

Transcript

Elspeth Boxall

Hello and welcome to our next NES Pharmacy podcast. In this episode, we will explore the reforms to Foundation Training Year and the impact on the FTY programmes in Community pharmacy to provide insights from various community pharmacy training providers, we've recorded two perspectives: One from a smaller independent pharmacy and another from a large multiple. Since we unfortunately couldn't record them together, we'll play them separately, one after the other. Now let's move on to the recordings. Thanks for listening.

Elspeth Boxall

Okay. Hello and welcome to the next in our series of NES Pharmacy podcasts, discussing the FTY programme in Community pharmacy. Um, today we're joined by Douglas Lynn, who is a Community pharmacist in Broughton Pharmacy in Edinburgh, which is an Independent community pharmacy. So, welcome Douglas. Um, first of all, can you just tell us a bit more about what the FTY training programme's gonna look like in your pharmacy this year?

Douglas Lynn

Yeah, so we are, um, we are partnering with NHS Lothian as part of their modular programme. Um, so the FTY will be placed with us in community pharmacy for the first six months of their year, and then they'll move on to Primary Care for the second six months. Um, I'm acting as one of the two Designated Supervisors, uh, and I'll be acting as the DPP for the year as well. So it's interesting to put those two different roles together.

Um, we will.... so in terms of how it'll look, uh, I will, if, if this year's, anything to go by, I'll be leading the 13 week appraisal, the 26 week appraisal, and then I'll be present at the 39 week one for, for that kinda sign off part as well. Um, in terms of the, the more nitty gritty part of it, we'll do like a weekly check-ins, but being in community pharmacy, we're quite lucky, they should be working with me on a day-to-day basis, so they won't be too formal if we can possibly avoid it. I'm quite really laid back in my approach anyway.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, that sounds really good. It, it's, it's good to look at it in a really practical man-, manner and as you said in Community pharmacy, that is the real advantage of how you work, isn't it? Because you're, you're working alongside the students so you, you know, you can check in regularly, which is, is excellent and interesting to hear about the modular approach as well. Um, so obviously, you know, you're, you're um, gonna be really involved in the supervision of your, your trainee, um, what will the rest of the supervision look like? I mean, how do you build in support, you know, from other members of your team, for example?

Douglas Lynn

I think, I think certainly the first few weeks tend to be a case of both the FTY pharmacists and me kind of getting to know where they're at in, in terms of where they start. So, um, some trainees will have quite a lot of Community pharmacy experience already and, and will have quite a strong knowledge of the local services and things. Others might not know Scottish Pharmacy or Community Pharmacy at all and that first few weeks can be quite open. In terms of the rest of the team, I try really hard to make sure that as many of the team as possible are contributing to the FTY's learning.

Um, I think they get more from it and I think our team benefit more from it. Um, and we do that as quickly as we can do. But it might take a, like the first few weeks of just settling in, um, and then making sure if there were any concerns, not that we'd, we'd be expecting any, but if there were any concerns, making sure that we go to NES quite quickly with those. It makes such a difference, especially this year, I guess, with the, um, the IP being a component, it's gonna be really important to raise any concerns early and make sure everybody's on the same page.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, that's really, really helpful to highlight that actually and I think that, um, probably leads on to the next sort of question that I was gonna have is like how, how do you make sure that um, you know, there's regular, um, appraisals and meetings to ensure that the, the assessment is robust. Um, I think you've already sort of touched on that, but maybe we can expand a bit more.

Douglas Lynn

Yeah, absolutely. Um, so the, the weekly meetings, as I say, my preferences for that may be quite casual. I'd rather give-in-the moment feedback every single day rather than, um, than save it all up for a weekly meeting. But I think particularly where there were concerns, those weekly meetings become a fallback for being able to pick up any issues that, that were there.

Um, and it gives the FTY a more formal opportunity to kinda bring things to me. 'cause sometimes that can be quite intimidating as well, especially in a, a new role and in where they are, um, on such a steep learning curve at times initially. So, um, we'd have the, the weekly appraisals and then, um, we'd have the, the 13 week, 26 week and 39 week, um, more formal sit-down meetings, would go ahead as they always would have this year anyway, um, with being part of the modular programme. I'll be working with, um, the other Designated Supervisor who'll be based in Primary Care. Um, we'll probably have a wee check in a week or two before that appraisal happens and then that, that makes sure we are on the same page for when we're, we're, um, speaking with the FTY. Um, and yeah, we've got the PLP side of things to fit in on top of that as well.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, no, that, that's great. It sounds like really well organised and um, I think, you know, obviously there's, it's a lot for the trainees, but it's also, you know, this is quite a lot of new, um, information to process for the DS and DPPs as well. So what, what kind of

support is available, um, you know, that you are aware of within your organisation and with, out with to support the DS and DPPs in, in this new training programme?

Um, so again, within the organisation's quite difficult. We are a, a standalone independent, so, and I'm, I'm the DS and the DPP and I'm the superintendent pharmacist as well. So I guess, um, I'm wearing all of those hats. Um, the NES support's really strong. Um, the, the upcoming training that we've, we've got that's, uh, an essential part of the training for this year, um, is going to provide a bit of support, um, in terms of how the DPP role and the DS role are gonna overlap for a lot of people. Um, I think it's quite,... it'll be interesting to see how, how it all works, but it, it's quite a change that lots of people are gonna be in my role where they're the Designated Supervisor and the DPP and lots of people are gonna be one or other. Um, but yeah, it's quite an exciting time to be involved in it. So hopefully, um, everybody's, everybody's able to kinda make the best of it, but the support from NES is, is definitely there. Um, certainly anytime I've spoken to NES throughout the last year or so, it's, it's been really supportive. Um, and they've, they've worked really hard to resolve things as best they can.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, I think that, especially as you say in, in your situation where you're in independent, um, pharmacy, uh, that is, it's so important to be aware of what NES can offer and just make sure that all the resources that are available are utilised to the, the best that you can. Um, so that's, that's really helpful to hear. Thank you. Um, again, you touched on this already, but um, we probably need to dive into it a bit more 'cause it's probably the, the question that's on everyone's lips. How do you see the PLP, um, working within your trainee, pharmacist training plan?

Douglas Lynn

I think, I think it's going to be very individual. Um, again, we, we kinda spoke earlier about how some of the trainees will have a lot of Community pharmacy experience. They may have worked with a prescriber in the community over the last few years as an undergrad, um, and others wouldn't have experienced it at all. Um, the, the FTY we had this year was from, um, was from Ireland. It's not really part of the practice there by, or certainly not as, as advanced as it is in Scotland. Um, but as ingrained in practice as it's in Scotland now. Um, so that aspect was a much steeper learning curve, particularly when you're not doing, you know, for someone who wasn't doing the IP at the time, for someone who this year will be, um, I think that could be quite steep, but I guess it's gonna depend on, on the individual trainees.

Um, I think there's gonna be quite a lot of pressure on the trainees as well. I think they, they probably do feel like they're going to be the, um, the test case for some of this. Um, so just acknowledging that, using the resources that are available and, and trying to make a plan for the individual trainee. Um, certainly my hope so... because my trainee's gonna be based in community in a patient facing role for the first six months with me, I'm hopeful that, that we're going to get quite a lot of that patient-facing prescribing based stuff done quite early in the year.

Um, that's maybe a bit aspirational, but it, it would be, it'll take the pressure off the FTY for later in the year when obviously their emphasis will change to passing their, the registration exam. Um, I think as Designated Supervisors and as DPPs, we think that the prescribing is a, a huge part of it, but I don't think we can lose sight of the idea that these guys that are looking to, to qualify as pharmacists, that's what they're looking to do primarily. The IP annotation's a great extra for them, but they're gonna make it through that exam and I think if we can get the PLP, from our perspective anyway, if we can get the PLP stuff, um, quite organised, particularly from sort of, um, weeks 13 through to 39, then that'll make a big difference for the trainee in terms of them being able to focus on their exam towards the end of the year.

Elspeth Boxall

Yeah, I think that you're absolutely right. I mean, that's a really important point. Um, and it's just, I think you, you know, you highlighted that it's really very individual, but it's just striking a balance, isn't it, between all the things that they need to achieve in, in that year, um, it's good to have a plan for how to, to make that a bit easier for them. So that's really helpful. Thank you. Um, in terms of assessment, um, as you said that, you know, they've got to, to pass this, this year, how will you envision using the curriculum assessment strategy to support the assessment of your trainee pharmacist?

Douglas Lynn

So I, I guess we'll use, um, different types of evidence. We've got other, we've got lots of ways to use the portfolio. Um, so things like using SLEs as best we can. Um, I think we, we want quite a, we're gonna hope for quite a structured approach, but again, particularly, so I guess my, um, my FTY will have to demonstrate to more than one Designated Supervisor that their evidence is robust enough to be, to be signed off and to put forward for that registration exam. So, um, it's certainly, it's something that we've used historically.

Um, and I'd, I'd expect to continue to use is that, look at a Designated Supervisor that you've perhaps not met before or only met once at this stage, you know, in the early months of, of the year, is gonna need to be convinced by the quality of your evidence. They've not seen you in practice, they've not, um, they've not worked with you on a day-to-day basis yet, and they're gonna need to see a, a, um, a structure and a, a quality of evidence that's, that's strong enough to be able to sign you off or allow you to progress at least on that basis.

Um, certainly one of the, the things I took from this year with the modular programme was that, um, the trainee only has 13 weeks between the, the 26 week appraisal and the 39 week appraisal to demonstrate to this the, the DS in the second half of the year that they're at that level. Um, and this year's FTY is gonna have that as well as trying to make sure that their, their IP PLP time is ticking along as well. So, um, they're gonna have a lot on, on their plate. Um, I think the more structured they can be and the more high-quality evidence that they can, that they can demonstrate, um, will, will help them throughout their year and will, will benefit them as they go on.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, no, that sounds like really good advice, just having a plan and I think, you know, you, you're obviously very aware of the time skills, which I think is a huge advantage. You know, you're, you're prepared for, um, time ticking away quite fast and, um, you're aware of all the things you've got to, to fit in. So I think that's, that'll, that'll make for a successful, um, placement for your trainee. Certainly. So, so that's absolutely been amazing. Douglas, I mean, I dunno if you have any like, final thoughts or like, you know, if you could only give um, a DS or a DPP one bit of advice, you know, what it would be to... going forward from your own experience in Community pharmacy?

Douglas Lynn

Um, I, I guess probably to... One is to, to use the NES resources if they're needed. I think if you've got any concerns, raise them early. 'cause it's so much easier to deal with a small problem in week one than it is to deal with a big problem in week 13. Um, the other would be enjoy it, you know, these guys are, um, they're fresh outta Uni, they're keen, they've got a great opportunity to be part of this and to qualify as prescribers. So they're hopefully gonna be a really enthusiastic Cohort and, um, it's gonna be beneficial to us and to our teams to have them with us.

Elsbeth Boxall

That's absolutely brilliant. Douglas, thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it and I wish you the best for your, for your trainee and yourself for the next year. Thank you.

Douglas Lynn

Thanks for having me.

Elsbeth Boxall

I hope you enjoyed the first recording. Now we will move on to the perspective of the larger multiple and how the changes will work in Community pharmacy. I hope you enjoy it.

Elsbeth Boxall

We're lucky to be joined today with Felice Jacobs, who is a Healthcare Academy trainer with Boots, which is part of the healthcare capability system in Boots. So thank you so much Felice, for taking the time to join us.

Felice Jacobs

Thank you. My Pleasure.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, So first of all, I think it'd be helpful maybe if you could explain a little bit about the Community Foundation Training Programme within your organisation, which is Boots, what it looks like in practice.

Felice Jacobs

So, um, obviously there's big changes and this is why we're perhaps doing this, but we... we're still finalising our offer for this year because, um, it, it's gonna complement the NES

offer. We absolutely need to make sure that we're not taking away from the, the Protected Learning Time. Um, and also the PLP time.

Um, so there'll be some elements that we'll have that'll help them get the most of the time that they're in the Boots system. Um, but we will kind of line up with what's happening with NES. Um, so that's, that's the plan.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah. So that, that sounds like, yeah, absolutely. It's really important just to, to line up with, with NES as you said. Um, in terms of how, how the supervision of the trainee pharmacists looks like in your programme, can you describe a bit how the supervision looks like?

Felice Jacobs

Um, so they'll have, I think, um, they'll have their Designated Supervisor and then if the Designated Supervisor is not their DPP, they'll have a DPP as well designated, um, prescribing practitioner. So, um, we'll be able to see, they'll be able to see lots of consultations in the workplace, um, because they'll be involved in the Pharmacy First Plus service as well as, um, attending any of the pharmacy led clinics.

But the, some of our IPs will run as well. Um, they'll get very much a hands-on experience. They'll be shadowing and they'll be observing the pharmacist day-to-day tasks. Um, and then they'll be able to carry out some of these tasks under direct supervision when it's appropriate. Um, so it's kind of a work towards, um, being able to do that by themselves once they're qualified, but obviously there's gonna be that sup, supervision, um, will be quite close. Um, yeah, so that's more away from the kind of normal dispensary tasks, um, that they, they have done historically and now it's gonna be purely pharmacist tasks from day one.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, that's really helpful to get that visual Felice 'cause absolutely. You know, and you've described, you know, there's gonna be lots of different elements of that just to, to build on their skills and, and that's great that they're getting that from day one. That's, that's excellent. Um, obviously there's gonna be quite a lot of different people involved, um, in the, in the year. So how, how will appraisals and meetings be arranged just to coordinate the supervisors and make sure the trainees are getting assessed?

Felice Jacobs

Yeah, well, I mean that that, that is something we're thinking about a lot. Um, so obviously if the DS isn't their, their DPP, they will spend time with the DPP in their store. Um, they'll will work alongside other pharmacists who will be giving feedback. So we kinda using the SLEs, um, Supervised Learning Events, um, and we've got quite a few collaborators from the Post Registration pharmacist programme that's been running for the past couple years. So they're quite experienced in giving the feedback. So that's gonna support the DS in any kind of appraisals that they, they would carry out.

Um, the majority of our DPPs, um, certainly this year will be working as prescribers for Boots. So they may be in the same store or they may be in a store nearby. Um, so they're gonna get a chance to see different settings, um, there depending on, um, the locations and things. Yeah, We will probably,... so as, as part of my role, there's four of us in Scotland, so there's four trainers, um, that are part of the kind of educational team that we have. So we'll be able to, um, support the kind of the, the supervisor as well as the DPPs and helping them through this transition into this new year that's ahead, 'cause it's very different to how it's been previously. So I think we're all kind of learning at the same time as well, but I think it's very supportive that they've got plenty people to call upon.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah. So you, that's quite interesting 'cause um, obviously I think a lot of people are wondering what support is gonna be available for the, the, the supervisors and the, the DPPs. But you say within your organisation, they'll be quite clear who they can go to for help and yeah and I guess the, the, the NES resources are also available for them as well.

Felice Jacobs

Absolutely. Yeah. Absolutely and we find that's invaluable that we've linked very closely with NES just to help us to understand the process and understand all the things that, the declarations and all the things that they have to do prior to that. So we're starting to work on that now with them. Yeah, that sounds good. So they'll be well, well supported and, and there is, uh, a lot of resources obviously within your organisation, which hopefully other organisations will have in place as well.

Elsbeth Boxall

And I wonder as well, how, how do you see the period of learning in practice working with your trainee pharmacists? Have you got that coordinated with the training plan?

Felice Jacobs

Mm, yes and no. Um, that's still a kind of discussion that we're gonna have with the, the, the DPPs. We've identified who's gonna be the, the DPPs and you know, the period of learning in practice, it's something, although it's 90 hours, we can't just say to somebody certainly in Community, go to that store and be with a prescriber 'cause nothing might present that day.

So it really does depend on the amount of prescribing interventions and, um, things that they see that they then would start to document it. So it may be that we have to call upon other, other areas where they can go and shadow an IP, um, maybe specific clinics and things, but there's enough people around that we can, we can do that. So yeah, period of learning practices is a huge learning curve, I think, for everybody, um, to see how that's gonna fit in. Um, so yes, we, we are, we're hopeful that it'll be fine. Yeah. But we've, we've got plans in place that, you know, we can move people about if we have to.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, I think that's really important what you're saying is that, you know, you, you have to kind of use all your available networks really, don't you, to, to, to give people the exposure

that they need. So that absolutely sounds like what everyone's gonna have to do. Um, [I know] before this.

Felice Jacobs

Absolutely. Yeah. Definitely working together.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yep. Absolutely. Um, and in terms of how you would use the curriculum assessment strategy, um, how would you use that to support your assessments?

Felice Jacobs

So again, it comes back to, it's very much when you look at what the Post Registration pharmacists have done with their Supervised Learning Events and the portfolio of evidence they've to keep. So we're gonna use experience that we've, we've gained from that. Um, and also with the kind of collaborators that we've had to, to kind of, um, meet that, um, area that we, we need. Um, so that's kind of like an ongoing assessment, which I think is really good because it's not just one person's say in it, um, because there's lots of collaborators coming in, they'll be, um, able to give that kind of, um, feedback that will support the development of the trainee because it's gonna come from other sources as well.

So I think, um, the curriculum is, the assessment strategy is really good to point out exactly the areas they have to focus on, um, when they're with us in the Community setting. Yeah, that sounds really, really helpful. And yeah, I mean, what, is there anything else that you think that we should add to, or anything else you think we should think about? I think, I think it is important 'cause we're all still learning and, and definitely we are, we're gonna kind of thinking about bringing our supervisors together and kind of learning communities to make sure that we support, um, share and we learn from each other.

Um, and each of our supervisor is going to be supported by one of the, um, Educational Leads. So myself and my three other colleagues will have a number of supervisors. In the past we've normally had training days for the, the trainees, but we're kind of moving more towards, right, well how can we get the, the supervisor set up to, to feel confident doing the assessments and the feedback and the appraisals, 'cause it is, it, it, looking at it just, it, there's a lot to be done.

Um, we started just some evening calls with our, our supervisors to get them geared up to fill out the declaration. Um, and where the supervisors also the DPP, that, that's also, um, there's more that they need to do on that. So we're, we're giving them support as much as we can do. But as I say, and I think everybody's in the same boat, it's, it's a huge learning curve for us all. But as long as we're talking and communicating across the sectors, it'll be fine.

Elsbeth Boxall

Yeah, I think that sounds like a really good tip that you're, you know, you're prepping now for it and, and making sure people have got enough time to get prepared and get everything in place because it is new. So I think that's a, that's a hugely helpful tip actually. It's something that we, we just need to start thinking about it now, so that's fantastic. So, alright. Thank you very much, Felice. That was really, really helpful. Lots of really useful practical ideas that potentially others can put into practice for their community FTY programmes. So that's really, really helpful.

Felice Jacobs

No problem. Thank you. It's Amazing. Thank you.

Elsbeth Boxall

We hope you enjoyed both of these insights into how community pharmacies are preparing for the 2025/26 FTY year. Please remember that there is lots of information on the Foundation Training Year communication page on TURAS Learn, and you can find the link to this page below in the podcast episode notes.

That just leaves me to thank both Douglas and Felice again for their time. I hope you all enjoyed the episode and join us for the next Questions and Answers podcast episode. Thank you.