

# Exploring stakeholder perspectives of a “day-one pharmacist prescriber”

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## Introduction

- The General Pharmaceutical Council’s (GPhC’s) revised standards for the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists, enable pharmacists to prescribe on registration<sup>[1]</sup>. This major reform is transforming the education and training of ‘day-one pharmacist prescribers’ allowing them to play a greater role in patient care.

## Aim

To explore stakeholder perspectives of a “day-one pharmacist prescriber” to help inform the initial education and training of the future pharmacy workforce.

## Method

- Structured interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders, and an interview and focus groups with pharmacy students, took place in Autumn 2021. The schedule was developed using the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF)<sup>[2]</sup>.
- Participants were identified and recruited via email. All were held and recorded on Microsoft Teams, then transcribed and analysed using Framework Method<sup>[3]</sup>.
- Ethical approval from LJMU, School of Pharmacy, REC (PBS/2021-22/01).

## Results

- The study included 50 participants; interviews with six patients, eight community pharmacists (two independent prescribers (IPs)), ten hospital pharmacists (six IPs), twelve primary care pharmacists (eight IPs), two nurses (one IP), five GPs, and one second-year pharmacy student and two focus groups, with three, final-year pharmacy students.
- In terms of skills, participants felt person-centred care, communication and consultation skills were very important for ‘day-one pharmacist prescribers’. Professional knowledge and clinical skills were cited by hospital and primary care pharmacists. Conversely, professionalism was more likely to be mentioned by community pharmacists, as well as understanding their limitations (Figure 1).

- Many felt the pharmacy degree needed to be more clinical with additional placement opportunities, which would be challenging in terms of time constraints and staff capacity (Figure 2).
- Barriers to ‘day-one pharmacist prescribers’ included a lack of experience and confidence, and pharmacist respondents felt it was important for them to gain the trust of other health care professionals. Barriers specifically for community pharmacy were a perceived lack of support and commercial pressures, along with logistical barriers including lack of space, equipment and IT issues. Another barrier was pharmacists sitting outside of the ‘parent team’ in hospitals.

Primary Care  
Pharmacist  
05

... have to provide training for a large number of students that [they] haven't had to train in that way before

**Figure 2:** Quote from a participant relating to environmental context and resources

## Discussion and conclusion

- Hospital and primary care pharmacists were more likely to mention professional knowledge and skills, for example clinical and diagnostic skills. This may be explained because many were qualified independent prescribers and so have a better understanding of the knowledge and skills required to perform the role.
- The additional challenges faced by community pharmacy presented may be because of a lack of defined roles for independent prescribers working within this setting.
- This study showed that ‘day-one pharmacist prescribers’ require appropriate professional knowledge and skills and need to provide a person-centred service within their sphere of competence.
- Stakeholders need assurance that these pharmacists are competent as independent prescribers at the point of registration, through changes to the undergraduate programme, in particular placement opportunities.
- A limitation of the study is a lack of stakeholder representation from medics and other health care professionals in secondary care.

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Hospital  
Pharmacist  
04

...interpretation of diagnostic tests

...general knowledge about legalities of prescribing

Community  
Pharmacist  
07

**Figure 1:** Quotes from participants relating to skills that “day-one pharmacist prescribers” require

## References

- [1] General Pharmaceutical Council. New standards for initial education and training of pharmacists approved [Internet]. London. [Updated 2020 December 11; Cited 2022 July 25]. Available from: <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/news/new-standards-initial-education-and-training-pharmacists-approved#:~:text=The%20GPhC%20Council%20has%20approved%20new%20standards%20for,public%20from%20their%20first%20day%20on%20the%20register.>
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- [3] Atkins, L., Francis, J., Islam, R. *et al.* A guide to using the Theoretical Domains Framework of behaviour change to investigate implementation problems. *Implementation Sci* 12, 77 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0605-9>