

Support Staff Specialist Group
Minutes of the meeting, 07 July 2008
50 Eastbourne Terrace, Paddington, London

1. Present

Helen Fawcett, Dalgeet Puaar (chair), Kath Stride, Barbara Wensworth, Tracey Burrows (sec), Tess Fenn, Liz Fidler, Lesley Morgan, Ellen Bidwell, Deborah Williams

2. Apologies

Karen Nash, Vanessa Eggerdon, Sally Kemp, Gill Risby, Julie Jordan, Jennifer Harris, Alison Simpson, Sarah Wright, Diane Blunden, Beth Barratt, Jane Pyatt, Val Findlay, Karen Nash

3. Minutes of meeting held 7 April 2008

The minutes of the last meeting were checked for accuracy.

LM requested minutes were numbered by page and agenda item.

6. SSG objectives

(Funding) LF asked for clarification of JIF funding (Joint Investment Framework):

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/London/Providers/jif/#jifforh>

(Checking in Technical Services) LF has seen a document which states that this group had approved it. (See agenda item 5)

8. Update from Strategy Group

Staffing establishment and vacancy survey – clarification that this was sent to trusts in London and East of England.

The minutes were then agreed as accurate.

4. Matters arising

BW agreed to co-ordinate names and details of individuals wishing to do freelance as IVs around the UK. No response received as yet.

5. Discussion of important issues

Institute for Learning (IFL) (HF & LF)

HF asked the group about their understanding of the FE Regulations 2007 which state that all teachers/trainers need to maintain CPD and register with the IFL. This also includes training that is linked with LSC funded qualifications.

If you have been performing this role before Sept 07 then you only need to register with IFL. After this date you need to complete the required qualification,

http://www.ifl.ac.uk/services/p_wvv_page?id=140

City & Guilds (C&G) have been holding events to clarify these requirements. HF had been informed that assessors in the workplace who are solely assessing do not fall under these requirements and can register with IFL as an associate; however, if any training or support is given then they do need to undertake the qualification.

This may have implications for anyone in the workplace that is providing training. HF has raised this as an issue with the RPSGB, Skills for Health and David Webb.

HF is awaiting clarification from the LSC. The guidance seems to be interpreted in different ways.

Action: HF to inform group of any discussions. BW will talk to Edexcel.

Pre and In Process Checking (LF)

LF raised the question as to whether this group had looked at the framework as the document states that the group has endorsed it. HF has raised this and has been informed that it will be removed. LM advised that the NOS relating to this area of practice be mapped against the framework. LF felt that TSET (or whoever the lead is) should be made aware of the need for a mapping exercise. KS wanted to know how the pre and in process checking would be assessed and regulated. Discussions regarding this are underway and a consultation is due to be sent out. EB will speak to SK for clarification. TF stated that it would also need mapping to the KSF. LF also highlighted that pre and in process checking was originally aimed at Band 4/5 staff, however, the framework states that it is for everybody and that at present South East Medicines Management Education & Development (SEMMED) have agreed not to use it.

Action: TB to re-send documents to group. All to read and comment for next meeting

CoDEG Technician Level Framework (EB)

<http://www.codeg.org/>

EB asked the group for feedback on how this framework is running. A pilot has been running since April 08. SEMMED have mapped their scheme into the framework. EB stated that in the South West Senior Pharmacy Managers have been asking about career progression of pharmacy technicians. EB would like to pilot it in other regions. Jane Hough is the link person regarding this and would welcome feedback.

LM asked where this framework links in to the Pharmacy Practice Framework consultation that the RPSGB are carrying out. LM advised to wait for the outcome of this consultation in order not to build expectations.

BTEC Pharmacy Services Distance Learning Pack (KS)

KS informed the group that this has been introduced and endorsed in Wales due to difficulties for pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (PTPT) in rural areas to attend college. The pack is modular and has to be marked by a site that has Edexcel approval to deliver the BTEC. KS is happy to provide more information to anyone who wants it. The pack can be bought on a franchise basis, based on the college delivering the tutoring, marketing and support. Provision of teaching for extemporaneous dispensing and chemistry practicals is required. Colleg Gwent is the link for this pack and is responsible for all administrative aspects. Cath Michalik is the link person. It is also available for community PTPTs. It can be delivered in individual units if required. Flyers are being printed at present.

Action: KS to send flyers out to group

6. SSG objectives

Registration

LM had sent an update via email regarding registration. LM clarified that there will be two years after the statutory register has opened to register with an old qualification. LM informed the group that when the Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) register opened, the Department of Health had sent out letters advising employers that they should only be employing registered ODPs, so this may happen when the pharmacy technician register opens. Some employers are already adding to job descriptions 'to be able to register' as a requirement.

National Projects

DP had sent an email updating the group. Feedback on Phase 2 of the NOS project is due out end July 08.

Final report on the QCF is due out July 08.

http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_8150.aspx

Funding

TB had sent out a spreadsheet for group members to update regarding funding arrangements for pharmacy assistants and PTPTs. The PTPT information was quite old and it will be useful to see what changes have occurred.

DP asked the group about funding being based on completion of the whole NVQ Level 2 Pharmacy Services Qualification and what other regions were doing regarding employers who only wished their pharmacy assistants to complete units relating to their area of work.

KS – employers pay for the unit route themselves in Wales

BW – both options are allowed

BW also informed the group that on the Edexcel EV report it states that a centre must allow individual unit certification; TF confirmed that this is the case for C&G also. This means that if a centre does not provide this option then they could be sanctioned.

EB had an action point from their EV report that unless their pharmacy assistants who had been registered for more than three years were not completed then sanctions would be imposed.

TB highlighted that this had also been an issue for their centre and that they were chasing trusts on a regular basis for completion. London Pharmacy Education & Training (LPE&T) are encouraging trusts to streamline their assessments and that the NVQ Level 2 should be more assessor led than the NVQ Level 3.

Accreditation in final accuracy checking (DB/KS)

DB is setting up a database on common ACT queries/errors. LF asked the group whether they have to regularly review ACT schemes from community to evaluate their comparability to the national framework.

Action: LF to obtain responses from other group members regarding this via email

Support and develop higher level qualifications (GR)

GR not in attendance to provide update.

Support work based facilitation (VE)

VE not in attendance to provide update.

Checking in technical services (SK)

SK not in attendance to provide update.

Training numbers (VE)

VE not in attendance to provide update.

7. Correspondence

No correspondence received.

8. Update from Strategy Group

The Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacist Specialist Group did want a password protected area of the NHS PEDC website. If this group want one then they can.

PTPTs have been added to the Shortage Occupation List along with Band 5 Pharmacy Technicians. BW asked if this was a national problem.

LF – This was an issue for South East, however, they have managed to double their numbers
Wales – trainee numbers are increasing

HF – excess of pharmacy technicians in North East

The terminology around representing English SHA areas has been amended on the terms of reference – this needs to be reviewed on the terms of reference for this group.

The Annual Report is now on the website. The chairs of the specialist groups need to finalise their reports by mid September and send to Clive Moss-Barclay.

The two day meeting will be held in October. A large part of this meeting will be taken up with review of the papers that have been issued, Darzi, pharmacy white paper. External experts will attend the meeting to give members a higher level understanding, which will assist in objective setting for the year ahead. On the basis of this the group felt it prudent to wait for outcomes on objectives for the main group so that our objectives can align to these.

The work carried out by Susan Sanders and Helen Middleton on competencies for education and training staff will go onto the NHS PEDC website.

9. Pharmacy Practice Framework Consultation

This has been put together and has gone to the RPSGB Education Committee for endorsement. It will then be sent out. In order to obtain a high response rate it will be sent out to the following:

Available on the RPSGB website

Sent to all registered pharmacy technicians

Focus groups to be set up – to volunteer contact Janet Flint at janet.flint@rpsgb.org

It is imperative that there is enough of a groundswell of support to influence regulations.

10. Edexcel update

Nothing to report. Edexcel BTEC progressing well.

11. City & Guilds update

Extension of pharmacy NVO qualifications until Sept 09.

A1 registrations can now be made on the website.

12. APTUK update

2008 AAH Hospital Technician of the Year Award flyers are ready to be sent out electronically. They will also be available on the APTUK website.

There is an additional award, APTUK Pharmacy Technician of the Year Professional Award – this will be nomination based for employees who have demonstrated development and effort in their job role. There is a £500 prize.

Pharma Awards – this will be publicised on the APTUK website.

The Awards are sponsored by different companies. They are nomination based in two categories: Technician for Community and Technician for Hospital. The closing date is Mid August. An application form can be obtained from the Pharma website. APTUK conference – well attended. Will be in Cardiff next year in June 09.

13. Skills for Health

Nothing to report.

14. RPSGB Support staff advisory group

The group have sent some NOS back to Skills for Health for re-wording. There has been an agreement for an IT unit to be available for pharmacy assistants. Public health and smoking cessation will be part of the new NOS. Not enough work has been done yet regarding student registration. A Code of Conduct for MPharm students is being developed which will assist in this until the General Pharmaceutical Council resumes.

DONM: 6/7 Oct

Any Other Business

Eportfolios – EB asked if anyone was using them. BW said that the City College in Manchester use one. TF said that there are some difficulties in downloading and uploading documents due to firewalls in Trusts.

Receipt of these minutes prior to the date of the next meeting implies that they are unconfirmed minutes.