

The Governance Framework Supporting The Scottish Pharmacy Pre-registration Scheme

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Stephen Peddie

Abstract

Title

The Governance Framework Supporting The Scottish Pre-registration Pharmacist Scheme (PRPS)

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Outline

The Scottish Pre-registration Pharmacist Scheme (PRPS) was launched in 2006 to centralise the pre-registration education and training year for pre-registration trainees in both hospital and community pharmacy settings across Scotland. The three main components (centralised recruitment process, educational programme and formal processes for premises approval and tutor support) are described.

The working relationships between NHS Education for Scotland (NES), employer organisations, General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) are outlined.

Conclusion

The centralised, quality-managed pre-registration training programme is better organised, transparent and responsive to developing needs. Opportunities for multidisciplinary learning are enhanced because pre-registration pharmacist training is now embedded in an organisation that also delivers training for medical, dental and nursing trainees.

Keywords: pharmacist, education, training, centralised.

Background

The Scottish NHS Pre-registration Pharmacist Scheme (PRPS) is rooted in 'The Right Medicine'¹ – the strategy for pharmaceutical care in Scotland - and a report on pre-registration training from 2004 by the National Pharmaceutical Forum (NPF).

The scheme was launched in 2006 to address the highlighted inconsistency in the quality of training provision in the pre-registration year and gave NHS Education for Scotland (NES) responsibility for the development and management of an educational infrastructure for all pre-registration pharmacists and their tutors in Scotland.

Since 2006, the PRPS has made much progress towards achievement of its main objectives through successfully managing the overall centralisation of the pre-registration education and training year for pre-registration trainees in both hospital and community pharmacy settings across Scotland.

The PRPS has three main components. A centralised recruitment process has been developed in conjunction with NES Human Resources (HR) and works effectively. An educational programme framework has been established with each trainee required to complete the same core elements and formal processes have been established for premises approval and tutor support, including appraisal and training.

There are strong working relationships between NES and the many employer organisations involved in the scheme. More recently, NES has established a formal working relationship with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) to strengthen the quality management processes supporting the scheme and is building closer working with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS).

All of the funding made available by the Scottish Government has gone into funding places in the scheme - a total number of 170 pre-registration trainees in Scotland. Each year, there are also a small number of trainees in Scotland who are not funded by NES.

“... the PRPS has made much progress towards ... managing the overall centralisation of the preregistration education and training year”



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The premises visitation procedure involves discussion with the pharmacy manager, tutor and staff

The quality management processes - premises approval, tutor training and tutor appraisal - are the key educational component of the PRPS and the obligation to participate in these is detailed in an Educational Agreement between NES Pharmacy and the approved training provider.

A Pharmacy Governance Group has been established within NES to consider the approval of each training site (and all other quality management matters).

The Pharmacy Governance Group meets monthly.

Table 1: PRPS Governance - key points

There is an agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NES Pharmacy and the GPhC to promote joint working and collaboration between the two organisations.

The MoU aims to avoid duplication and work is progressing to identify and set up systems to simplify application and quality management processes.

Training – whether NES funded or not – can only take place at premises that have been approved by NES as the GPhC will base registration as a training site on this.

GPhC have approved the NES training programme as an overarching programme. This will facilitate movement of trainees to a different training site should this become necessary.

The training site approval process is a cyclical exercise conducted for each training year with approval – and so registration with the GPhC - for that training period only.

All new training practices must be visited and the PRPS approval visitation procedure followed. This includes any training practice that has not been active in pre-registration training for more than three training years.

Table 2: GPhC/NES Joint Working

PRPS Governance Processes

Key points

Quality management processes and a governance group are key components of the scheme (Table 1).

Educational Agreement

The quality management processes are the key educational component of the PRPS, and the obligation to participate in these is detailed in an Educational Agreement between NES Pharmacy and the approved training provider (Table 2).

The Educational Agreement states the funding to be provided in respect of the placements and specifies the NES and GPhC requirements for the training placement. Some aspects of employment terms and conditions – for example salary, weekly hours of work, holidays and study time – are included in the educational agreement to ensure consistency between training providers. NES provides a training grant for each trainee, paid in instalments to the employer, which fully covers the salary and employers costs.

The governance procedures have evolved over the years towards a comprehensive process of premises approval to better support the establishment of ‘Training Practices’ for the PRPS and also as sites for other streams of pharmacy education and training. The management and responsiveness of the approval process has continually improved.

Memorandum of Understanding

To respond to published GPhC standards, NES Pharmacy has established new working relationships with the GPhC to support the quality management of pre-registration pharmacist training placements and, in 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was agreed to promote joint working and collaboration between the two organisations.

The MoU has three main streams covering fitness to practice collaboration,

premises and programme approval. Progress has been made in implementing the MoU and a current focus is the avoidance of duplication and setting up systems to simplify application and quality management processes.

Premises

The collaboration between NES Pharmacy and the GPhC with regard to training premises approval provides for registration of a pharmacy as a training site by the GPhC – a necessity if training is to be provided - to be founded on those premises first being approved as a training site by NES Pharmacy.

The approval process is a cyclical exercise conducted for each training year with approval – and so registration with

the GPhC - for that training period only. The process is the same whether the post is funded by NES or not and whether the training practice is a community multiple, independent or a hospital department i.e. the process applies to any pharmacy in Scotland wishing to be involved in pre-registration pharmacist training.

The process is based on a premises visit procedure and/or recorded experience of that pharmacy as a training site e.g. information gleaned by NES from previous quality management processes such as trainee questionnaires and tutor appraisal. Information from other sources, for example the GPhC, will also be included in the process (Table 3).

Tutors

The approval process ensures that tutors meet the criteria set by the GPhC. New tutors must also complete core training and participate in the tutor appraisal processes described in the Educational Agreement (Tables 4 and 5).

Pharmacy Governance Group

A Pharmacy Governance Group has been established within NES to consider the approval of each training site (and all other quality management matters).

The NES Pharmacy Governance Group meets monthly and its deliberations and decisions are formally minuted. Issues, problems or concerns reported to NES are recorded in a database or on the documentation pertaining to the

The PRPS premises visitation procedure involves discussion with the pharmacy manager, tutor and also the pharmacy staff to ensure that the pharmacy as a whole is committed to supporting status as a training practice. Support for the tutor in taking on the role of tutor is a key element. It is the aim of the visitation process to ensure that the premises provide a suitable environment for training. With regard to the tutor, this includes verification that:

- There is a willing, named, on-site tutor who meets the GPhC tutor criteria and who has completed NES-approved tutor training
- The tutor demonstrates commitment to an Educational Agreement, and agrees to meet the requirements of the scheme detailed in the document. In particular, this includes participation in the tutor appraisal process.

For training practices with previous experience (i.e. currently active or hosting a trainee within the previous three training years) the assessment process is determined by recorded data pertaining to that pharmacy, intelligence from other sources, and verification that essential criteria continue to be met.

The NES sources of information used to determine on-going approval of a current or recently active training site include:

- reference to the PRPS problem logs (these list any trainee, tutor or practice issues that have arisen during the training year, together with the actions taken to address and/or resolve the problems)
- comment from the tutor appraisal process (the information gathered from the tutor as part of the appraisal process that relates to the support for pre-registration training. This will include the assessment of the tutor's achievement of the standards described in the Council's tutor guidance document)
- data from the Exit Questionnaire (a review questionnaire completed by each trainee on completion of their training)
- the PRPS training practice rating scale (a compilation of the feedback from trainees that illustrates the consistency of training experience)
- ad hoc information (observation from ad hoc visits, comments from trainees at tutorials, etc)
- the GPhC will be asked if they have any relevant information to include in the assessment.

The outcome of the NES assessments will be notified to the GPhC with a view to the process of registration of these pharmacies being completed within the required timescale.

Whilst issues will preferably have been addressed as they arise, this check represents an opportunity to ensure that training providers/practices are committed to meeting the requirements of NES and the GPhC for pre-registration training.

Table 3: PRPS Premises Approval

procedures for reporting of poorly performing trainees or tutors; these forms are presented to the Governance Group for its consideration and decision on any further action required.

With regard to pre-registration training programmes, the purpose of the MoU is that the GPhC will approve and recognise the NES national PRPS programme for all pre-registration trainees based in Scotland. To support this, NES will ensure that the training programme to be followed by trainees in the PRPS meets the GPhC Standards and Procedures for the initial education and training for pharmacists.

Direct learning

The NHS Education for Scotland (Pharmacy) training programme framework specifies the core elements of direct learning that each pre-registration trainee must attend throughout the training period. Beyond this, the framework provides guidance on the activities to be undertaken and timetable to be followed in the workplace training programme to ensure that opportunities are provided for the trainee to achieve the required learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The Scottish NHS Pre-registration Pharmacist Scheme and the governance processes that underpin its delivery have achieved the set objectives of a centralised, quality-managed pre-registration training programme that is better organised, transparent and responsive to developing needs. These governance processes could be used by others setting up a similar scheme.

Pre-registration pharmacist training in Scotland is now embedded in a multidisciplinary organisation (i.e. NES) that also delivers training for medical, dental and nursing trainees. The opportunities for multidisciplinary learning are enhanced and enable the PRPS to fully support the Prescription for Excellence strategy and vision for primary care for the next 10 years.

An Educational Agreement describes the criteria for approval of a tutor in the PRPS including those elements specified by the GPhC and by NES.

The criteria to be applied for approval as a tutor in the PRPS are as per the Regulator, together with a recorded assessment of the tutor against eligibility criteria (the Declaration). New tutors are also required to complete core training before the start of the training year, and to participate in the tutor appraisal processes described in the Educational Agreement.

There are two types of tutor training offered as part of the PRPS:

- core tutor training, which is aimed at new PRPS pre-registration tutors. Core tutor training is mandatory and provides an overview of the requirements of the GPhC and NES programmes.
- tutor development event. Such events are targeted at pre-registration tutors as they gain experience in the role, and the content is based on needs identified from the PRPS tutor appraisal process.

Table 4: PRPS Tutor Approval

The appraisal process has been developed to provide for an assessment of each tutor against the GPhC tutor guidance statements and is an essential component of the scheme. The appraisal process will facilitate the development of tutors involved in the scheme and, thereby, raise the standards and consistency of the training.

Tutors are invited to complete an on-line self-assessment form that allows the tutor to describe the evidence they maintain that supports their achievement of the Council's obligations and guidance.

This reflective exercise includes specific feedback from previous trainees, written evidence of engagement with the trainee (e.g. weekly meeting reports, progress reports, review of evidence etc) and review of the tutor's CPD (in the role of pre-registration tutor).

The outcome of the Appraisal process should be a list of agreed development needs – in the role of pre-registration tutor - that can be incorporated into the tutor's overall Personal Development Plan.

Table 5: PRPS Tutor Appraisal Process

“Pre-registration pharmacist training in Scotland is now embedded in a multidisciplinary organisation . . .”

Declaration of interests

- Mr Peddie has nothing to disclose.
- Dr Ailsa Power has nothing to disclose.
- Professor Rose Marie Parr is currently Honorary Professor at both Schools of Pharmacy at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen and Strathclyde University in Glasgow.

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