

- To: • Foundation pharmacist training programme providers
- cc. • Community Pharmacy England
• regional education and training networks
• primary care teams
• ICB and trust chief executives
• General Pharmaceutical Council
• Community Pharmacy Workforce Development Group
• Royal Pharmaceutical Society
• British Pharmaceutical Students Association

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
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Dear colleagues

Changes to the implementation timeline for mandatory multi-sector rotations in the Foundation Pharmacist Training Programme

Multi-sector rotations involve at least 13 weeks of training in a different area of pharmacy practice to the one the trainee is based in. Following the publication of the General Pharmaceutical Council's [Standards for Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists](#) (2021), NHS England mandated that multi-sector rotations would be required for all trainees starting in the 2026/27 training year.

That requirement aligned with the Initial Education and Training (IET) reform programme's goal of developing adaptable pharmacists capable of operating in multi-professional teams in a variety of healthcare settings and of collaborating across complex healthcare systems. The objective is to develop professionals who can meet diverse and changing patient needs, deliver person-centred care (both face-to-face and through remote consultation), and ensure the safe, effective, compassionate and empathetic use of medicines.

We acknowledge the work pharmacy employers have invested in developing their training programmes for 2025/26, including securing access to prescribing learning environments and designated prescribing practitioners (DPPs). This has already facilitated the growth of multi-sector relationships for both employers and supervisors. In 2025/26, multi-sector

rotational programmes developed by employers will be available for approximately 50% of trainees entering training.

A phased approach to multi-sector rotations

We have received positive feedback from employers and workforce leads across England about the progress made in establishing these multi-sector programmes, as well as insights into the barriers and challenges they have encountered. We are also mindful of the current pressures faced by pharmacy teams and the broader healthcare sector and greatly appreciate your continued commitment to delivering high-quality training. To support pharmacy teams in continuing to deliver high quality training, **mandatory rotations will be delayed, and a phased approach will be implemented.**

Next steps

Employers intending to host a trainee pharmacist in 2026/27 must register their programme(s) in the National Recruitment Scheme (Oriol) by early March 2025. Currently, all programmes are expected to include a multi-sector rotation. Although NHS England remains fully committed to implementing multi-sector rotations for all trainees and strongly supports continued progress toward this goal, some areas may require a phased approach, with full implementation anticipated by the 2027/28 cohort.

The goal remains that by March 2025, the employer national recruitment deadline, most programmes will be developed to include multi-sector rotations. However, single sector programmes submitted to the National Recruitment Scheme will still be eligible for the 2026/27 recruitment cycle. From March 2026 onwards, single-sector programmes will **not** be accepted for training programmes starting in 2027.

Organisations interested in developing multi-sector rotations are encouraged [to review the available resources](#) and contact their pharmacy workforce lead or their NHS England Workforce, Training and Education pharmacy team (see list below).

Regional NHS England Workforce, Training and Education pharmacy team contacts:

- [East of England](#)
- [London](#)
- [Midlands](#)
- [North East and Yorkshire](#)
- [North West](#)
- [South East](#)
- [South West](#)

NHS England Workforce, Training and Education will continue to work with workforce teams and training providers to support the implementation of the new initial education and training standards and multisector rotations for all.

Yours sincerely,



David Webb
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England



Samantha Illingworth
Director of Education Quality and Reform