PWDS Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2026



Welcome

Welcome to the autumn/winter edition of the PWDS newsletter, with the latest updates, insights and opportunities from the Pharmacy Workforce Development South team.

In this edition we celebrate our time at APTUK Conference 2026, share great practice from across the region and look ahead to upcoming training.

We would love to hear your feedback, ideas and stories for future editions. Our contact details are on page 9.

Happy reading,
The PWDS Team

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HAVE YOUR SAY

APTUK UK-wide post-registration career pathway for pharmacy technicians

Consultation closes **31 December 2026**. Find out more on page 3.

31 DEC

PWDS NEWS

PWDS at APTUK Conference 2026



Expanding Horizons

September welcomed the APTUK Conference 2026, with PWDS in attendance and contributing to the conference programme.

The event provided an excellent opportunity to connect with pharmacy technicians and colleagues from across the country, share ideas and explore approaches to workforce development and advancing practice.

PWDS contributed to the conference programme through a session presented by a trio of speakers, including PWDS Training Programme Director Kate Postle. The session explored the role of Medicines Information Pharmacy Technicians, development opportunities within the speciality, and the diverse career pathways available to pharmacy technicians.

The conference also provided an opportunity to engage with delegates at the PWDS stand, discuss education and training opportunities, and reconnect with colleagues from across the UK.

AT A GLANCE

EVENT
APTUK Annual Professional Conference and Exhibition

DATES
18–19 September 2026

VENUE
Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow, London

PWDS AT THE EVENT
Programme session on Medicines Information Pharmacy Technicians, plus the PWDS stand

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHT

One of the conference highlights was the launch of the public consultation for the APTUK UK-Wide Post-Registration Career Pathway for Pharmacy Technicians, supporting the future development and progression of the pharmacy technician workforce. **See page 3 to have your say.**

With the conference venue located next to Heathrow Airport, attendees were also treated to the impressive sight of aircraft arriving throughout the event, providing an unusual backdrop to two days of learning, networking and professional development.

SECTOR NEWS · CONSULTATION

Have your say: pharmacy technician career pathway

Closes 31 December 2026 APTUK UK-Wide Post-Registration Career Pathway for Pharmacy Technicians

Help shape the future of pharmacy technician career development

The consultation seeks views on a proposed UK-wide career pathway that aims to provide a clear, nationally recognised approach to pharmacy technician career development across all sectors of health and care.

FROM		TO
Foundation Practice Level 4	→	**Enhanced Practice** Level 6

Developed by APTUK in collaboration with a UK-wide Partners Engagement Group, the pathway is intended to support workforce development, professional growth and career progression for pharmacy technicians across the four nations.

APTUK is now seeking feedback to help refine the pathway before publication.

How to take part

1
Read the draft pathway and try the capability tool

2
Check the FAQs or join a consultation webinar

3
Submit your response by 31 December 2026

Consultation resources

- Draft career pathway document
- Capability tool
- Introduction video
- Consultation questions preview
- FAQs
- Webinars on FAQs and consultation data analysis

Scan for full consultation details

Or visit **aptuk.org** and search “career pathway consultation”

Pre-registration pharmacy technicians on the wards



Among the fantastic posters showcased at this year's APTUK Conference was a submission from **Jenny Maby**, Lead Pharmacy Technician for Education & Training at Bristol NHS Foundation Trust (City & Weston Operating Unit), entitled:

Quantifying the Impact of Pre-Registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians (PTPTs) on Ward Service Delivery

Here is what Jenny had to say

"I was lucky enough to attend the APTUK Conference in London, which was an excellent opportunity to learn, share ideas, and connect with pharmacy technicians from across the UK, whilst also presenting my poster, showcasing an analysis of EPMA data collected during the clinical ward placements of our Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians (PTPTs)."

"The poster explored the interventions and contributions made by PTPTs while on the wards, demonstrating the positive impact they can have on patient care, medicines optimisation, and service delivery.

It displayed the data to evidence the value trainees bring to clinical services while supporting their professional development, including how many patients they saw and how many medicines were added onto the EPMA system as part of the medicines reconciliation process.

It was a pleasure to attend with some of my PTPTs (who are now qualified) to represent Bristol NHS Foundation Trust – City and Weston."

→ **Turn the page to see the full poster**

Got a poster to share? We'd love to showcase it in the next PWDS newsletter. Email pwds@uhbw.nhs.uk

Workforce in Training

Quantifying the Impact of Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technicians (PTPT) on Ward Service Delivery



Background

The updated 2017 education and training standards for pharmacy technicians introduced medicines optimisation duties, including medicines reconciliation. To meet rising service demands and the extensive training required for this specialist area, pre-registration pharmacy technicians were deemed capable of supporting this work.

This approach helps manage service pressures while enhancing trainee development through structured supervision.

Objectives

- To support and develop the PTPT in achieving their educational objectives relating to medicines optimisation responsibilities.
- To ensure the PTPT gains the confidence and competence required to undertake these duties effectively by providing sufficient and varied ward-based experience.
- To improve overall medicines reconciliation performance through increased workforce capacity and enhanced trainee involvement

"Completing my pharmacy technician training on the ward, with a focus on medicines reconciliation, gave me the confidence to move directly into a specialised role. The experience developed my clinical knowledge, communication skills, and ability to support safe, patient-centred medicines optimisation from day one."



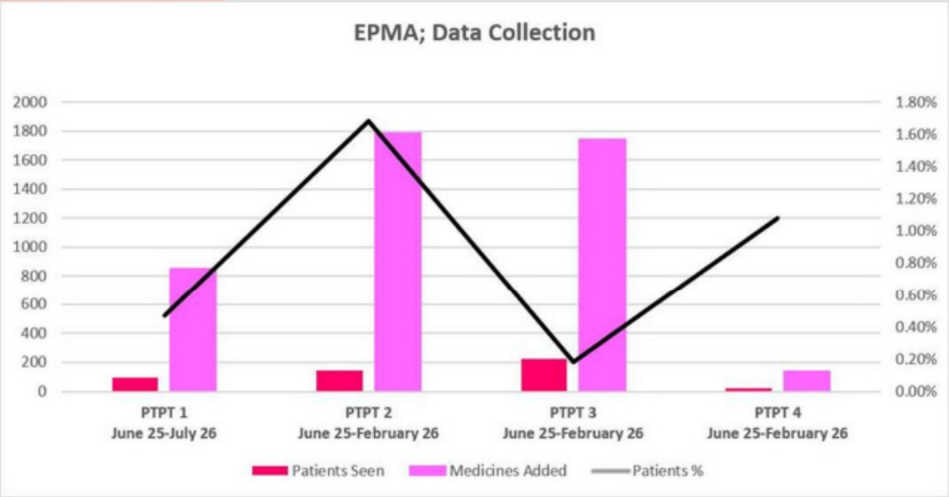
Method

Trainees were timetabled into clinical time across different specialities including Oncology, Care of the Elderly, Cardiac and Surgery over a 10 month period.
They were supervised by experienced pharmacy professionals and had personal development plans in place to support with educational objectives and service requirements.
Main duties included:

- Medicines Reconciliations
- POD Checks
- CD Audits
- Patient Counselling
- Returns
- Ward-Top Ups

The implementation of EPMA has enabled the process to be monitored effectively, providing quantitative data to support performance measurement, quality assurance, and ongoing service improvement

Results



The results clearly demonstrate the fantastic contribution our PTPTs are making at ward level and the value they bring to patient care.

Collectively, the PTPT team has:

- Reviewed and supported over 450 patients across clinical areas.
- Added more than 4,500 medicines to the EPMA system as part of the medicines reconciliation process, helping to ensure accurate and timely medication records

These achievements have highlighted the PTPTs' growing confidence, competence, & positive impact

Looking ahead, internal competencies are being developed to further enhance the PTPTs' skills and knowledge.
This will support them in working more autonomously at ward level and enable them to undertake these responsibilities independently, strengthening the pharmacy workforce and expanding the support available to clinical teams and patients.

Jenny Maby; Lead Pharmacy Technician for Education & Training
Ruth Gbao: Pharmacy Technician in Dispensary and Cardiac
Molly Wilson: Pharmacy Technician in Cancer Services
Ellen Crockett; Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician



FOCUS ON

Embedding Pharmacy Support Staff within Medicines Optimisation at Salisbury NHS FT



63%
of discharge prescriptions processed entirely at ward level

21%
further discharge prescriptions partially processed on the ward

22 min
average turnaround for ward-based discharge prescriptions

At Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, pharmacy support staff are an integral part of the Medicines Optimisation service, supporting patients and clinical teams across medicine, surgery and admissions.

Three ward-based support staff rotate across these areas, undertaking POD checks, discharge medicines dispensing, stock management, medicines returns, audits and a range of medicines management activities.

Embedded within ward teams, they attend ward huddles, contribute to service improvement discussions and support the delivery of medicines services. On the Burns Unit, ward-based ATO **Amy Norton** has become a valued member of the multidisciplinary team. **Lorna, Sister on the Burns Unit**, said:

> *"Amy provides a valuable and consistent point of contact for the ward team … She is curious about how she can improve patient care from a medication point of view and uses her own initiative to do so … This has definitely improved patient flow and experience … Amy presents herself to staff to ensure they know she is there to help."*

The impact on patient flow has been significant. By undertaking operational medicines management activities, pharmacy support staff enable Medicines Optimisation Pharmacy Technicians (MOPTs) to spend more time focusing on patients, using their clinical skills and completing medicines reconciliation.

The role also provides valuable development opportunities. Reflecting on training completed through the Medicines Optimisation programme, **Wisdom Kushiator, ward-based ATO**, said:

> *"It made me realise the crucial nature of my responsibility in terms of ward stock top-up, POD checks, ordering and supply, processing urgent or missed-dose and discharge medication, labelling and dispensing medication, transferring medication between wards and others."*
>
> *"It is very rewarding to be part of a team helping patients go through difficult times."*

With plans to expand support for medicines returns and reduce medicines waste, Salisbury's approach demonstrates how pharmacy support staff can improve patient flow, enhance workforce productivity and contribute to safe, effective and patient-centred care.

Interested in developing your pharmacy support staff and wider team? PWDS offers a range of training, development and workforce transformation programmes. Find out more at **pwds.nhs.uk**

MEET THE TEAM

Spotlight on: Alex Websdale-McShane



In each newsletter we shine a spotlight on a member of the PWDS team so you can get to know us a little better. This edition features Alex Websdale-McShane, Project Manager for the team.

Alex leads the **Teach & Treat South West 5 Systems Project** and supports the **G-BNSSG Workforce Lead** across a wide portfolio of workstreams. In addition, he oversees team reporting, helps support the business and administration function and the Senior Leadership Team.

Alex brings a structured project management approach to the way we work at PWDS, with clear plans, shared action logs and robust project closure processes. This helps ensure that good ideas maintain momentum, are delivered successfully, and leave behind a clear record of learning and achievement.

As PWDS continues to support the South West pharmacy workforce, this approach enables us to learn from each project, work more efficiently, and deliver high-quality outcomes consistently and at scale.

TRAINING

Technical Services Update Days



The Technical Services Update Days have been developed in collaboration with the **Regional Quality Assurance** team to provide expert and timely training for appropriate personnel working in aseptic units.

For more details, visit the Technical Services Update page on the PWDS website.

NEXT EVENT

Effective Capacity and Contingency Management

Monday 16 November 2026
9:30am – 4:00pm
Albemarle Centre

EVENTS & TRAINING

Upcoming PWDS events



FEATURED · FREE PLACES

PWDS Educational Supervisor Training Event

Tuesday 17 November 2026 · 9:45am – 1:15pm · MS Teams

- Civility Saves Lives
- Recognising and Responding to Competency Concerns
- Academic Integrity and the Use of AI
- Useful Resources for Supervisors
- Best Practice in Observations

Scan to book, or email **pwds@uhbw.nhs.uk**

NOVEMBER 2026

16 Mon	Technical Services Update Day – Effective Capacity and Contingency Management
17 Tue	Educational Supervisors Training Event

DECEMBER 2026

1 Tue	Pre- and In-Process/Final Accuracy Checking Programme – Practice Development Day
14 Mon	Product Approval Accreditation Programme – Induction
15 Tue	Product Approval Accreditation Programme – Assessment
15 Tue	Homecare Services – Prescription Verification and Clinical Validation Training Programme – Practice Development Day

JANUARY 2027

7 Thu	Neurodiversity Workforce Champion Training – Day 2
13 Wed	Medicines Optimisation Practice Development Day
18 Mon	Product Approval Accreditation Programme – Assessment
26 Tue	Enhanced Clinical Practice – Virtual Practice Development Day

Full details and booking for all events at **pwds.nhs.uk**

ABOUT US

About PWDS and how to contact us

Pharmacy Workforce Development South (PWDS) is a leading NHS pharmacy education and training provider and regional workforce development team.

Hosted within Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, PWDS works on behalf of South West NHS hospital trusts and in partnership with NHS England Workforce, Training and Education (South) to meet the training and development needs of the pharmacy workforce across the South West, Thames Valley and Wessex regions.

PWDS programmes are also available to non-NHS organisations within the South region and to the pharmacy workforce across the United Kingdom.

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Please note

- Office hours are 08:30–17:00, Monday to Friday (except bank holidays).
- The PWDS team is based across the South West and primarily works remotely.
- The team will often be on location at venues and pharmacy sites delivering training events.
- Each member of the team is committed to responding to email enquiries as soon as possible. Under normal circumstances, please expect a reply to non-urgent queries within 5–7 working days.

Team member contact details

Find individual contacts at **pwds.nhs.uk**

Follow us