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Health Education and  
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

# Pharmacist Education and Training is changing from 2021



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**This Case for Change explains Health Education and Improvement Wales' (HEIW) vision and ambition for the implementation of the new Initial Education and Training (IETP) standards across Wales. Our plan is to deliver these changes at pace whilst ensuring patient & practitioner safety**

## HEIW: Changing Shape of Pharmacy Training

A Healthier Wales and the Wales Strategic Programme for Primary Care sets out the Welsh Government vision for the transformation of NHS services to provide patient care closer to home.

Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales (PDaHW) is the vision for the future of pharmacy services designed around patient needs. The development of the pharmacy workforce underpins the goals of PDaHW.

The changing landscape of healthcare and population demographics requires the NHS to consider how best to utilise the valuable staff resource to meet increasing demand. Patients are living longer in our communities with multiple illnesses which often result in increasing numbers of prescribed medicines. The pharmacy workforce, as the experts in medicines, have an increasing role to work together with patients and healthcare colleagues to improve outcomes, reduce harm and increase value from their medicine use. HEIW has recognised the need to have a vision for the changing shape of Pharmacy training, which can deliver the ambition of the Welsh strategic direction. This has been described in our principles and goals for 2025 towards 2030. Our vision demonstrates a whole pharmacy workforce development which is necessary to deliver the vision of PDaHW.

This case for change describes the significant changes which are happening within the development of pharmacists but HEIW plans will still focus on the development of the whole workforce.

We started our journey of pharmacist educational change in 2019 by securing a significant investment from Welsh Government for our UK-leading Welsh Pre-registration Pharmacist training programme which provides multi-sector training across the patient care pathway, NHS single lead employment and consistent quality management. By ensuring all training of our future pharmacists is of high quality and across all the main sectors of practice, in particular within primary and community care, HEIW can ensure a seamless approach to the care of patients and deliver on the goals of a Healthier Wales.

# Pharmacy Delivering a Healthier Wales Vision

Care will be delivered in local communities with pharmacy teams integrated with other services to improve the health and wellbeing of the population

Together, pharmacy teams will improve patient knowledge and use of their medicines, through co-production

Pharmacy technicians will improve management and use of medicines

Pharmacists will focus on optimising therapeutic outcomes using tools that include prescribing

Pharmacy services will support and drive innovation and equitable access to new medicines and related technologies, providing seamless care for the citizens of Wales.

## IETP and Transforming Pharmacist Education

The pharmacy regulator, General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), are making major reforms to the undergraduate and early postgraduate education and training of pharmacists across the UK. Implementation of the changes will start in August 2021.

As our population grows, and more people live with long-term conditions, the demands and expectations on our pharmacy services are changing and increasing. In recognition of this need, the implementation of the reformed initial education and training (IETP) standards for pharmacists will produce pharmacists with enhanced clinical skills and independent prescribing (IP) status, more quickly than at present. This means that pharmacists will be able to offer patients enhanced medication care from the point of registration as part of a wider multi-disciplinary team..

What's more, it will also give new and existing pharmacists the skills and experience to improve health and wellbeing, prevent illness and support people to live well with existing long-term conditions. Patients will be supported to make choices about their medicine care plans and stay independent with access to the right care, in the right place, at the right time. More pharmacists will be able to directly prescribe a range of common medicines to patients.

This visionary and innovative change to the HEIW pre-registration pharmacist year in 2019 has now laid the building blocks for implementing the new GPhC standards. HEIW will work in partnership with our Welsh Schools of Pharmacy to ensure we have a premium offering to students who come to train, live and ultimately work in Wales. This will include increasing the amount of experiential learning available during the 4 years of the Pharmacy (MPharm) degree.

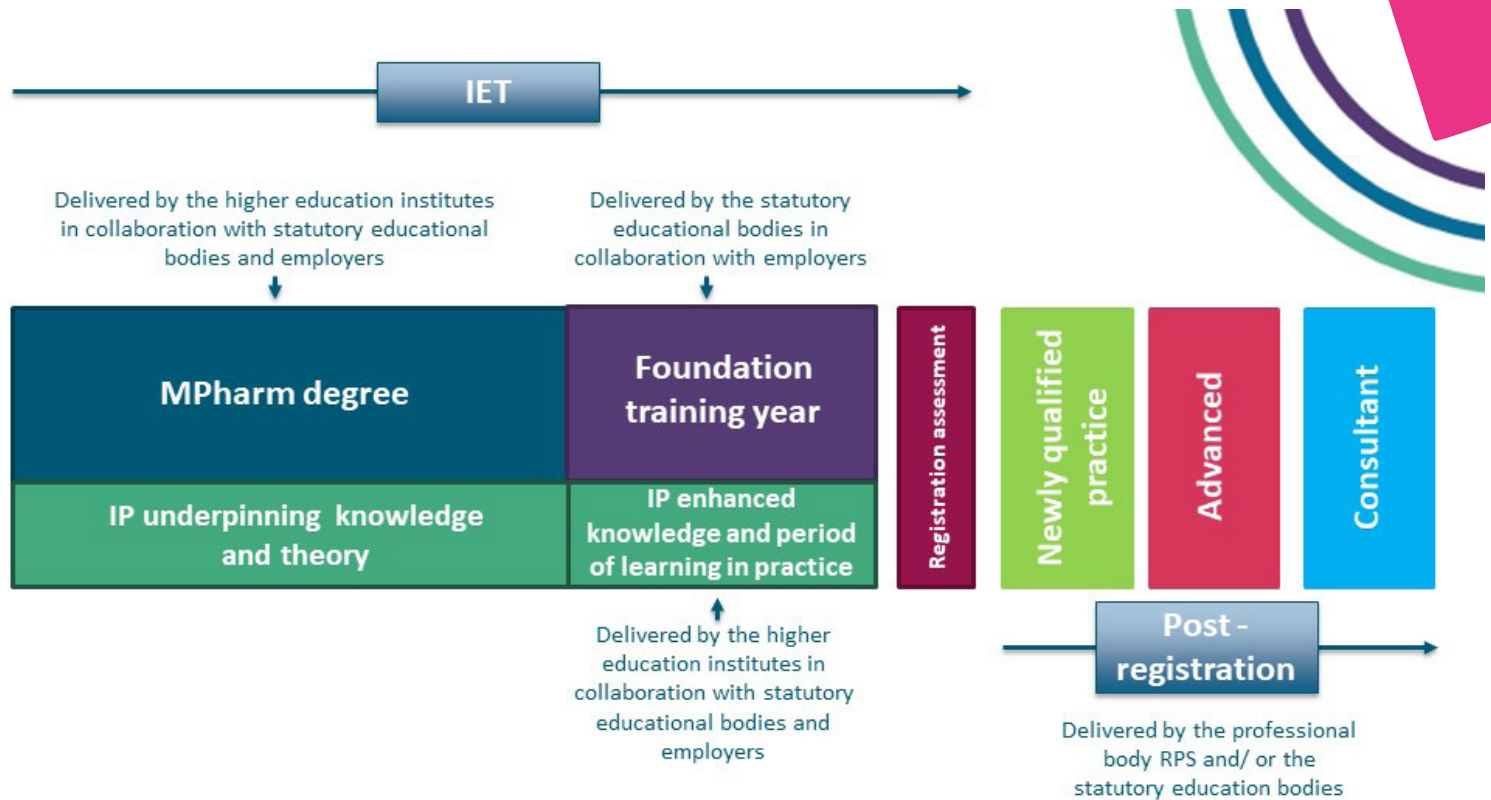
Enhanced clinical placements at quality assured locations within the MPharm degree will ensure that students apply their academic learning to practice from the earliest point in their careers.





This will then lead into their final fifth year of foundation training which will be managed by HEIW and then to registration to practice as an Independent Prescriber.

Alongside the changes for pharmacists' initial education, HEIW is committed to supporting our current pharmacists, pharmacy technician and pharmacy support staff and will ensure all pharmacists in Wales identified as requiring an IP qualification have been safely and successfully trained to IP standards by August 2026. HEIW will be providing a programme of learning for all sectors of practice to support the IETP reforms for newly qualified pharmacists as they exit their initial training from August 2022 onwards



## What does it mean for patients?

Wherever pharmaceutical care is provided, patients will be assured that the pharmacy team will be able to help patients to achieve the best from their medications and maximise their quality of life. Pharmacists will work closely with patients to minimise harm from medicines and increase the benefits which will improve patient outcomes.

All pharmacists will be able to prescribe medicines, which means that they will be able to make any necessary changes to patient medication and only to refer back to doctors when necessary. Patients will be able to receive their care in the place of their choosing and wherever possible closer to home. Pharmacy will be part of the multi-disciplinary team managing the patient's care and referring patients appropriately to the right health care professionals at the right time.

The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of healthcare professionals working together in multi-disciplinary teams and of resources being used flexibly in the interests of patient care. The changes in pharmacy education will enable pharmacists to play an increasing role in the full range of healthcare settings, in particular primary and community care.

The greater focus on professional judgement, management of risk and diagnostic skills will enable pharmacists to increasingly use their expertise in medicines in ways that will support work such as de-prescribing and prudent healthcare, as well as helping to deliver A Healthier Wales.

"HEIW is well placed to build on the transformational multi-sector pre-registration training programme with all trainees now employed by a Single Lead Employer, a standardised off-site training programme and training mapped to the consulted IET learning outcomes framework being piloted and evaluated."

Margaret Allan HEIW Pharmacy Dean



## Creating the environment for success

To successfully implement the reforms to achieve the goal of training Independent Prescribers within 5 years, we must nurture a culture and environment that will enable our learners to succeed. This includes:

- Substantial discussion and agreement on the implementation proposals
- Implementation will be highly dependent on securing significant additional funding to increase the clinical learning in practice across all sectors of practice including primary and community care
- Embedding education and training as core principles in practice
- Workforce transformation: supporting and readying employers to make best use of the increased skill set of newly qualified pharmacists to deliver enhanced patient services
- Introduction of a new foundation training year to provide registered, independent prescribing pharmacists at the end of the 5-year period
- Support and deliver increased inter-professional learning and multi-disciplinary team integration
- Increase clinical training capacity across the whole integrated care pathway
- Securing the additional funding necessary to deliver increased training placements for undergraduate students across all care sectors and Wales. Currently the MPharm degree does not attract clinical funding for in practice learning
- Close partnership working between universities, HEIW and training sites to ensure consistency of quality, funding and geographical spread for all clinical placements.

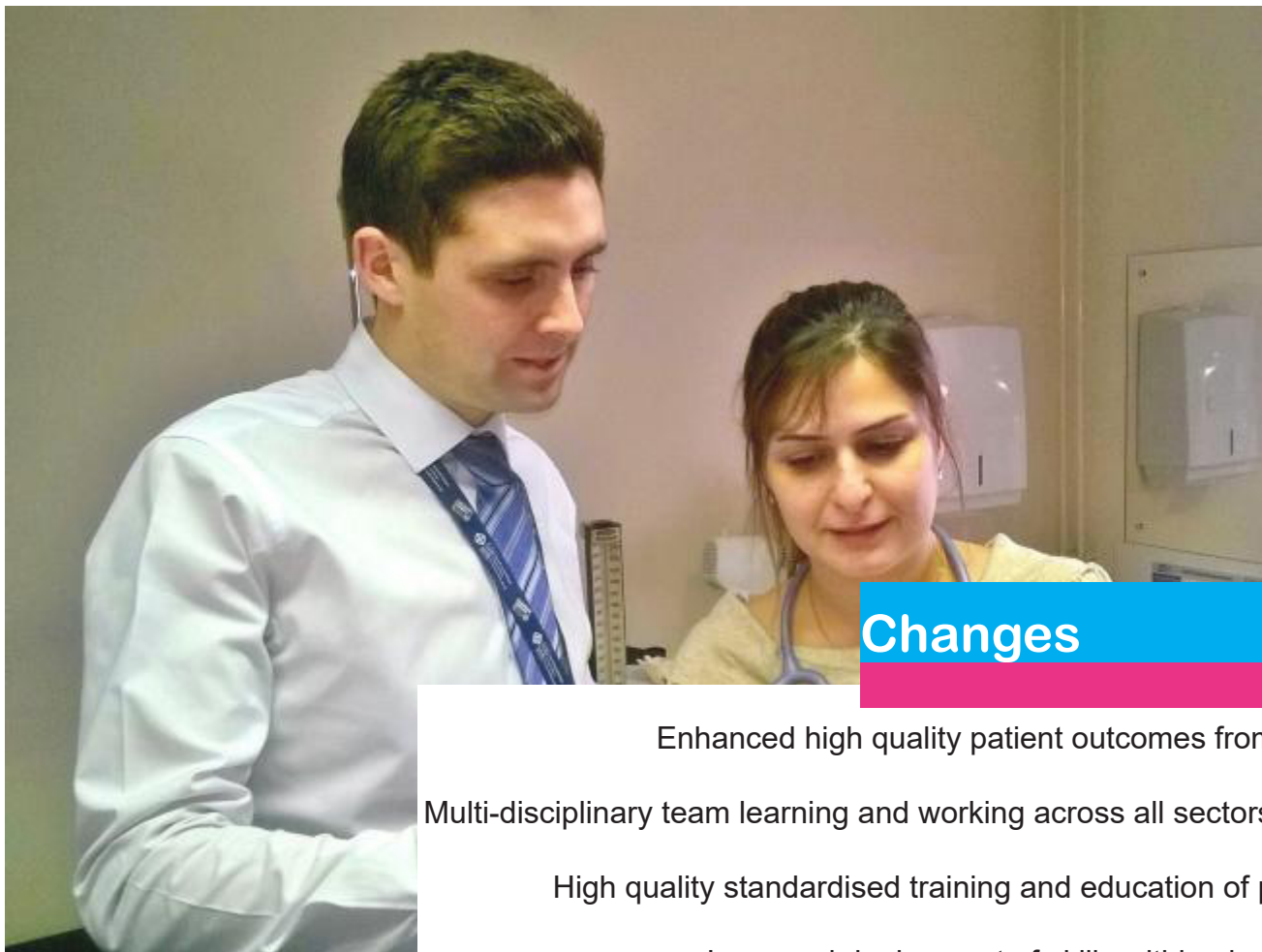
These are fundamental changes to the way pharmacist training is delivered. The learning has to shift from pharmacists being able to demonstrate how their knowledge would theoretically apply in practice to being observed applying their skills in practice with patients. The current eight years of learning to achieve this level of practice will be achieved in five years.

# What are the benefits of these changes?

Our Vision for the Pharmacy workforce of the future will benefit patients and care services across Health & Social Care in Wales continue to support the ambitions and goals of A Healthier Wales and Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales.

The transformation of Pharmacist education will enable us to:

- Increase the number of Pharmacists able to adapt to the changing patient care landscape by incorporating clinical training across the whole integrated care pathway
- Support the safe and effective prescribing of medication in domiciliary and managed care setting
- Incorporate social prescribing where appropriate to meet patient needs
- Deprescribe medication where the risks outweigh the benefits to the patient quality of life
- Attract high-calibre trainees into Wales which incentivises learners to stay and work in Wales
- Match workforce demand to trainee numbers
- Pharmacists providing enhanced consistent patient care across all sectors of practice from day one hospitals.



## Changes

Enhanced high quality patient outcomes from medicines

Multi-disciplinary team learning and working across all sectors of practice

High quality standardised training and education of pharmacists

Improved deployment of skills within pharmacy team

High quality local pharmacy patient services closer to home

# What can I expect to see?

The full implementation of these new standards will not be realised until 2026. In the next five years you will notice:

- More demand for undergraduate pharmacy students training in the workplace as the quantity and quality of clinical placements increases within the MPharm
- Increased quality management of pharmacy training placements
- Increased education and training of the existing pharmacists to level up the skills of the whole workforce
- Increased education and training across all care sectors
- Increased interprofessional learning within multi-disciplinary teams
- More pharmacist qualified to prescribe and provide enhanced patient care
- Reshaping of existing pharmacist clinical diploma posts to provide resources to provide the revised post- registration education and training which meets the future career pathways

## What's going to happen and when?

August 2021: the pre-registration pharmacist year will become a foundation year and will start to incorporate some of the new learning

During 2021/22: close partnership working with key stakeholders including universities, employers and training sites to plan for the increase in undergraduate clinical placements and further changes to foundation year

August 2022: reshaped education programme for newly registered pharmacists to incorporate all the revised learning and deliver independent prescribing

2022- 2025: phased increase of quantity and quality of undergraduate clinical placements to enhance current offering within MPharm

2022- 2025: foundation year phasing more of the new learning including independent prescribing

August 2025: foundation year delivers all the new learning outcomes for MPharm graduates

August 2026: all undergraduates undertaking the new learning programme will register with enhanced clinical skills and prescribing status.

During the whole period of implementation 2021- 2026, HEIW will upskill the identified existing pharmacist workforce to achieve independent prescribing status and will develop the new career pathway for pharmacists beyond the point of registration.

This document has been produced by  
Health Education and Improvement Wales

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