

Transcript

Elspeth Boxall

Hello and welcome to the next in our series of NES Pharmacy podcasts. We're doing something a little bit different today. Um, we're just gonna take some time, uh, to reflect on our podcast series over the last year and a half, actually, I think it is now, since we started in 2024.

Um, I'm Elspeth Boxall and I'm a Postgraduate Tutor with NES and have had the, the role of interviewing for the NES Pharmacy podcast over the last, um, uh, 18 months or so. Um, and today we're, we're joined by Peter Hamilton, who as much as I'm the voice of the podcast, I think he's really the brains behind it. So, um, I'll let Peter introduce himself and give you some background.

Peter Hamilton

I think you give me more credit than I'm due Elspeth because you've been doing a lot of this. So, hi, uh, I'm Peter Hamilton. Uh, I'm the Principal Lead for the Professional Pharmacy or Professional Development team within the NES Pharmacy team.

Um, our, what our, the, the podcast work has been really led by the, the Professional Development team and I, I think a very small group of that team have, I've really been core to that, and I've been involved in kind of help shape and plan, um, what the podcasts look like. So, yeah, so I think Elspeth gives me a bit more of a bigger role. I think she's been the brains behind it.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, I think if we're totally honest, Peter, it's actually Natalie who does all the editing, really is a key to all this. Um, absolutely. But yeah, behind the scenes. So, I think, um, we're obviously want to reflect a little bit about what we've been doing. So, Peter, can you describe to us why we decided to launch the NES Pharmacy podcasts?

Peter Hamilton

Yeah, so, so I suppose this has been, is a really interesting one because way back in 2024, we got all our Postgraduate Tutors together and we had a chat around how better we engage with the, the kind of workforce, how we provide something a bit different that can give that real world experience and, um, Elspeth, you kinda came up with the idea of, uh, doing a podcast and you were really keen and, and I think it really grew from there.

I think we recognised that, um, our workforce, the way our workforce learned is changing and pharmacy teams needed a kind of flexible, easily accessible on-the-go way to support their education and all our workforce is busy. So, a podcast gave that chance, um, to kinda learn during a commute, on a walk, between tasks or on their lunch and we also wanted a format that had that real human side to it.

It wasn't like a didactic presentation. Um, and had a space for those in practice to help share their experiences and give that honest reflection. And we were really aware of all the changes in the pharmacy education landscape, and there was a real appetite to help showcase and share those updates. So, I suppose we felt in August, 2024 that it was the right time to do something different and to start that, and it, it, it became a new way to help support that change.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, I think that, that's absolutely true, Peter. It's like, um, you know, we have to, to change with, with the workforce, and I think you've alluded to it already, but how do you feel that podcasts fit into the wider pharmacy education and training strategy? I think you mentioned, you know, it's complementing other things. So how, how do we fit in? How do we complement other resources, do you think?

Peter Hamilton

So, I, I think you're absolutely right. The word is compliment. I think podcasts do complement our more formal learning resources. They don't replace structured education, um, like, like our frameworks, like our e-learning resources. But what they do is they help share that kind of practice-based examples and help showcase the wide variety of roles, uh, and the people in the workplace that help support that different education. So maybe they're a bit like a kind of entry point.

They spark a conversation, they spark an interest in a course or a framework or an e-learning module, um, and help people then lead on to something that is going to provide that more structured education. They maybe help as well reinforce that message, um, in a really accessible way, um, and allow us to kind of respond quickly whenever there is maybe changes in practice. So, I think they, they really, really complement it. It's not replacing it, it's kind of sitting alongside, um, everything we do.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, I would completely a, a-agree, Peter, it's a, it's a great platform just to get people started and, um, maybe dip in and out of things. So, I think, you know, as this is a really good chance just to sort of highlight what topics we have already covered.

Um, we started with initial and education, um, reforms and that looked at the background around the key changes in early years pharmacy education and explained how all staff can be involved in supporting learners in practice and that, that initial podcast then linked nicely on to the role of the DPP, um, which was very topical at the time and we heard from a number of experienced DPPs in community, hospital and GP practice and gained a lot of insight and practical tips, which would be useful for anybody, um, in this role.

And maybe something that people want to look back on now with a number of new DPPs in the workforce. In series three, we then moved on to looking at advanced practice and credentialing and again, I think we, you know, we managed to reach, um, a number of practitioners in different roles and hear their experience and their credentialing journey.

Um, and I have to admit that's one that I'm gonna go back to soon because, uh, my New Year's resolution is to get back to that portfolio and that might be, uh, applicable to a number of people listening. Um, so yeah, definitely a lot of top tips on that one. Um, and I, I think we then, again, as you mentioned, we, we tried to respond to what we felt was needed at the time.

So our next, um, area that we, we worked on was the Foundation Training new reforms for series four, and again, we've managed to speak to a number of practitioners and gain practical tips, um, from experienced supervisors as well as having a series of FAQs from the NES programme leads, which might also be useful for reference for people now that we have, um, the foundation trainees in post and most recently we did something a little bit different.

Um, we finished a 2025 with a series of podcast, podcasts, sorry, with a Simulation team and, uh, trainees who had used simulation in their training and that was a really useful listen just to understand the full potential of simulation as a, as a learning tool. So again, something a bit, a bit different. So, having sort of gone over those topics just to refresh people's memories and maybe highlight what's available, can you explain, Peter, why those were the topics that we chose?

Peter Hamilton

Um, it's really interesting. It's trying to get, I suppose, what we, we did find when we were trying to choose topics was getting the timing right, trying to fit with when changes were happening, when it, it, it was, uh, an opportune moment for that.

So, we did look closely at what the most current, um, probably most needed for pharmacy practice at that time. So, for example, the DPP one was a really core need at that time to really develop our DPP role and get our workforce ready for those new FTY trainees coming out the following year. So that focus kind of try, we tried to align it to those national priorities of where things were happening and the, the kind of evolving needs of the workforce.

I think we also wanted to act as a showcase, so pointing listeners towards the changes and how to prepare for these changes coming like our FTY and also our most recent simulation one that was a real, you know, it is a new area that we've had over the last maybe three years of education. So, it's been really interesting hearing how trainees who have been through those kinda simulation roles and how it's benefitted their practice.

So, I think, yeah, how, how they were chosen was trying to align to those timelines and make them really timely, relevant and linked to those, those overall workforce priorities.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, absolutely. Uh, timing is everything. Um, but how, how do you feel, Peter, that, you know, you, we've covered a quite a big range of topics and a, a big range of speakers have been involved. How do you feel that collaborating with speakers from across the profession shaped these episodes?

Peter Hamilton

I think it's been excellent to have such a diverse group involved in the podcast. I think having those voices ensure the podcast really reflected like the pharmacy landscape in Scotland. So, I think that was really useful. Getting that spread of, um, more experienced pharmacists to really early careers was, was really good.

Also, getting the variety of sectors of practice is really, really important. Um, and, and I think each speaker really added a, a real practical insight to what the workforce is like, brought that topic to life and provided that real lived experience that, that you can't really script. Um, I think that in saying that, it also brings that authenticity to what we're doing and trying to get that honesty around it. So yeah, I think, I think having that real spread of speakers really speaks volumes and really tries to, to help people understand what it's like in, in real pr uh, in, in real life practice.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, absolutely. Um, and I suppose, um, we also have to think about the, the benefits this has brought for the speakers as well themselves. I mean we've, we've um, you know, created a platform where, um, people can share or spotlight the area of practice. Um, they can, you know, have a new platform to share messaging to maybe networks that they couldn't reach in, in other ways. Um, and actually, you know, even for maybe for the more junior, um, pharmacists that have been involved, they've actually been able to use this for their credentialing as well, um, for their development and met some of their portfolio objectives. But, you know, I think the big thing is, is just, um, the benefit for the, the services that can spotlight areas that, that need highlighted at that, at that time, which also comes down to timing. Um, yeah.

Peter Hamilton

So, so yeah, so Elspeth, I've got, I, I totally agree and I think it really gives that opportunity to people from practice to be involved. So, it, it's really been a great platform, I suppose Elspeth I've got a couple of questions for you, which should be really... so what, what, what do you think went well when you were recording? What, what was, what was, what was good?

Elsbeth Boxall

So yeah, the tables have turned, so now I've got to answer the questions. [Absolutely]. Yeah. Um, so what went well? I think, um, for me, um, I, I felt like the, you know, the speakers that we had, I, I think as you've already alluded to, they came from such a broad background of, of pharmacy practice, um, and I think, you know, we were reaching people who probably maybe wouldn't have had a voice before, um, and given them the opportunity to showcase their work and their ideas.

Um, I think having such a variety of people involved may-maybe meant we kind of, you know, we could reach, um, kind of a, a different ideas that that wouldn't be, uh, in the broader forum normally and, um, I think everybody was really enthusiastic. I think, um, having a variety of people maybe makes it a bit more, you know, there'd be something for

everybody. You probably, maybe won't want to listen to every podcast 'cause it might not all be relevant to you, but hopefully there was, there's something that everybody can dip into and we've tried to keep it as relevant as possible and that people can go back and use them as a reference.

We've tried, you know, as you alluded to earlier, too, as well, we've linked them to other resources. Um, so it's, we've made them a good starting point for people. Um, so I think, I think those are, those are the main things that have gone well. I think we have hopefully achieved our aim of providing something new, providing something that, um, is an education resource that people can access on the move.

Whether it's when you're, as you said, commuting or doing the hoovering or sitting by the pool, um, you know, there's, it's just, uh, just something a bit different. So, I think we have, that's been a positive for me. I think we have achieved what we went out to do.

Peter Hamilton

Great. Thank you, Elspeth. So, I suppose on the flip of that then, what challenges have you found over the last year and a half and what do you see the challenges probably in the future?

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, that's a really good question. Um, I think probably the main thing is that we have really struggled to get feedback on, on the podcasts and I think that's possibly just maybe the platforms that we're, we're putting them out on.

It's, it's maybe not as obvious how to give feedback and it's difficult to know just how they actually are landing and whether we are, um, really producing the topics or talking about the topics that, that people want us to talk about. It's, you know, I think if we could get more feedback that would hugely help us to build on the, on what we've done with the podcasts and make sure that we are engaging the whole workforce and making sure there's something for everybody.

Um, so I think that leads me onto the, just challenges in the future is, is keeping it relevant, keeping the podcast relevant, keeping the top topic relevant, um, and engaging with everyone to make sure that we are providing something that, that everybody can listen to. Um, and and key to that really is finding the best way to promote the podcasts, make sure they're accessible, um, and get feedback to develop our topics.

Peter Hamilton

Great. I think you're totally right, and I think that is absolutely one of the, the key challenges is that, kind of around communication and trying to get that right, um, with people. So that's all my questions. I'll hand over back to you.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, so I think, um, you know, the main thing now is to, is to look forward. Um, so, you know, we're new year, uh, a new set of podcasts are on their way. So, um, the next topic

that we're hoping to tackle is the Scottish Clinical Leadership Fellowship, which some people might know is quite close to my heart.

So, um, I'm really looking forward to, um, producing some podcasts, just talking about that experience and the, the benefits of that, uh, fellowship and those we're going to aim to release in March and April of this year, uh, just to time with the, the next set of applications for that.

Um, and then very topically we're, we're going to look to at the Pharmacy Workforce Forum, Forum and, um, at the different work streams, um, and outcomes for that and we're going to aim to have those podcasts out over the summer. So, um, yeah, definitely look out for those when you're, uh, looking for something to listen to on your holidays.

Um, but I think, you know, those, those are our, our planned, um, topics, but we really would appreciate people giving us some feedback on what they would hope we would use as topics going forward. So I'd really encourage people to use the feedback forms, um, that are in the, the bios on the, on the podcast, really easy just to click a link when you're on Podbean, um, and give us some feedback and, uh, pan back to you, Peter, just to, if you've got anything to add to that.

Peter Hamilton

So, no, I don't have anything to add. I think it just reinforced that kinda feedback message is just, we want to, to hear what you have to say about them, um, how we can keep improving what topics you want next, um, who you want to hear. Um, so, so that would be really, really helpful for us, um, to help take forward. The link will be in the show notes, the podcast notes, so please click that link and, and feed back and just thank you so much for those who have listened and those who are gonna listen in the future.

Elsbeth Boxall

Thanks very much for your time, Peter, and for all your support with the podcast so far. Thank you.

Peter Hamilton

Thank you.