

Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy technicians are registered professional members of the pharmacy team who prepare and manage the supply of medicines and give advice to patients and customers.

Case study: Chris Overland

Chris completed a GNVQ in Health and Social Care in 2001 and as part of the course completed two-weeks work experience at Southend Hospital in the pharmacy department. After leaving college he hadn't decided on what to do next but happened to see a student pharmacy technician post at Southend Hospital was being advertised. He applied, completed the course and qualified in 2003.

Chris has since held a variety of roles at Southend Hospital, most recently Operations Lead for Pharmacy, working alongside the Clinical Lead for Pharmacy and responsible for overseeing the operational elements of the pharmacy service. These included:

- Managing the day to day running of the service.
- Developing business cases for service developments.
- Managing pharmacy projects.
- Monitoring key performance indicators.
- Managing complaints and investigating incidents.

Chris has been involved in numerous projects in his current and previous roles with the one he is most proud of being the implementation of trust-wide electronic prescribing in 2015.

Since January 2019 Chris has been working in his current role across three acute trusts (Basildon, Mid Essex and Southend) that are planning to merge in April 2020. The role entails developing and implementing pharmacy transformation projects as set out in their Hospital Pharmacy Transformation Programme which focuses on the following:



- Homecare.
- Aseptics.
- Medicines Information.
- Pharmacy procurement and inventory management.
- Outsourcing of outpatient dispensing.

The key aims of these projects will be to deliver a streamlined and innovative, cost-effective and highly responsive pharmacy service across the Mid and South Essex Hospitals Group.

Once his secondment is over, Chris will have a range of choices available to him as to whether he stays in pharmacy or uses the transferable skills he has gained in his roles to explore other options.

He feels that starting as a pharmacy technician has given him a much more varied career than he ever could have imagined. It has opened up a number of doorways to him and he has had the opportunity to gain academic qualifications as well as extensive experience in project management, leadership and IT.

His advice to anyone looking for a career in the NHS is to consider a role as a pharmacy technician. It can be a hugely varied and rewarding role with opportunities to specialise in a range of areas.

Read more about the role:

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/roles-pharmacy/pharmacy-technician>

Read more about training to become a pharmacy technician:

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/medicines-optimisation/training-pharmacy-technicians>



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