

Support Staff Specialist Group
Minutes of the meeting, 06 October 2008
50 Eastbourne Terrace, Paddington, London

1. Present

Vanessa Eggerdon(VE) [Chair}, Deborah Williams (DW), Sarah Wright (SW), Kath Stride (KS), Trevor Beswick (TB), Beth Barratt (BB), Barbara Wensworth (BW), Tess Fenn (TF), Tracey Burrows (TrB)

2. Apologies

Helen Fawcett, Gill Risby, Dalgeet Puaar, Liz Fidler, Diane Blunden, Jennifer Harris, Sally Kemp, Karen Nash, Alison Simpson, Lesley Morgan, Julie Jordan

The group welcomed Deborah Williams (Thames Valley) who works alongside Jane Pyatt.

3. Minutes of meeting held 07 July 2008

Page 4 no. 9 'Groundswell of support for regulations' should be amended to regulation.
The minutes were then agreed as accurate.

4. Matters arising

Nothing to report

5. Discussion of important issues

Aseptic Processing Programme and Process Technology (GR)

A paper has been sent to Transcom outlining NHS Technical Specialists Education and Training (TSET). Membership of the group is being reviewed. TSET have a stand at the NHS QA Symposium on the 6/7 October in Manchester.

The *Professional Development Framework in Technical Services* is now in its second stage of development, where it will be translated to align with the General Level Framework (GLF) and Advanced Consultant Level Framework (ACLF). There is also an operational level below this, classified as a Competency Level Framework (CLF).

The *Pre and In- process Checking Framework* is now complete and has been circulated to the group.

The *Final Accuracy Checking Framework* is complete and will be released soon. It has been developed and tested to support individuals providing the final product check (not final release).

The *Pharmaceutical Process Technology for Support Staff Programme* is now City & Guilds accredited. A review of existing models has been completed and trainees can register for the course by going to www.medslearning.leeds.ac.uk and selecting courses, study days and events.

The *Aseptic Processing Programme* is standalone and interactive. It can be accessed on-line or with a CD-ROM. It provides the underpinning knowledge for the *Pharmaceutical Process Technology for Support Staff Programme* as well as supporting in-house training and the NVO Levels 2 & 3 Aseptic modules.

The APDM/ASfM/Medical Gases courses continue to run and are well subscribed.

The PTQA (PGCert/Dip/MSc course run by the University of Leeds continues to run successfully and is in its fourteenth year. It is suitable for pharmacists, QA personnel and experienced pharmacy technicians.

In and Pre-Process Checking Framework

At the last meeting, a question had been raised as to whether the NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee Support Staff Group had endorsed the framework. TB clarified that the Main Committee would endorse the framework and asked the group if there were any more concerns.

How are the new modules going to be regulated and assessed? If in-house assessment, how will it be standardised?

This is an implementation issue and should be adapted locally as you see fit.

What is the transferability between community and NHS or from trust to trust?

This is a similar issue to ACT transferability. The same principles should be applied.

Who is it for? Qualified pharmacy technicians only or other support staff? Are there entry criteria?

The framework can be utilised by other pharmacy support staff so the framework is generic in its definition of 'candidate'. This is an implementation issue, the framework can be adapted for specific staff groups if need be.

TB explained that the course was going to be mapped onto the National Qualification Framework (NQF) to see how it fits against other qualifications, e.g. Foundation Degree. The group felt this would be useful and would lend it some weight.

Alison Beaney (NHS Technical Specialist) is carrying out some work to map the framework against the National Occupational Standards (NOS). This work will be taken to the next TSET meeting.

Mapping against the KSF and Agenda for Change banding will take place locally.

The group concurred that now was the time to implement the framework and embed it as the deadline for comments had passed.

Institute for Learning (BB)

BB stated that there is still some confusion and conflicting information on who should register with the IfL.

Discussion around this had taken place in the Main Committee and the consensus at this point is that only those who draw down LSC funding must register and guidance should be sought from your LSC locally.

Learning Beyond Registration funding (BB)

BB had received feedback from a senior pharmacy manager that pharmacy was not included in this funding. BB asked the group if they had any knowledge of this funding. VE suggested that Joint Investment Framework (JIF) funding was available for all pay bands and up to Foundation Degree. Trusts need to co-ordinate this locally. More investigations need to take place to obtain more information.

Action: all to look up LBR funding

SW informed the group that funding in her region for Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians (PTPTs) had been withdrawn, and asked whether this was a similar problem elsewhere. VE suggested it might be confusion around nomenclature as the traditional student pharmacy technician title had changed to ensure access to this funding is still obtained.

SW said that it would be interesting to see a national picture of how funding is accessed.

6. SSG objectives

Registration

The mandatory register is expected to open at the end of the year.

National Projects

The second phase of the NOS project is under way. A final version is about to be sent to the Strategy Group. There has been some discussion around the five new NOS. Work is being done on the development of the new qualifications, with mapping of the NOS to Level 2 and Level 3. Mapping against the old and new qualifications is also taking place to identify any gaps. There will be a meeting on 16/10/08 to review the assessment strategy.

TB asked if there was any feedback nationally on the use of eportfolios.

Action: VE to email and obtain national feedback on use of eportfolios

Funding

The spreadsheet that was set up to document national funding arrangements still has gaps. TrB will re-send this to the group. The data will be used on an information-sharing basis for this group and the Main Committee.

Action: TrB to re-send spreadsheet and present all data at next meeting

Accreditation in final accuracy checking (DB/KS)

DB not present to report. KS said that data was being collated on ACT queries.

Support and develop higher level qualifications (GR)

GR not present (see page 1 & 2 no. 5)

Support work based facilitation (VE)

Evaluation of these frameworks needs to take place. Information on the take up and results would be useful. TF suggested that the groups developing the frameworks should take the lead.

Checking in technical services (SK)

SK not present (see page 2 no. 5)

Training numbers (VE)

KS & HF to carry out more work on this.

[Action: VE to re-circulate the document about qualified pharmacy technicians and future employment status](#)

7. Correspondence

No correspondence received

8. Update from Strategy Group

The two-day meeting will focus on:

- Agreeing new terms of reference
- Developing a mission statement
- Identifying new objectives for the coming year

Ray Fitzpatrick attended and suggested that communication could be improved between the groups through the sharing of agendas and minutes and having relevant people attending a group to discuss specific agenda items.

Joint working should be encouraged to ensure that the NHS Education & Development Committee has a powerful voice on key agendas, e.g. Transcom and CPD. Promotion of hospital pharmacy should be encouraged, e.g. profile raised at the British Pharmaceutical Conference.

The annual report for 07/08 will be finalised on 7/10/08.

Suggestions were made to enhance our profile through NHS Careers. They will be contacted to see if there would be potential money or a remit to raise the hospital pharmacy profile.

TB informed the group of the new multi-professional Medical Education England (MEE). This has been created in response to the Darzi Review, which highlighted a need to focus on the workforce agenda. It includes dentistry, doctors and pharmacy. A separate pharmacy board (community and hospital) chaired by the Chief Pharmacist of England will also be introduced to advise on workforce issues. This will be set up in early 2009.

9. Pharmacy Practice Framework Consultation

The Pharmacist Consultation is now complete.

The Support Staff Consultation is going to the Support Staff Advisory Group (SSAG) on 18/11/08 and will then be sent out for consultation.

Action: Those wishing to comment should inform Janet Flint at the RPSGB, janet.flint@rpsgb.org

10. Edexcel update

Nothing to report.

TB asked about an extension to the current pharmacy NOS. The following awarding body link states the registration and certification end date:

11. City & Guilds update

There is a new EV for the North of England called Andrew Mould. NVO Assessment Centres will receive notification of any changes.

The link from City & Guilds stating the latest registration and certification end dates can be found at

<http://www.cityandguilds.com/cps/rde/xchg/SID-9CAB6AB6-2CAB81CF/cgonline/hs.xsl/35683.html>

12. APTUK update

Work is being undertaken with Transcom and affiliated memberships. A survey is due to come out asking questions about what would be expected from a pharmacy technician professional body and what would you expect to pay to register. The survey is on the APTUK website.

To reduce costs and their carbon footprint, the APTUK journal will only be available on-line. Members can access the journal through a secure part of the website.

Preparations are underway for next year's conference. On-line registration is now available as well as the ability to pay by BACS.

Results from the Pharma Awards are to be announced this weekend. Uptake from the hospital pharmacy sector has been disappointing. TF encouraged group members to raise the profile of this in the future – flyers are available on the APTUK website.

13. Skills for Health

Covered on page 3 no. 6

14. RPSGB Support Staff Advisory Group (SSAG)

There is a meeting on 18/11/08. Discussion will be around the following:

- NOS project
- New assessment strategy
- Practice Framework for Support Staff
- Technical Certificate

15. Any other business

Deborah Williams requested to be added to the email list to obtain agendas and minutes

Action: TB to update local database for DW's email address.

KS – Wales have Local Health Bodies (LHBs) who are similar to PCTs. They have staff working in administrative roles under the supervision of a pharmacist; however, they are not carrying out pharmacy technician roles. There have been requests for them to undertake the BTEC, of which most of the content is not relevant to their job. BW suggested that the best route to take would be to make it clear to the potential candidate that if they complete the course they will not be able to practise as a pharmacy technician and that there is a chance they would not be able to register.

BW – attended an education strategy meeting at the RPSGB on 29/9/08. Run by outside consultants, the focus was on obtaining opinion what the expectations were of the new General Medical Council (professional body). Wendy Harris is co-ordinating other meetings.

VE – advised the group that the Terms of Reference might change after the 2-day focus event and new objectives will be identified.

Please email nominations for election of chair and vice chair to the secretary by end October 2008. Election for chair and vice chair will take place at January's meeting. If electing someone then please inform them you are going to do so.

Julie Jordan – has received a request from a senior pharmacy manager that the 1000 item ACT checking log should have no errors at all on it. The group felt that this should be discussed and implemented locally.

Date of next meeting: **Monday 19 January 2009 1.30pm**

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