



HEIW Strategic Pharmacy Workforce Plan

Newsletter Spring/Summer 2024



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Welcome

Here we are a year on since the launch of our Strategic Pharmacy Workforce Plan (SPWP) in June 2023.

Where has that year gone and what has been achieved?

I am really pleased to say that since end of March 2024, we now have a fully recruited HEIW SPWP team who have started to take forward the workforce plan actions. During the last year, we would have liked to have progressed further with many of the plan actions, but both internal and external factors have influenced and impacted the pace of implementation.

That doesn't mean nothing has happened!! In fact, a lot has happened, and this newsletter will show you how much has moved forwards during the last twelve months.

The HEIW team are now ready and keen to engage with all of our partners over the next twelve months to achieve the ambitions of the plan.

You can read the full Strategic Pharmacy Workforce plan here:

heiw.nhs.wales/files/strategic-pharmacy-workforce-plan

You can view a summary of the 31 Actions here:

heiw.nhs.wales/files/strategic-pharmacy-aims

Follow our progress via the HEIW website here:

[Strategic Pharmacy Workforce Plan - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](https://heiw.nhs.wales/strategic-pharmacy-workforce-plan)

Or on social media:

facebook.com/HEIW.NHS

linkedin.com/company/nhs-heiw

Professor Margaret Allan, BPharm (Hons) FRPS,
Pharmacy Dean



Progress to date

Themes

Theme 1 - An Engaged, Motivated and Healthy Workforce

Theme 2 - Attraction and Recruitment

Theme 3 - Seamless Workforce

Theme 4 - Build a Digitally Ready workforce

Theme 5 - Excellent Education and Learning

Theme 6 - Leadership Succession

Theme 7 - Workforce Supply and Shape

Updates from Actions

Action 2

Actions 7, 8 and 9

Actions 10, 11 and 12

Action 14

Actions 16, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23

Actions 24, 25 and 26

Action 29



Theme 1 Updates

An Engaged, Motivated and Healthy Workforce

Action 2

Develop pharmacy job planning guidance and a toolkit which will bring the right balance of service delivery, development of self and others, leadership, research and innovation when implemented by employers

Update

The SPWP team have established that actions 2, 9 and 29 have significant overlap and have therefore been consolidated into a single 'Workforce Planning Support Project'.

HEIW will:

- 🔧 continue the development of an online hub for pharmacy Operational Workforce Planning. It is expected to be available by December 2024.
- 🔧 deliver a toolkit to support partners mapping job descriptions to career development frameworks in practice, within their local planning activities.

Activity is in line with the Director of Pharmacy Peer Group workplan so that outputs contribute to delivery of the [Independent Review of Clinical Pharmacy Services at NHS Hospitals in Wales - Welsh Government Response](#)

We will also share learning from one part of the system (NHS) to the other (NHS contractors).

Theme 2 Updates

Attraction and Recruitment

Action 7

Develop bespoke solutions to improve attraction and recruitment into pharmacy roles in areas where rurality is a specific challenge

Update:

There are particular 'hard to recruit to' geographies in Wales that may require flexibility, or novel approaches, to attract and retain pharmacy staff.

The main focus of this action has been working with partners in rural areas, to understand the challenges and solutions in every sector. We heard from 25 contributors through a series of remote workshops in May and June this year. Common themes emerging were around access and transport, isolation, flexible training and career progression opportunities.

A full summary of the engagement activity around challenges and solutions will be circulated for feedback by the end of October. An approved version will be available to all partners and stakeholders no later than December 2024.

Action 8

Develop Clinical Researcher and Clinical Academic career pathways for pharmacy professionals with equitable access to training and funding opportunities

Update:

HEIW are an active partner within [Pharmacy Research Wales](#). We are working together to signpost access to research funding for pharmacy professionals and to develop research career pathways. Through this group, NHS Wales is linked in with other UK-wide work to develop Clinical Academic Career Pathways.

Action 9

To support consistent implementation of career development frameworks across all NHS services areas, all job descriptions for pharmacy roles are mapped to the skills and competencies of recognised national pharmacy career frameworks (e.g. Royal Pharmaceutical Society)

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Theme 3 Updates

Seamless Workforce Models

Action 10

Improve public awareness and understanding of the changing pharmacy roles in healthcare

Action 11

As a foundation from which to build more collaborative working with the wider health and social care workforce, improve the understanding of how all pharmacy roles are transforming

Update:

Both actions 10 and 11 focus on improving understanding and awareness of the changing roles in pharmacy. This includes the change in 2026, when successful trainee pharmacists will join the General Pharmaceutical Council register as independent prescribers.

Action 10 focuses on public awareness. We are in the process of creating a key information resource which is intended to be used for all subsequent public messaging development on pharmacy roles.

An assessment of current public-facing campaigns is underway. This will establish if a new, pharmacy specific publicity campaign is appropriate, or whether existing campaigns can be used to raise awareness. We have also started collaboration with the Primary Care

Workforce plan, where similar public messaging campaigns are under consideration.

Action 11 looks at communication to other health and social care professionals, about changing pharmacy roles, and how services may be delivered.

We have started to map the contact that pharmacy teams have with other professions, and how this could be impacted by the introduction of independent prescriber pharmacists at the point of registration in August 2026. A further information resource will improve understanding of the changes to the pharmacy profession that impact other professions.

Action 12

Agree and implement a Consultant Pharmacist Strategy Wales

Update:

We have developed an e-resource for those who are interested in developing consultant pharmacist roles. User acceptability testing was completed in August with the live resource receiving updates. You can access the current version here: [Delivering Service Improvement: The case for Consultant Pharmacists](#).

Pharmacists thinking about their own consultant pharmacist credentialing journey can view videos from Wales network of credentialed pharmacists on Y Ty Dysgu. The network are collecting 'expressions of interest' from those who want to be part of a self-supporting network for this Royal Pharmaceutical Society credentialing.

nhs.wales/tydysgu.heiw.wales/learning-and-networks/pharmacy/heiw-pharmacy-training-programmes/consultant-pharmacy-practice

Any feedback on this work can be provided through HEIW.pharmacyworkforce@wales.nhs.uk

Theme 4 Updates

Building a Digitally Ready Workforce

Action 14

Develop consistent generic digital skills, competencies and behaviours within the pharmacy workforce using the HEIW Digital Capability Framework

Update:

The Digital Capability Framework (DCF) module on Y Ty Dysgu has been updated to offer a fresh, streamlined, interactive introduction to the self-evaluation tool. It offers users all the information people need to get the most out of the framework, and start on their digital capability development journey.

Numbers continue to increase as more pharmacy staff engage with the digital capability framework.

All Y Ty Dysgu users have access to the DCF upon registration. The module can be accessed via [here](#).

Single Sign On For NHS Wales Staff

All users that register with an NHS Wales email address, now have the benefit of entering the system in one-click, utilising the new single sign on functionality. Users will no longer need to remember multiple log-on details in order to benefit from the development available within Y Ty Dysgu.

Registration is simple and can be accessed via this link:

tydysgu.heiw.wales/signup

Step by step guidance can be found on our publicly accessible landing page:

[How to Register](#)

Incorporating The Digital Capability Framework Into Appraisals And Inductions

The framework is an opportunity for staff to develop their digital capability. By incorporating the self-evaluation into appraisals and inductions, staff can demonstrate their levels of digital capability and identify objectives for the next 12 months.

Line managers and leaders can offer the DCF as a tool for development and a measurable action.

If you are interested in trialling the DCF as part of your appraisal/PADR, please contact Ellen Edwards, Digital Transformation Research and Engagement Lead ellen.edwards3@wales.nhs.uk to discuss.



Theme 5 Updates

Excellent Education and Learning

Action 16

Expand the access to immersive technologies for the pharmacy workforce during their healthcare education and development in Wales

Update

Having secured an additional secondment resource to start work on this action in August 2024, a draft report and recommendations are expected mid-year in 2025. We will be reviewing how immersive technology is currently being utilised in education and training programmes. We are exploring the types of available technologies, and how and where they could be included into curricula to bring benefits and improve training outcomes.

Action 18

Explore the opportunities for multi-sector training opportunities for pre-registration pharmacy technicians

Update

HEIW deliver a Pre-registration Pharmacy Technician (PRPT) training programme via a Welsh Government funded Modern Apprenticeship Framework. PRPTs are required to demonstrate application of knowledge and competency within a pharmacy setting.

Historically, HEIW have supported multi-sector training models tailored to meet the specific needs of various health boards.

For instance, a model implemented in a particular health board allowed trainees to gain experience in a hospital setting, work with a "Your Medicines at Home" team and spend time in community pharmacies. This bespoke approach ensures that trainees are exposed to diverse areas of practice, enhancing their understanding, skills and the patient journey.

Feedback from these trainees has been overwhelmingly positive. Multi-sector experiences not only provide a richer educational experience but also foster a deeper understanding of the pharmacy landscape, from primary care to community pharmacy settings. Trainees have reported that this exposure helps them build a robust professional network and a better appreciation of the roles within different sectors.

Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technicians are currently engaged in a range of dynamic training models that encompass exposure to different sectors of practice within the same health board.

Examples of multiple experiences

HEIW is continuously exploring new opportunities to expand and refine these training models. A model in Powys teaching health board (PTHB) involves collaborating with community pharmacies to provide training opportunities despite the region's unique challenges, such as opportunity to achieve the requirements of the training programme within the hospital setting environment. This initiative has been successful due to strong engagement and mutual support between the health board and community pharmacies.

Additionally, health boards like Hywel Dda University Health Board (H DUHB) and Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board (BCUHB) have implemented single sector areas of practice rotations. Trainees spend part of their week in GP practices and the remainder in hospital settings, both managed by the health board.

This integration allows trainees to bring valuable insights from one area of practice to another, enriching their overall training experience.

Future delivery models for managed sector will require PRPTs to have exposure to a minimum of two areas of pharmacy practice throughout their training programme.

Benefits of Multi-Sector Experiences

Multi-sector training experiences offer several key benefits:

Comprehensive Patient Care:

Trainees follow the patient journey across different care settings, gaining a holistic understanding of patient care.

Professional Networking:

Building a network within the different sectors, which is invaluable for future career opportunities.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration:

Exposure to various sectors promotes collaboration, as trainees understand the roles and challenges of different healthcare settings.

Flexibility and Customisation:

Each health board can tailor the training model to meet its specific needs and resources.

As HEIW continues to innovate and adapt its training models, the goal remains clear: to equip pharmacy technicians with the skills and experience needed to excel in a rapidly evolving healthcare environment. The commitment to multi-sector experiences not only enhances the educational experience of our trainees but also ultimately improves patient care and health outcomes across Wales.

If you would like more information on the Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician (PRPT) programme please access the link below:

[Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician \(PRPT\) programme - HEIW YTD Portal](#)

Or email: HEIW.Prptprogramme@wales.nhs.uk

Action 19

Work with partners to develop proposals for the inclusion of genomics and advanced therapy medicines products within the education and training of the workforce

Update

HEIW are developing a Strategic Workforce Plan for Genomics in partnership with Genomics Partnership Wales.

The Genomics Team are in consultation and working towards finalising the plan to be published during Autumn 2024.

The plan is being developed in response to one of the key aims in the Genomic Delivery Plan for Wales.

heiw.nhs.wales/workforce/strategic-workforce-plan-for-genomics

Genomics will play a significant role in the future delivery of healthcare. It will help us understand more about illness and disease and enable us to develop targeted approaches to treatment and patient care.

Key drivers for the development of the plan are:

- 🔗 To ensure that NHS Wales has a robust specialist genomics workforce and the right infrastructure in place to respond to the requirements set out within the national (UK) and Wales genomic delivery programmes
- 🔗 To equip the wider NHS Wales workforce with sufficient 'genomic literacy' to ensure that genomics can be effectively mainstreamed into service delivery.

So far, 19 pharmacy staff have completed genomic training modules and 91 are enrolled, yet to complete.

You can also access the HEIW genomics page for information on how to get started with genomics and signposts to education resources. [Genomics - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health-education-in-wales/genomics/)

Action 20

From 2026 all new pharmacist registrants in Wales will be supported to follow the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Foundation, Advanced and Consultant level framework

Update

As part of core business, HEIW have established a Post Registration Steering Group to guide the development of pharmacists from newly qualified to consultant level. There is representation from all sectors and levels of practice on the group.

One of the first activities has been to set up a short-life working group. Its' remit is to develop recommendations on how new independent prescribers from August 2026, and existing novice independent prescribers, should be supported. We continue to report on progress through this newsletter.

Action 22

Increase numbers of Designated Supervisors, tutors and mentors at all stages of pharmacy career frameworks

Update

The numbers of designated supervisors, tutor and mentors have already increased, since the launch of the Strategic Workforce Plan. We have established that the requirements for designated supervisors, tutors and mentors meets current demand for all HEIW pharmacy education and training programmes.

Further work is underway to establish if any potential increase to training numbers over the next 3 years would be impacted the availability of these supporting roles. We aim to complete this work by the end of December 2024.

Action 23

Increase multi-professional training opportunities for pharmacy professionals

Update

Scoping is underway to establish the extent of inter-professional training currently in place across pharmacy national training programmes in Wales. We expect to highlight priority areas and opportunities for inter-professional development activity in our report.



Theme 6 Updates

Leadership and Succession

Action 24

Establish tailored access routes for each pharmacy staff group to engage with the compassionate and collective leadership tools and resources available on Gwella.

Action 25

Develop and deliver clinical and professional leadership solutions aligned to the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care that reflect the pharmacy workforce requirements.

Action 26

Deliver and develop professional leadership solutions that align to the leadership strategy for health and care in Wales and reflect the pharmacy workforce requirements

Update

Significant progress has been made in the development of a bespoke pharmacy pathway within the Gwella HEIW Leadership Portal. The HEIW Leadership Team are making final preparations to launch this new resource by the end of October this year.

To accompany this launch we will also be evaluating the leadership training currently available to pharmacy professionals. Alongside existing Leadership programmes, HEIW also fund up to 3 pharmacists in each cohort to complete the England Future Chief Pharmacist development programme. An evaluation of whether this programme meets the Welsh workforce needs will be completed by December 2024 with a report recommending any changes or developments required.

Theme 7 Updates

Workforce Supply and Shape

Action 29

Develop workforce planning skills amongst pharmacy professionals in all health boards and all sectors and across different clinical specialities

Update

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Good News Stories

New Career Pathway!

The Pharmacy Technician team are delighted to report that the 'Access to' Programme for pharmacy support staff, started last year, has opened up a new career development pathway to pharmacy technician registration.

Individuals with aspirations to become a pharmacy technician, but who lack the required GCSEs, are able to fill any gaps.

Individuals can undertake a bespoke series of 1 to 4 qualifications, whilst they work and are supported by HEIW and our Further Education College partners.

Qualifications available are Essential Skills Wales Level 2 Application of Number (GCSE Maths equivalent), Digital Literacy, Communication (GCSE English Language equivalent), and BTEC / GCSE Applied Science, via blended delivery models.

The 'Access to' Programme is a good way for individuals, who may have been out of education for some time, to re-engage with learning and build confidence.

Two individuals who completed qualifications (from community pharmacy and general practice backgrounds) became eligible to apply, and secured places on the HEIW Pre-registration Pharmacy Technician training programme starting in September 2024.. Others were shortlisted for Health Board interviews where they were not previously eligible to apply.

Following registration there are diverse and exciting pharmacy technician job opportunities in every sector.

Immersive Technology / 'Pharma-SEE!'

Given the current challenges in the NHS, it's hard to offer in-person work experience. 'Pharma-SEE!' aims to connect healthcare professionals with secondary school children, reducing the need for in-person experiences.

This mainly non-clinical program lets children explore a community pharmacy and learn about basic self-care by interacting with the pharmacy team. With various interactive elements, this resource can help engage students interested in science-related careers.



Since September 2023, our Clinical Fellow, Geraint Jones, has been creating 'Pharma-SEE!' - a virtual-reality resource for children aged 13 - 18 years to raise awareness of the pharmacy profession.

Using 360-video and virtual reality (VR), 'Pharma-SEE!' enables a 'virtual work experience', hopefully inspiring children to want to be a part of the profession without them needing to access to a healthcare setting. This project aligns with Action 16 in HEIW's 'Strategic Pharmacy Workforce Plan'.

'Pharma-SEE!' will work on any device, like PCs, smartphones, tablets, and VR headsets. It's designed to inspire kids from all over Wales, no matter their background. The project will add to HEIW's collection of simulation tools, using modern technology to connect with young people. 'Pharma-SEE!' can be used in schools and at career events to reach more students and offer healthcare providers a new way to connect with the younger generation.

Pharma-SEE!' was launched in July 2024 and will be accessible via HEIW's 'Careersville' platform and the Meta App Store. It was first showcased at the Royal Welsh Show in August where it received positive feedback and lots of interest! It will also be displayed at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Welsh Annual Conference in September.

'Pharma-SEE!' was shortlisted for the 'Spread and Scale' Wales Award at the 2024 NHS Welsh Sustainability Conference and Awards, recognising its potential for wide use across Wales. It also received praise from the Central African Chapter of the Association for Information Systems (CACAIS) for its innovative use of new technologies to address societal challenges and its early efforts to attract young people to pharmacy careers in Wales.

Geraint has filled a vacancy in the Strategic Pharmacy Workforce Plan team. He is working on actions relating to careers and immersive technologies, which link with his own continued research in these areas.



Autumn 2024 Priorities and Next Steps

- 🔗 Action 2, 9 and 29 - Workforce Planning Support Project
- 🔗 Action 5
- 🔗 Action 6
- 🔗 Action 16
- 🔗 Action 17
- 🔗 Action 24, 25 and 26

Bulletin Board

Eye on the Horizon is a new six-weekly bulletin from HEIW's Strategic Workforce Planning Team. It may be of interest to readers of this newsletter. The bulletin is designed for those involved in workforce or service planning, or for those interested in workforce issues, challenges, opportunities and trends more broadly. It provides a brief overview of the current focus of work for the Strategic Workforce Planning Team, including links to new publications, resources and training opportunities, as well as details on our future events which include our annual conference, drop-in sessions, workshops and masterclasses.

If you would like to subscribe, please email: heiw.workforceplanning@wales.nhs.uk



Get in touch!

Please do not hesitate to contact us if your work supports the strategic pharmacy workforce plan and you would like to share any information about the work you are doing. We value your time and participation in the ongoing efforts to influence the future of the pharmacy workforce in Wales, and we thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter.

[Feedback form](#)

If you would like to get in touch please email:

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