Declaration of Competence for community pharmacy services
Information for pharmacy professionals

Background
In the past, community pharmacy professionals (pharmacists and pharmacy technicians) were required to complete an accreditation process in order to provide services commissioned at a local level by primary care trusts (PCTs).

The Declaration of Competence system
As responsibility for commissioning community pharmacy services at a local level passed to new commissioners in 2013 it became apparent that a new solution, other than accreditation, would be advantageous. The Community Pharmacy Competence Group (CPCG), now known as the Pharmacy Competence Group (PCG), formed to identify a new system to support commissioners and pharmacy professionals in the consistent delivery of high-quality services. In conjunction with the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education, the PCG has developed a series of Declaration of Competence (DoC) frameworks for locally commissioned services.

Each DoC provides pharmacy professionals with a framework against which to self-assess their competence. The approach complements the General Pharmaceutical Council's policy that pharmacy professionals are responsible and accountable for maintaining and improving the quality of their practice by keeping their knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to their role and the services they offer.

Additionally, pharmacy professionals should recognise the limits of their professional competence and seek to fill any learning and competence shortfall before declaring their competence. If you have alreadyprovided a service for a number of years you should still work through the DoC system to ensure you remain competent; failure to do so could be viewed as a disciplinary matter by the General Pharmaceutical Council. However, previous learning and experience can still contribute to the required learning and experience included within the framework.

Additional support for the DoC system
The DoC system is now supported for use across England by Health Education England (HEE) and endorsed by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

The DoC system is supported by a number of national community pharmacy organisations, including the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC), the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK), the National Pharmacy Association (NPA), the Association of Independent Multiple Pharmacies (AIMp) and the Company Chemists' Association (CCA).

What does this mean for pharmacy professionals?
Commissioners may decide to use the DoC system to assure themselves that pharmacy professionals have the necessary competencies to provide a commissioned service.

Employers may also take this approach to satisfy themselves of the competencies of employees in providing a specific service.

Pharmacy professionals may also choose to work through the DoC system on their own initiative in the following circumstances:

- in advance of a service being commissioned so they are service ready
- to provide assurance of competence in daily practice
- as a way of identifying continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities.

How does the DoC system work?

Pharmacy professionals select the service they require and complete a self-assessment framework for that service. The competencies within the framework cover the clinical, ethical, cultural and legal aspects of providing each service.

By working through the self-assessment framework and reflecting on each individual competency, pharmacy professionals are able to identify gaps in their knowledge and skills. Details of the recommended CPPE or other provider learning and assessment which meet the individual competency requirements for the service are signposted in the framework and these can be undertaken to fill any gaps in an individual's knowledge and skills.

Having fully completed the relevant DoC self-assessment framework, pharmacy professionals can download their personally generated self-declaration statement via the CPPE website. This statement is pre-populated with details of relevant CPPE learning programmes they have accessed and assessments they have successfully completed. There is also a section to add additional training from other providers. They can then print and sign their self-declaration statement and make it available to employers/commissioners, or alternatively provide access to DoC records by using the <u>CPPE viewer facility.</u> Most pharmacy professionals will want to retain a copy for their own records too.

Pharmacy professionals should work through the relevant DoC frameworks for any services they are providing, at least once every two years, or sooner if stipulated in the DoC, their service specification or in the contract with the commissioner, to show they are maintaining their competence and as evidence of CPD.

Why is working towards the practice standards for pharmacy consultations a core competence within the DoC system?

Developing the consultation skills of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians has been identified by HEE as a key priority, as they recognise that pharmacy professionals need to work closely with patients in order to optimise medicines use and deliver public health messages.

The importance of these skills has also been highlighted during the development of the DoC system and consultation skills have therefore been included as a core competence in all of the DoC frameworks for locally commissioned services.

HEE has created the *Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice* website, which supports pharmacy professionals through a learning pathway as they develop and improve their consultation skills.

The key knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of all pharmacy professionals are set out in the *Consultation skills for pharmacy practice: practice standards for England* and they can be accessed from the website, together with a six-step learning and development pathway.

Which services are covered?

Individual DoCs for a range of services are available on the <u>CPPE website</u>. This link is regularly updated with new services.

Need more information?

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions relating to this system, or you would like information about how CPPE's education and training supports the system, please email CPPE (<u>info@cppe.ac.uk</u>).