more in depth to EP ES training, Supervisors should understand the EP role and requirements, read the current guidance and contact NICPLD about how their previous training will be recognised.

3.8 What if I cannot find a suitable ES?

Contact NICPLD to discuss your circumstances. NICPLD can provide peripatetic educational supervision for up to 10 community pharmacists, on a first come, first served basis, where appropriate supervision is otherwise unavailable. Availability should be confirmed with the programme team.

3.9 Who is responsible for organising my development and completing the programme?

You take the lead in arranging learning opportunities, preparing for supervision, seeking feedback, maintaining your ePortfolio and completing agreed actions. Your ES actively supports planning, feedback and progress review. Responsibility for completing programme requirements and timely submission remains with you, if you are struggling to achieve learning outcomes please discuss this with your ES/ PS or NICPLD.

4 Learning and Portfolio evidence

4.1 What is the time commitment and do I need to attend every session?

Taught learning requires one day per month over 18 months, through workshops and webinars. Attendance at all sessions is expected for completion. You must also complete required eLearning and workplace activities and allow time for reflection, supervision and portfolio preparation.

4.2 Is there a guide explaining what each training day covers?

The Programme Overview lists the workshop and webinar topics. A detailed timetable is provided for each cohort; use the NICPLD programme webpage and Hub for current information. Ask the programme team if you need more detail on an individual session's format or preparation.

4.3 What if I cannot attend a taught session?

Contact NICPLD promptly to discuss the circumstances and what is needed to meet programme requirements. Do not assume that a recording or alternative activity automatically replaces attendance.

4.4 Are all practice activities compulsory?

Core practice activities must be completed. Supplementary activities are optional and can provide additional learning or evidence where an outcome needs further demonstration. Completing the core activity numbers does not by itself demonstrate all outcomes at the required standard.

4.5 What should each piece of evidence contain?

Each piece should include an output showing the activity completed, corroboration independently confirming that it took place and was completed to the appropriate standard, and your reflection on the experience. These elements may comprise one or more uploads. Personal reflection should follow feedback from the person providing corroboration.

4.6 Do I need separate evidence for every curriculum indicator?

No. Indicators guide the expected breadth, depth and level of performance; they are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Your evidence must collectively demonstrate each of the 24 curriculum outcomes at the required standard.

4.7 How much evidence do I need for each outcome?

The indicative minimum is one piece for a low-stakes outcome, two for a medium-stakes outcome and three for a high-stakes outcome. These numbers do not replace consideration of evidence quality and the standard demonstrated. All outcomes are equally important and must be achieved.

5 Assessment and completion

5.1 When can I submit my ePortfolio?

There are two assessment windows each year. You must have completed a minimum of 18 months on the programme before submission and complete an intention to submit form in advance of your intended submission date to allow appropriate assessor allocation. Information for window dates, deadlines and submission instructions will be available on the hub.

5.2 What if I am not ready to submit after 18 months?

This is very common and totally understandable. Continue completing your portfolio and meet with your ES at least every six months to review progress until submission. You must complete the programme within a maximum of five years. Contact NICPLD if barriers may affect your planned submission or completion.

5.3 What happens if my portfolio does not meet the standard?

You will receive feedback on the additional work required before resubmission during the next assessment window. Review the feedback with your ES and agree a focused plan to address development or evidence gaps. Portfolios assessed as not meeting the standard by the first assessor are double marked.

5.4 What do I receive on successful completion?

Pharmacists whose ePortfolio is assessed as meeting the required standard receive an Enhanced Pharmacist programme certificate of achievement.

5.5 Will EP change pharmacist job specifications?

Heads of Pharmacy are aware of the programme changes and will consider their implications for job specifications. Specific requirements are determined by employers. Completion should not be presented as guaranteeing a particular post, grade or promotion; check the relevant job specification.

6 Resources and Contact Details

6.1 Will the programme launch recording be available?

A recording and accompanying FAQs will be available on the EP webpage.

6.2 Where can I find information about changes to APP and APD?

Use the NICPLD Advanced Practice webpages for current information about APP and plans for the AP credentialing pathway. The NICPLD Advanced Practice landing page signposts AP credentialing from 2028. Confirm how transition arrangements apply to you with the programme team.

6.3 Who should I contact with further questions?

Email nicpld-EP@qub.ac.uk or telephone 028 9097 1384. The programme Senior Leads can advise on eligibility, previous learning, supervision, workplace opportunities and assessment arrangements.

7 Useful links

EP programme and applications: [NICPLD: Enhanced Pharmacist Programme](#)

Royal College of Pharmacy Enhanced Curriculum: [Enhanced pharmacist curriculum - Royal College of Pharmacy](#)

PSNI pharmacist prescribing guidance: [Standards-and-Guidance-for-Pharmacist-Prescribing-April-2013.pdf](#)