

# Expression of Interest - Buttercups Training Guidance for Employers

## Overview

The Buttercups PTTP apprenticeship adheres to an individual training plan (ITP), which describes when each component of teaching and learning will take place throughout the apprenticeship. The ITP aligns the eLearning and assessments to workplace activities completed on programme, and enables learners to gain practical experience through workplace opportunities that integrate theoretical learning with hands-on training.

NHS England's requirement of this funding is for employers to develop an independent training plan of work-based activity for PTPTs. Our recommendation is to highlight to NHS England that the workplace training plan you develop will align to the ITP for the Buttercups PTTP apprenticeship, to create a coherent and seamless training experience for learners. We encourage you to emphasise that the workplace training plan you implement will expand and develop on the competencies and practical training outlined below.

We recommend you consider the unique experiences and development opportunities your organisation can offer to each individual trainee, and how this difference to other employers will make your application stand out from competitors. NHS England have provided guidance on expected outcomes demonstrated in each section of the Expression of Interest (EoI) in their [Guidance for contractors](#). We hope that the following supplementary information regarding the Buttercups PTTP apprenticeship and our insights help you to produce a comprehensive and successful submission.

## Section 2 – Training plan overview

Describe the range of training activities you will deliver in the workplace by the PTPT over the two year period to meet each of the four domains of the GPhC IET standards. Explain how, as the employer, you will support their development through these activities, building on the knowledge and skills gained from their education provider, to help them progress toward autonomous practice as a pharmacy technician.

### Person centred care

#### **Buttercups Comments:**

Throughout the Buttercups programme, the PTPT will engage with patients, carers and customers. Targeted workplace activities will enable PTPTs to demonstrate that they can understand individual needs and adapt their practice accordingly. For instance, PTPTs will conduct research into the cultural health requirements of the local population, reflecting on these insights to adapt their practices to better serve the needs of the community.

PTPTs will be observed as they counsel service users, offering a platform for them to enhance their communication skills and confidence in interactions. Over time, PTPTs will learn how to handle difficult conversations and provide clear and empathetic guidance.

Through structured Patient Communication activities, PTPTs will build upon their verbal and non-verbal communication skills and PTPTs will undertake scenarios where patients require specific counselling. Following these exercises, they will receive constructive feedback on their performance.

Additionally, PTPTs are observed when researching and preparing a response to a wide range of patient enquiries, ensuring they can cater to specific patient needs. This includes providing information on Halal or Kosher compliant medicines, medicines derived from animal products and guidance for patients who are pregnant or breastfeeding. PTPTs will be equipped with the necessary tools and support to design and deliver a public health campaign aimed at improving health outcomes within the local community. This campaign must be inclusive and accessible, particularly to individuals with specific needs, ensuring broad community engagement.

Throughout the programme, PTPTs are encouraged to continually enhance their skills in delivering person-centred care. They are provided with ample opportunities to seek feedback from service users, for example, using multisource feedback forms, allowing them to reflect on their practice.

## Professionalism

### **Buttercups Comments:**

Initial training on the PTTP apprenticeship emphasises the importance of developing and demonstrating the professional behaviours expected of pharmacy professionals. Within this training environment, PTPTs are integrated into an open, fair and supportive learning culture where they are strongly encouraged to raise any concerns or issues where necessary. This promotes transparency and fosters a workplace where safety, ethics, and continuous improvement are prioritised.

From the outset, PTPTs are encouraged to take ownership and accountability for their pharmacy practice, understanding the importance of leading by example. As the training programme progresses, PTPTs will gradually take on more leadership roles within service delivery and management. This may include tasks such as organising or leading team meetings or taking charge of specific projects.

In the later stages of the programme, PTPTs are given the opportunity to manage the team or oversee a service for a designated period. For example, they may lead staff training sessions or manage operational issues that arise. Through these hands-on experiences, PTPTs will be able to demonstrate key leadership and professional competencies such as effective problem solving, time management, decision-making and conflict resolution, preparing them for professional practice. These experiences will help prepare them for the challenges of professional pharmacy practice, instilling confidence in their ability to handle complex situations.

Professional development is a fundamental aspect of the PTPT role and the workplace is designed to foster continuous learning and improvement. PTPTs are encouraged to engage in peer discussion and reflective activities that help them evaluate their own practice.

## Professional knowledge and skills

### **Buttercups Comments:**

The Buttercups PTTP apprenticeship programme is designed to ensure that PTPTs effectively utilise workplace policies and procedures, integrating these critical components into their daily practice.

eLearning material signposts learners to workplace standard operating procedures (SOPs) so that all teaching is relevant and tailored to the specific operational context in which the PTPTs are training. PTPTs are not only introduced to SOPs, but are also expected to consistently follow them throughout their training. By embedding SOPs into the learning process, the training encourages PTPTs to maintain safety, quality and compliance in the workplace. This focus on SOPs provides a strong foundation for professional practice.

It is key that PTPTs are provided with practical experience, but without compromising patient safety. Therefore, observations and mentoring by a workplace training supervisor (WTS) and, where required, a workplace facilitator, are

a fundamental part of the programme. PTPTs are highly encouraged to learn from experienced colleagues by shadowing their workflows and seeking their guidance. Regular observations by WTSs enable PTPTs to demonstrate their skills in a controlled environment. Observations help pinpoint areas where PTPTs excel and areas where further development is required.

Specific workplace activities have been designed so PTPTs are observed and mentored on specific skills. This hands-on learning approach is essential for building confidence and competency. PTPTs will complete various demonstration of practices (DOPs) in the workplace. The DOPs include pharmacy operations including familiarisation with pharmacy workflows, patient consultations and the effective use of dispensing systems, the disposal of medicines where PTPTs are trained and observed in the correct methods of safely disposing expired, damaged or returned medications.

Other DOPs include managing out-of-stock issues where PTPTs are guided through the processes for handling medication shortages, including communicating with patients and healthcare providers, suggesting alternatives. PTPTs are observed and mentored in the management of pharmacy stock including how to maintain records, monitor expiry dates and ensure the safe storage of medication. PTPTs are involved in responding to medication recalls; mentors guide PTPTs through the necessary steps to ensure that recalled medications are handled in compliance with regulatory standards. PTPTs are trained to handle situations where drug interactions are flagged by the dispensing system, including investigating potential risks, consulting with pharmacists and communicating with prescribers. PTPTs are assessed on these skills through assessments within their e-portfolio. Technical skills are further developed through the completion of dispensing logs and prescription validation logs. These activities allow PTPTs to actively practice and refine their accuracy, attention to detail, and ability to follow protocols in real-world scenarios, ensuring proficiency in handling prescriptions and dispensing medications.

PTPTs are actively involved in the managing and learning from near misses and dispensing errors. They are taught to record accurately, analyse root causes and implement measures to prevent recurrence. Mentors emphasise the importance of maintaining a culture of openness where reporting errors is encouraged.

PTPTs are required to map out the journey of a prescription from prescriber to patient, exploring the key steps involved in the dispensing of a prescription. This exercise allows PTPTs to gain a comprehensive understanding of the end-to-end workflow, including the prescription's verification, preparation, clinical checks, labelling, and final handover to the patient. By exploring these stages in detail, PTPTs develop a deeper insight into the interconnected roles within the pharmacy, ensuring they are well-equipped to manage the process efficiently and safely.

Real-life projects are learning opportunities throughout the duration of the programme. For example, during the Patient Case Studies project PTPTs must identify three patients that they can carry out a medication review and conduct patient counselling on. PTPTs must use the patient's medication history and records to explore, in detail, each medication and its mechanism of action and rationale for use. In this way, PTPTs are allowed to apply theoretical knowledge directly to practical situations, enhancing retention and understanding.

## Collaboration

### **Buttercups Comments:**

Workplace activities completed on the PTTP apprenticeship programme will enable PTPTs to develop the skills to work effectively as part of a team to deliver high quality care.

PTPTs are given the opportunity to rotate between different areas of the pharmacy to gain new skills and a wider understanding of the workplace and pharmacy practice. PTPTs carry out job shadowing, enabling them to observe other roles, providing exposure to new tasks and techniques.

## Section 3 – Trainee support

**Provide details of how the PTPT(s) will be supported by your organisation to successfully complete their training.**

**Buttercups Comments:**

We encourage you to highlight that all aspects of the PTPT support requirements outlined in the NHS England's Guidance for contractors (pages 6-7) will be met, identifying any areas where you believe your organisation possesses particular strengths and a track record of consistency in this domain.

We also recommend that you consider the existing support mechanisms in place for all trainees within your organisation, and your organisation's unique experience and knowledge in training and developing the pharmacy workforce. This could include previous collaboration with Buttercups to identify and assist trainees requiring additional support with their training.

**What does your organisation have in place to ensure all staff, including PTPT(s), are treated fairly, with equity, consistency, dignity and respect?**

**Buttercups Comments:**

We recommend detailing any and all relevant policies, procedures and initiatives you have in place to support EDI, safeguarding and employer welfare. This could include any initiatives or schemes unique to your organisation, and any commendations you've received for your work and development in this area.

**Provide an explanation of the planned educational and practice supervision in place, demonstrating that you have capacity to support the PTPT, especially if you have other trainees within the workplace who require supervision e.g. Foundation Trainee Pharmacist.**

**Include details of relevant education and training experience and additional information that may support learning experiences for the PTPT(s)**

**If you or the pharmacy are new to training, what steps will be taken to equip you or the pharmacy for the role as a training site**

**Buttercups Comments:**

We understand that NHS England will be seeking confirmation that a robust support mechanism for all PTPTs will be in place in each site location funding is requested.

We encourage you to highlight that all aspects of the PTPT supervision requirements outlined in the NHS England's Guidance for contractors (pages 7-8) will be met. This includes provision and reassurance being made around the capacity to offer continued support to learners in the event of attrition/extended absence of the educational supervisor (workplace training supervisor) and/or practice supervisor (workplace facilitator).

We would also recommend highlighting that PTPTs to have the opportunity to work with the wider multi-professional team, and how this will be facilitated within your organisation.