

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: Sue Baines

Sue Baines is a Pharmacy Technician working in Primary Care in East Leicestershire

Sue started working as a Pharmacy Counter Assistant in a small independent pharmacy in Rutland in 1993, where she also managed the Photolab. As she assisted the Pharmacy Manager one day a week in the dispensary, she became interested in the role of Pharmacy Technician and applied for a dispensing technician trainee post in another small pharmacy business that was attached to a local health centre in her home-town.

After completing the two-year National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) – Correspondence Dispensing Technician Course, she qualified in 1998 and remained working in the pharmacy until 2001. Following this she then moved into the NHS as a Prescribing Support Technician working within Medicines Management Team in the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and then more recently the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

In 2015 East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG commissioned a pilot within three of its localities to ascertain the benefit of the role of having a Pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician Team embedded within a hub of GP practices. Sue was seconded into the pilot, which was a resounding success. As a result of the pilot, new roles were created in many GP practices within East Leicestershire CCG, so Sue decided to leave the CCG completely in January 2019 and work in two GP Practices, one for one day a week and the other two days a week.



Although the two practices are different in how they are organized the kind of responsibilities she has include:

- Supporting the Practice Pharmacist in the delivery of medicines optimisation and management change programmes, and activities to reduce medication waste, increase cost-effective prescribing and increase patient safety.
- Answering medication related queries from patients, GPs, practice staff, and other health care professionals.
- Medicine reconciliation.
- Undertaking medicines management change programmes – this includes audits and cost -saving medication switches.
- Analysing and reviewing prescribing data sent by the Medicines Management Team at the CCG – reviewing Non Formulary medication, Shared Care, High Cost and ‘Specials’ drugs.
- Overseeing the CCG prescribing element of the Medicines Optimisation GPSIP and ensuring all the relevant parts are completed and submitted to the CCG on time.
- MHRA alerts – identifying any patients who may fall within the alert criteria via GP clinical system searches and forwarding to the relevant clinician for review.
- Reviewing eclipse alerts, data collecting and forwarding the information to the pharmacist / GP for review. Eclipse is a software program, which runs alongside the GP clinical system and identifies patients who are potentially at risk of a hospital admission.
- Working with care homes to resolve their queries: Sue meets with care home managers on a regular basis to iron out medication-related issues.
- Reviewing dressings on repeat and identifying formulary and non-formulary items.

Sue enjoys working within a practice, supporting the practice pharmacists, GP’s, practice nurses and repeat prescription staff in their role, helping to provide better care to patients, and she feels closer to front-line services and patients.

One of Sue’s main achievements over the last year is that she was instrumental in overseeing and assisting the practice, so that they achieved the required targets on the GPSIP 2018/19 and therefore attained the financial payment for the year.

Sue also feels that her 17 years’ experience within primary care in the Medicines Management Team at the PCT/CCG has been extremely beneficial to her role within the GP practice, as the knowledge and skills she has gained from this setting have been transferable into the new role.

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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