

Pharmacy Technician Simulation sessions – a feasibility study

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INTRODUCTION

The NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC) Primary Care Pharmacy Roles and Responsibilities work has identified a clear need to enhance the face-to-face clinical consultation skills of Pharmacy Technicians.

The NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Pharmacy Simulation Strategy 2024–2027 describes simulation as “a powerful, evidence-based educational tool for developing non-technical skills such as clinical decision making, communication and teamwork in a safe environment.”¹

While simulation-based training has been available to Pharmacists in NHS GGC for several years, this opportunity has not previously been accessible to Pharmacy Technicians.

Evaluation of pharmacist simulation sessions within NHS GGC has consistently shown that participants value the experience and report increased confidence in applying clinical skills in practice.

The Roles and Responsibilities work indicates that Pharmacy Technicians will be required to undertake face-to-face medication reviews with patients. For many Pharmacy Technicians across GGC, this is a new and developing aspect of their role. As such, they will require not only enhanced clinical knowledge but also strengthened consultation and communication skills.

Introducing simulation-based training for Pharmacy Technicians is therefore considered a highly beneficial approach to support skill development and build confidence in delivering face-to-face patient medication reviews in a safe and supportive learning environment.

AIM

- To evaluate PTs’ confidence of their consultation skills pre and post simulation training
- To obtain PTs’ perspectives on the value of simulation as a training tool and its anticipated impact on their clinical practice

METHOD

In 2025 six simulation sessions were delivered across NHS GGC with Senior Pharmacy Technicians. Each session involved four participants recruited into the session voluntarily via their Team Lead Pharmacy Technician. Participants chose one of four clinical scenarios available including asthma, pain, antidepressants, polypharmacy review. Each session was facilitated by four Team Lead Pharmacy Technicians.

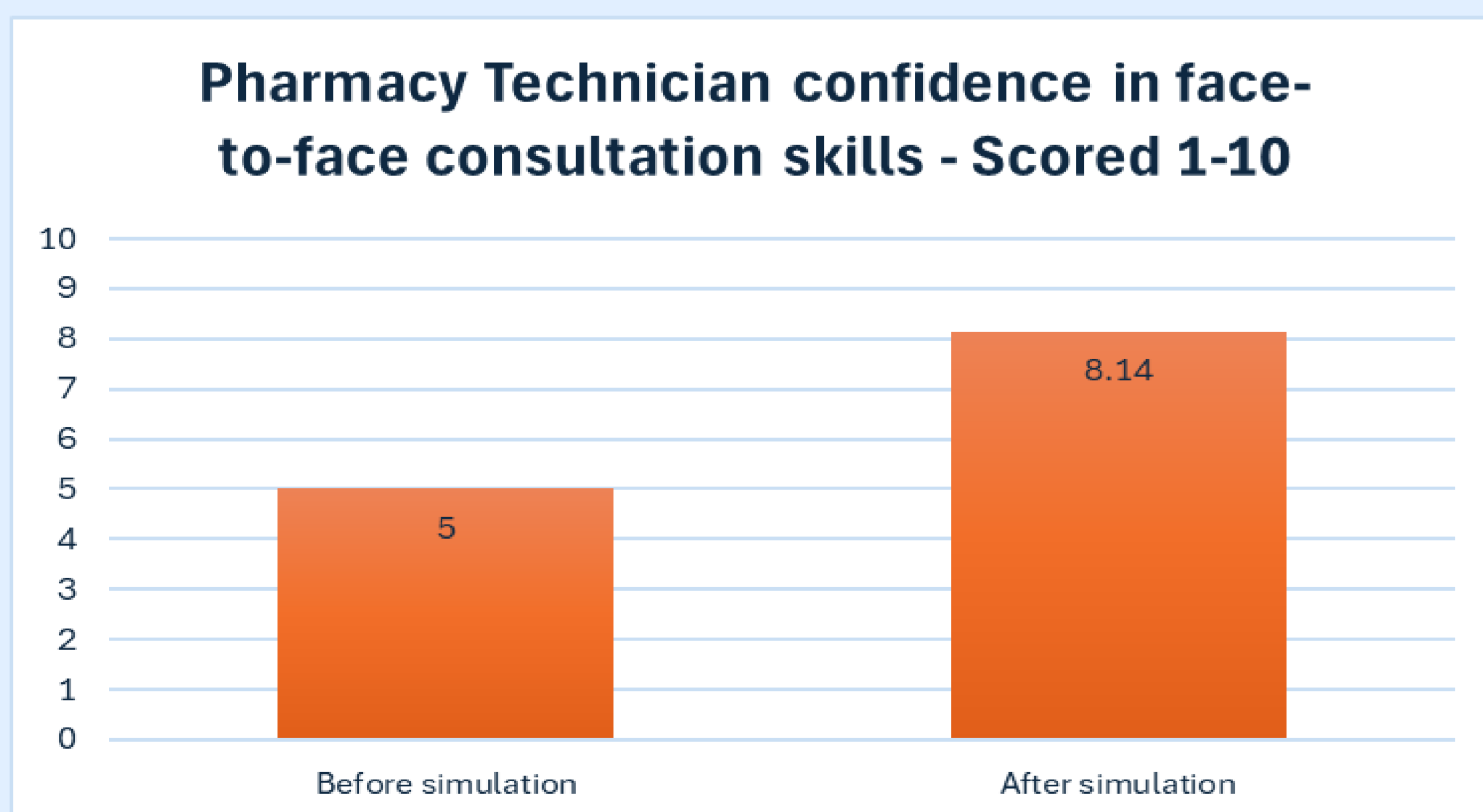
Participants conducted face to face consultations, with simulated patients’ (acted out by a facilitator) while being observed by the remaining participants and facilitators. This was followed by a debriefing, where participants reflected on their consultations, discussed what went well, and identified areas for improvement.

Following each session the participants sent an e-mail inviting the to complete an anonymous questionnaire via Microsoft forms to collect feedback on their experience of simulation and the impact that they felt it may have on their clinical practice.

RESULTS

Of 24 participants who took part a simulation training session, 21 completed questionnaires.

Prior to the simulation training, participants reported an average confidence score of 5/10 for conducting face to face consultations; this increased to 8.14/10 following simulation training.



Graph 1: Pharmacy Technician confidence in face-to-face consultation skills before and after simulation training

21 (100%) of participants who completed the questionnaire scored the overall simulation

experience as **10/10**

Of the 21 participants who completed the questionnaire, all participants responded yes when asked if they thought that undertaking the simulation training would have a positive impact on

their clinical practice **= 100%**

Feedback from Pharmacy Technicians on the simulation training

"I left the SIM session feeling so much more confident in my abilities. I felt it was an excellent way to practice consultation skills. It was incredibly beneficial."

"It was a great insight to watch others have a consultation and how to handle a variety of scenarios within our role as pharmacy technicians"

"I will most definitely be influenced by this training session. I would totally encourage my peers to take part in a simulation training session for their own benefit"

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Pharmacy Technicians value simulation as a useful training tool. They feedback that they felt that simulation training has improved their confidence in undertaking face to face consultations, and they feel that it would have a positive impact on their clinical practice going forward.

Next steps would be to:

- 1) Offer this simulation training for consultation skills to all Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Staff in NHS GGC.
- 2) Continue to develop more scenarios focusing on clinical simulation skills.

REFERENCES

1. NHS Education for Scotland. Pharmacy Simulation Strategy 2024–2027. Edinburgh: NHS Education for Scotland; 2024.