

Sussex Pharmacy Careers

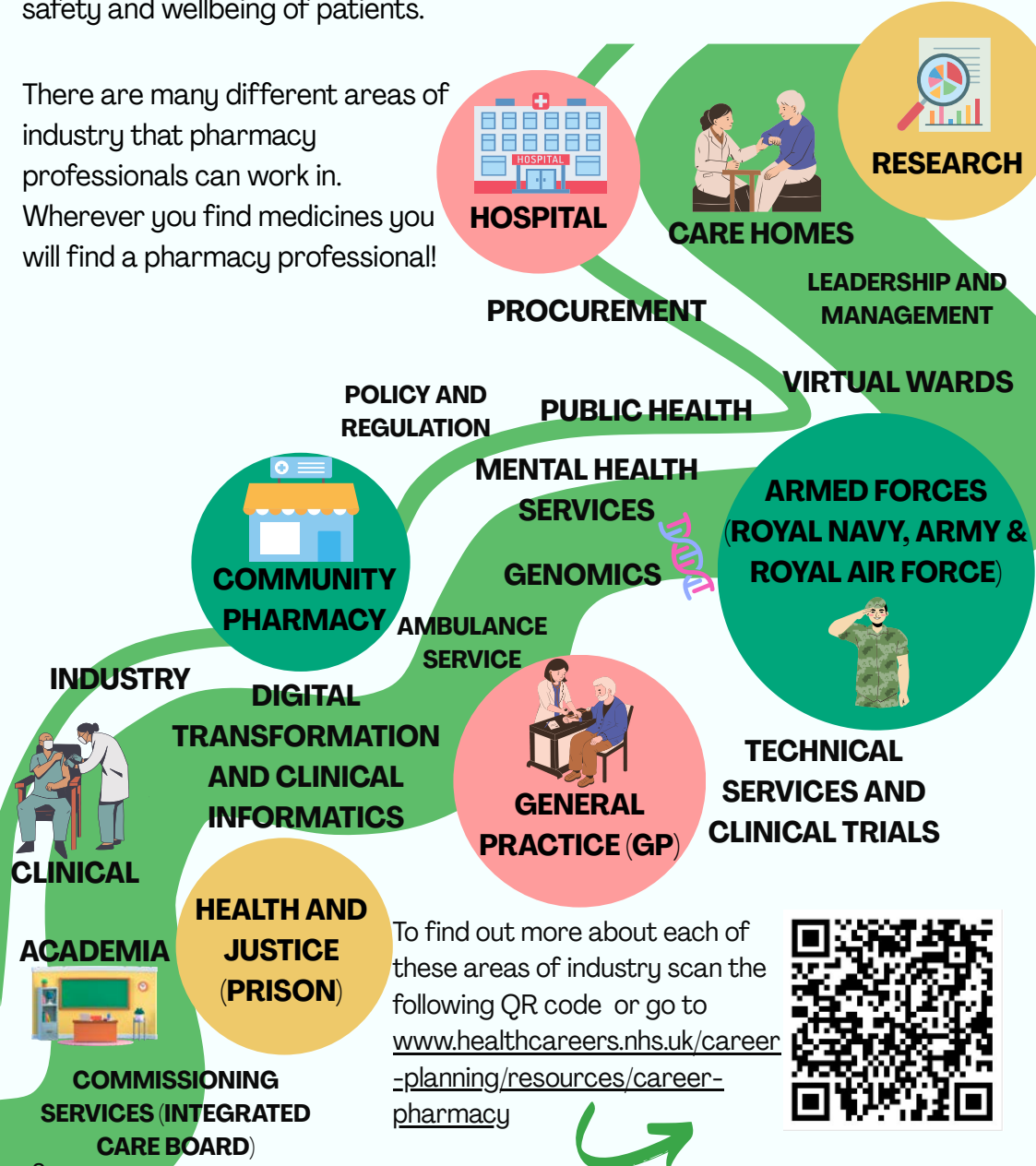
Contents

2. Introduction
3. What is a Pharmacy Assistant
5. How to become a Pharmacy Assistant/Career Progression
6. What is a Pharmacy Technician
8. How to become a Pharmacy Technician
9. What is a Pharmacist
11. How to become a Pharmacist
12. Further Information
14. University of Brighton
15. Our Partners

Introduction

Pharmacy is a dynamic area of healthcare offering many varied and rewarding careers. You could work as a pharmacist, pharmacy technician or a pharmacy assistant. All pharmacy professionals contribute to the health, safety and wellbeing of patients.

There are many different areas of industry that pharmacy professionals can work in. Wherever you find medicines you will find a pharmacy professional!



To find out more about each of these areas of industry scan the following QR code or go to www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/career-pharmacy



Pharmacy Assistant

Pharmacy assistants are integral members of the pharmacy team. They work alongside pharmacy technicians and under the direction of the pharmacist to ensure the smooth running of dispensaries, receipt and distribution centers and aseptic units.

In community pharmacies, they work directly with patients, helping with prescriptions and answering questions. They support the preparation of prescriptions and the delivery of pharmacy services.

In secondary care they may prepare prescriptions for inpatients, manage stock, deliver medicines to wards, and check patients' own drugs (PODs). They may also help manufacture products in the aseptic unit such as chemotherapy.

Career progression

You could progress further in your career by:

- You could become a team leader in the receipt and distribution of medicines in a hospital setting.
- You could become a healthy living champion working in a community setting.
- Undertake further training to become an accuracy checking dispensing assistant or a registered pharmacy technician.



Skills, personal attributes and behaviours expected:

Good maths and IT skills



Accuracy and attention to detail



Honest and trustworthy



Be able to work in partnership with others



Friendly and kind



Behave in a professional manner



Stay calm under pressure



Speak up when they have concerns or when things go wrong



Your role could include:

- Customer service, including giving advice and signposting to appropriate health care professionals.
- Provision of healthcare services, e.g. stop smoking adviser.
- Taking in prescriptions, labelling, dispensing, and handing out medicines
- Receipt and distribution of medicines.
- Assessing suitability of Patients' Own Drugs (POD's).
- All aspects of medicine ordering for stock and individual patients.
- Aseptic services.



You can find out more about working as a pharmacy assistant from **Health Careers** below

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/exploration-roles#3424



How to become a pharmacy assistant

To work as a pharmacy assistant in a pharmacy setting, you will need to complete or have already completed a General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) approved qualification in pharmacy services.

You could work and do a part time qualification like the Level 2 Certificate in the Principles and Practice for Pharmacy Support Staff.

Apprenticeship

You could do a 12- 15 month Pharmacy Services Assistant apprenticeship. You will be trained within the workplace. Study time and off the job training will be provided at work.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements, but most employers will expect good literacy, numeracy, and IT skills. They may also ask for GCSEs or equivalent qualifications and some relevant work experience. Experience in customer service is not essential but would be a bonus!

Direct Application

You can apply directly for pharmacy assistant roles. More information on where to apply for jobs can be found on page 12.

Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy technicians typically work under the supervision of a pharmacist. Pharmacy technicians can be found in many healthcare settings, including, but not limited to community pharmacies, hospitals, GP surgeries, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), mental health, care homes, and the armed forces. It is a very versatile role, and no two days are the same.

To work as a pharmacy technician, you'll need to be registered with the GPhC which can be done on completion of an accredited pharmacy technician course.

Entry Requirements

GCSE certificates or equivalent in English Language, Maths, and a minimum of one Science (grade 4/C or above).

Some course providers allow you to complete functional skills alongside your course.

Qualification

Some employers offer the course as an apprenticeship, while others offer a non-apprenticeship route. If it's an apprenticeship, you must meet the eligibility requirements set by the employer or course provider.

You can find out more about working as a pharmacy technician from Health Careers - scan the QR code or use the link below

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/roles-pharmacy/pharmacy-technician



Skills, personal attributes, and behaviours expected

- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Problem solving
- Reliable and hard working
- Provide person-centred care
- Be able to work in partnership with others
- Communicate effectively at all times
- Behave in a professional manner
- Respect and maintain patient confidentiality and privacy
- Ready to learn
- Demonstrate leadership

Your role could include

- Providing safe and effective pharmacy services.
- Supplying medicines and devices to patients.
- Working with patients to reach the best care for them.
- Assembling medicines for prescriptions.
- Providing information to patients and other healthcare professionals.
- Managing areas of medicines supply, such as dispensaries.
- Supervising other pharmacy staff in their training and development.
- Customer service, including giving advice and referring to appropriate health care professionals.
- Aseptic dispensing, which involves maintaining the facilities used to prepare sterile medicines.
- Involvement in quality control, procurement, information technology, and clinical trials.

How to become a Pharmacy Technician

To qualify as a pharmacy technician, you will need to complete a **two-year training programme** comprising of practical work experience and study. You'll usually be employed as a pre-registration trainee pharmacy technician and study for a level 3 or level 4 apprenticeship.



You will be trained within the workplace whilst undertaking the diploma. It is a vocational course, meaning it's flexible and can be delivered face-to-face, at a distance, online, or a combination of these. You will be entitled to some study time during work hours. In addition, monthly training sessions are available, including consultation skills, medicine reconciliation, and accuracy checking facilitated by specialists..



You will have a tutor to help you during the course. They will support your learning and development. Trainee feedback and any concerns are sought as part of regular feedback sessions facilitated by NHS England.



Successful completion of the training allows you to register with the GPhC and work as a qualified pharmacy technician.



Pharmacist

Pharmacists have a unique set of skills and in-depth knowledge of medicines and health. This makes them well placed to make valuable contributions to patient care while working as part of the multi-disciplinary team. They are often the first point of contact when a person is unwell or needs medicine or health advice. With many opportunities to work in lots of different sectors, this can be a varied and rewarding career. To work as a pharmacist, you will need to be registered with the (GPhC) which can be done on completion of an accredited degree.

Entry Requirements

You'll usually need:

- at least 1 A level, or equivalent, for a foundation degree
- 3 A levels, or equivalent, including chemistry and a second science or maths
- Entry criteria can vary depending on the Higher Education Institute.

Your role could include:

- Clinically checking the appropriateness of prescribed medication for an individual.
- Answering medicine queries and providing advice to patients, carers, and other healthcare professionals.
- Counselling patients on the best way to take their medicines.
- Working with patients, carers and other healthcare professionals to make medicines use safe, effective and cost efficient.
- Assessing patients in order to supply medicines for minor ailments e.g. earache and sore throat.
- Prescribing medicines for patients.
- Supervise and manage other pharmacy staff and being involved in their training and development.
- Involvement in continuously improving the quality of care provided.
- Checking the accuracy of medicines that have been dispensed.

Skills, personal attributes and behaviours expected:

- Be thorough and have a good attention to detail
- Be able to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- Be compassionate and understanding
- Good customer service skills
- Patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- Good maths and IT skills
- Excellent communication skills
- Leadership and management skills
- Working as part of a team
- Speak up when you have concerns
- Behave in a professional manner
- Respect and maintain patient confidentiality



You can find out more about working as a pharmacist from Health Careers - scan the QR code or use the link below

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/roles-pharmacy/pharmacist



How to become a Pharmacist

To work as a pharmacist, you'll need to complete a Master of Pharmacy degree (MPharm), accredited by the GPhC which takes 4 years.



Upon completion of the MPharm you need to complete a year of paid, supervised practice called the Pharmacist Foundation training year. During this time, you will have to demonstrate certain skills and behaviours to your supervisors. At the end of the year, you will have to successfully pass 2 assessments set by the GPhC in order to register and then practice as a pharmacist. From 2026, all newly qualified pharmacists will also be trained as independent prescribers.



Support will include:

- A tutor for the year who will provide advice and support.
- Supervisors to help and guide you for each rotation.
- Work shadowing to gain experience.
- Time and support to practice and perfect knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be a pharmacist.
- Study days.
- Lots of online resources.

Where to apply for jobs

NHS Jobs -

www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/search

Trac Jobs - www.trac.jobs

GOV.UK - www.gov.uk/find-a-job

Organisations may also advertise on their own websites.

Vacancies outside of the NHS may be advertised locally by employers so you may find adverts in places such as GP surgeries, community pharmacies, job centres, local newspapers and on any of the main recruitment websites such as **Indeed** - uk.indeed.com

QR Code for Gov.UK



Interactive Pharmacy Careers Map

careersinpharmacy.uk/careers-map



Interactive Quiz

fancification.com/NHS-Pharmacy/



Interested in a career in pharmacy?

Use the QR code or link below to view an interactive PDF document that provides insight into the opportunities available within a career in pharmacy, featuring the roles and settings you could work!



www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/career-pharmacy

Pharmacy: A Day in the Life programme

This NHS programme comprises of online work-related modules to give learners an insight into what it is like to work in pharmacy. It is an interactive and immersive VR360 app that can be either accessed via an internet browser or downloaded to a VR headset, phone, or tablet.

You need to be 18 yrs+ to create an account.

Watch the promotional video below for more information.

How to access the programme



1.

Create an account at:
learninghub.nhs.uk



2.

Use the following link to access the pharmacy course:

learninghub.nhs.uk/catalogue/pharmacy-a-day-in-the-life



PROMOTIONAL VIDEO



player.vimeo.com/video/867212333

University of Brighton



**RANKED 3RD IN
THE UK OVERALL,
AND 5TH IN THE
UK FOR CAREER
PROSPECTS**

Courses available at the University of Brighton

Pharmacy MPharm with preparatory year - see more information by using this link: www.brighton.ac.uk/courses/study/pharmacy-mpharm-with-preparatory-year.aspx

Pharmacy MPharm - see more information by using this link: www.brighton.ac.uk/courses/study/pharmacy-mpharm.aspx



University of Brighton

Our partners



East Sussex Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Sussex Community
NHS Foundation Trust

Sussex Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust



Community Pharmacy
Surrey and Sussex



NHS Sussex ICB Medicines Optimisation Workforce and Transformation Team 2025

www.sussex.ics.nhs.uk/nhs-sussex