

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: Sami Walker

Sami Walker is a pharmacy technician at the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford, which is part of the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust.

Sami did a Biology and Forensic Science degree and after graduation saw a student pharmacy technician post advertised and applied for it, qualifying in 2013.

She is part of a small team responsible for managing high cost drugs within the trust which includes:

- Monthly financial reporting, checking what has been issued and ensuring it is charged to the right commissioners (Cancer Drugs Fund, CCG or NHS England).
- Managing the Blueteq database which shows the different drug treatments and how they are funded. Consultants must complete a request before they start treatment, and for some drugs ensure reviews are completed every twelve months.
- Formulary Management: making sure the on-line formulary is up to date to support doctors in their prescribing; making all relevant information regarding NICE Guidance and funding routes available and making sure they complete any paperwork for funding before prescribing.



Impact on services

- The trust is able to claim back from commissioners approximately £2m each month on high cost drugs, so getting this right means more money for patient care.

- Having accurate information about high cost drugs at the start of the process creates more accuracy for both doctors and the pharmacy team further down the line.
- The Blueteq system ensures approval is given before treatment begins, ensuring reclaim is always possible, verifying the treatment is appropriate for the patient against criteria and then speed up the time taken to initiate treatment for the patient.
- These data processes also feed into various national databases which can have an effect in turn on the National Prescribing Guidelines.

The trust recently introduced a new pharmacy dispensing and stock management system. This led to all data capture and processes having to be re-worked to enable the high cost drugs team to maintain their financial reporting throughout this process, ensuring the trust continued to re-coup the monies it was owed.

This work requires good IT skills as well as knowledge of drugs but is very varied and makes for an interesting job where no two days are the same.



If someone is open to new experiences and willing to learn, then it's a great career with so many different opportunities to develop and grow.

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>