

BRIDGING THE GAP

A Guide for Newly Qualified
Pharmacists in Northern
Ireland

Published: July 2026

Bridging the Gap

A Guide for Newly Qualified Pharmacists in NI

This document is designed to support newly qualified pharmacists in NI with their transition from trainee to early career pharmacist.

‘Early career pharmacist’ refers to pharmacists in the first 5 years of post-registration practice. These pharmacists are invited to join the Pharmacy Forum Early Careers Pharmacists Working Group. Here they can troubleshoot problems they encounter, brainstorm with peers, and escalate emerging professional limitations through Pharmacy Forum, the leadership body. The network is chaired by a registered NI pharmacist, and overseen by the Education, Research and Training Committee.

This document is not designed to be entirely exhaustive of all the information you need to practise safely as a pharmacist. It is designed to provide practical advice specific to Northern Ireland in the early stages of your career, and to make you aware of further resources that may be available to you.

The document will be reviewed annually.

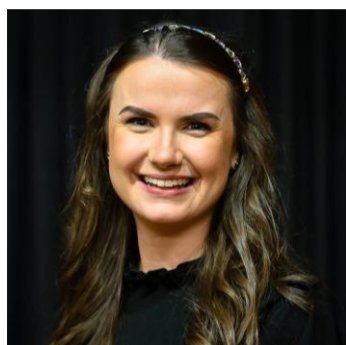
If you have any feedback on the document, or would like to contribute to further iterations, please send to Pharmacy.Forum@psni.org.uk

Contents:

A word from the chair of ECP group	Page 2
Meet the ECPs.....	Page 3
Section 1: Registration to retention; CPD.....	Page 4
Section 2: The working world	Page 7
Section 3: Day to day practice	Page 9
Section 4: Further support	Page 13
Glossary of terms	Page 15
Appendices	Page 19

FOREWARD

From Chair of the ECP Working Group



It is both a privilege and a pleasure on behalf of the Early Career Pharmacist working group to introduce this guidance document for newly qualified pharmacists as they begin their professional journey.

Starting a career as a pharmacist is both an exciting and challenging time. The transition from education into professional practice brings new responsibilities, expectations, and opportunities for growth.

This guide has been created with a clear purpose: to help navigate the early stages upon registration with confidence. Whether exploring different sectors of practice, or considering long-term career direction, the early years are critical in shaping professional identity and future aspirations.

We recognise that no two career journeys are the same. The pharmacy profession offers a diverse range of pathways, and it can sometimes feel overwhelming to decide which direction to take. This document aims to provide practical guidance, signpost valuable opportunities, and share insights that will help make informed decisions along the way.

As a working group, we are committed to representing your voice and supporting your development. We understand the challenges you may face, from building confidence and competence, to balancing workload and wellbeing. We hope this resource serves as a trusted companion throughout these development years.

I encourage you to engage with the content, reflect on your goals, and take advantage of the opportunities available to you. Your early career is a time to learn, grow, and shape the pharmacist you aspire to become.

On behalf of the working group, I wish you every success in your professional journey.

Rachel O'Kane

Chair | Early Career Pharmacist Working Group

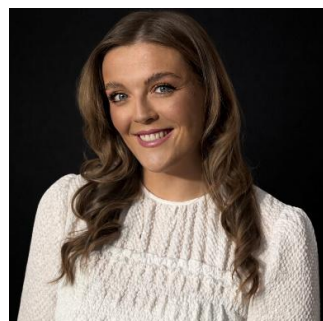
Meet the ECP Working Group



Sarah Arnold



Cora Clarke



Olivia Donnelly



Emily Hinds



Anna Kenedy



Adam McCambridge



Conor McDonnell



Katie Mooney



Shauna Murray



Sarah O'Hanlon



Megan O'Kane



Ife Uzor

SECTION ONE: Registration to Annual Retention

Retention

Now that you are registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (the Society) you will receive annual retention forms in May of each year. These forms will be issued to you electronically unless you state a preference to receive a hard copy so it is important to make sure that your contact email address that the Society holds for you is always up to date.

To be retained on the register you must submit the retention form and the payment by the submission date specified.

In May 2026, the option to pay the annual retention fee in quarterly instalments was introduced. At time of writing, the **levy for annual retention is £477**, so it is important to plan for that expense.

Tax relief can be claimed on the annual retention fee and details on how to reclaim that can be found [here](#).

For further information about registration and FAQs, visit the Society's website or click [here](#).

Registering as a pharmacist in other countries

As a registered pharmacist with the Society you are permitted to work as a pharmacist in Northern Ireland only. To work as a pharmacist in other jurisdictions, including Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland, you will need to register with the relevant pharmacy regulatory bodies.

Great Britain

The pharmacy regulator in Great Britain is the [General Pharmaceutical Council \(GPhC\)](#). To find out more about registering in Great Britain (England, Scotland & Wales), click [here](#).

Republic of Ireland

The pharmacy regulator in Ireland is the [Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland \(PSI\)](#). To find out more about registering in the Republic of Ireland, click [here](#).

For any other areas, please refer to the relevant pharmacy regulator.

Note that revalidation/CPD and insurance requirements are different for each region you are registered in and these must be studied closely and adhered to. Please refer to the relevant pharmacy regulator for further information

To register as a pharmacist in other jurisdictions, you will most often require a '**Certificate of Current Professional Status**' (CCPS) to be issued from the Society to the regulator in the jurisdiction that you wish to join, along with the appropriate fee and other requirements of that country. You can apply for this certificate via the Registration Online portal. This process takes approximately 21 days from submission of a **correctly** completed application, and the certificate is valid for 3 months from the date of issue, so make sure to allow for this time when planning towards the dates that you may wish to start work.

CPD

In tandem with the annual retention, CPD submissions are required to be submitted via the Registration Online portal to the Society by 31 May each year, unless otherwise specified by the regulator.

Full details on what is required under the current CPD framework can be found [here](#).

In summary, the requirement for a full CPD submission is:

- Between 4 (minimum) and 10 (maximum) cycles
- 30 hours CPD activity (minimum)
- CPD must have been undertaken since the first day of the current CPD year (01 June) and be submitted before midnight on the last day (31 May)
- 50% minimum of cycles must be scheduled learning
- 75% of cycles (minimum) must relate to current scope of practice (the pharmacy context you are currently practicing)
- 75% of cycles (minimum) must be applied and evaluated in current practice, not future
 - *25% of cycles (maximum) can be applied and evaluated in future practice or a simulated environment.*
 - *All must be relevant to the safe and effective practice of pharmacy*

If you experience extenuating circumstances that have adversely impacted your ability or capacity to complete a full portfolio of CPD during the retention year, you may be eligible for a full or partial exemption. An application for a full or partial exemption should be made at the time of the event but must be made by 30 April each year. Details of the eligibility criteria and application process can be found [here](#).

The Pharmacy Forum NI (PFNI) and the Society run CPD webinars annually with the objective of helping pharmacists to comply with the CPD framework. These webinars are most useful to early career pharmacists who may be undertaking CPD for the first time, and we encourage you to attend one.

You can find more resources on CPD submissions [here](#), including exemplar learning cycles, FAQs and 'Dos and Don'ts'.

Pharmacy Forum NI CPD Facilitation Service

PFNI runs a CPD facilitation service. This is a service available to all pharmacists whereby a trained CPD facilitator supports a pharmacist with the completion of one CPD cycle, with a view to aiding their successful completion of their full CPD portfolio submission. Facilitation can be initiated by contacting PFNI via Pharmacy.Forum@psni.org.uk

If you are concerned about CPD submission, we encourage you to avail of this service.

Indemnity Arrangements

As part of the annual retention process and as is mandated by legislation, you are required to indicate that you have sufficient professional indemnity cover for your areas of work. This will differ according to the nature of the work you undertake. Factors that you may wish to consider when deciding upon your indemnity insurance provision include:

- Does the insurance product cover a prescribing qualification?
- Does the insurance cover all the clinical services you may deliver? For example, vaccinations, or must this be taken out as an additional add on?
- Does the insurance product cover every role you take on? For example, if you choose to rely on employers' insurance, be aware that this will not extend to any work you undertake with another employer.

Insurance providers that have activity in Northern Ireland include National Pharmacy Association and The Pharmacists' Defence Association.

You may also wish to take out salary protection cover, should you be rendered unexpectedly unable to work. This is a personal decision, and not a professional obligation.

SECTION TWO: Working World

Job Seeking

Hospital:

Job vacancies in all five Health Trusts in NI will be advertised [here](#). Regional interviews for all Trusts typically take place in springtime. You will be able to submit your preferred trust/location for employment. Temporary and permanent jobs will be offered under a ranking system, so you may be appointed, join a reserve list, or be unsuccessful in your application. Additional top-up lists for individual Trusts may take place at any time of year so ensure you check the [hscni.jobs](#) website regularly.

If you missed the regional interviews or did not get an offer in your preferred location, there may also be opportunities to undertake locum work in hospitals via an agency. This is also a good option if you do not want to commit to contracted job just yet.

Locum:

Locum agencies such as [Locate A Locum](#), [Clarity Locums](#), [Locum Online \(UCA-NI\)](#) all work directly with pharmacies to match locum pharmacists to demand. Arrangements with each agency differs slightly so do visit each agency's respective website for more information.

Printing business cards, visiting pharmacies and speaking with the staff or owner directly is often an effective means of building your locum network. Business cards can be printed inexpensively. Often pharmacies and their staff really appreciate a 'face to the name' approach and it can make all the difference.

Community:

Permanent community pharmacy roles can be found through employer websites, online job boards (e.g. Indeed, NIJobs, LinkedIn, etc.), recruitment agencies, and professional networks. Building relationships during your foundation training and early career, while keeping your CV up to date, can help you access opportunities as they arise.

General Practice Pharmacy:

Whilst some General Practices employ Pharmacists directly, currently in NI the majority of the General Practice Pharmacist workforce is employed through GP Federations. These roles require at least **three** years post registration experience. Job vacancies in GP Federations are advertised on [www.nijobfinder.co.uk](#)

What you can expect from your employer

Your employer, regardless of setting, should provide a supportive environment for a changing job role, allowing you to use your professional judgement and work within your own professional boundaries.

Your employer is not obliged to provide protected learning time. Neither the Society nor PFNI can regulate or legislate for this. Some trade bodies and trade unions campaign in favour of protected learning time as an industry standard.

However, the Society's Guide to Recording, Submission and Assessment, March 2024 does state:

Employers should provide support to pharmacists by developing procedures which support CPD, providing development opportunities (particularly those that can be experienced in-house), assisting with resources and expertise, and by giving positive encouragement and recognition.

Other Considerations:

Register as a sole trader: If you intend to undertake locum work, you must register as self-employed (sole trader) with HMRC and complete an annual self-assessment tax return to work out your income tax and national insurance contributions. You can access a guide on how to do this [here](#).

Income Protection Cover: Those working as full-time locums/self-employed may wish to consider this type of policy, should they end up sick/unable to work for a significant period of time.

Union Memberships: A trade union will support you on issues related to your terms, conditions or rates of pay at work. They can also support you should any problems with workplace policies or processes arise. Some trade unions also offer indemnity insurance to pharmacists. Below are listed some of the Trade Unions with activity in Northern Ireland; of these The Pharmacists' Defence Association (PDA) and The Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (which is part of Unite the Union) are the only two pharmacy specific trade unions.

- **PDA**
- **GUILD/UNITE**
- **UNISON**
- **NIPSA**

SECTION THREE: Day to Day Working

Prescribing

Remember that you must be suitably qualified, trained, experienced and indemnified before embarking upon any prescribing or other clinical activity.

The GPhC has produced a helpful guidance document: [Guidance for Pharmacist Prescribers](#). It reminds pharmacist prescribers to *'make prescribing decisions based on the needs of the person and not because of commercial interests or pressure from people, colleagues, employers or pharmaceutical companies.'*

When prescribing in any sector, an additional risk-assessment should be carried out if prescribing and dispensing of a medication is completed by the same person.

The Royal College of Pharmacy has [guidance](#) on how this is best completed.

Online prescribing

Job vacancies for online prescribing can be a tempting proposition as they often involve working from home arrangements and competitive salaries. As before, always ensure that you are suitably qualified, trained, experienced and indemnified to perform any professional or clinical activity. Online prescribing is an area of heightened risk to patients and individual professionals. You should be sure that you are fully aware of the risks and have taken steps to mitigate them before agreeing to any arrangements. These should be documented.

Hospital Pharmacy

If you work in the hospital sector, to be eligible to prescribe in a Healthcare Trust, you must join the Trust's Non-Medical Prescriber (NMP) register. The process for joining the register may vary between Trusts and you will be supported by your peers and line manager to complete your registration. You will be required to evidence the competencies outlined by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (now Royal College of Pharmacy) for safe and effective prescribing. You cannot prescribe until you have confirmation you are on your Trust's NMP register.

General Practice Pharmacy

In General Practice when you take up post you will be supported by your peers and line manager to define and develop your prescribing role within the practice team according to your competence. Before undertaking prescribing, you will be allocated a prescribing cipher number for each practice premises from which you prescribe.

Further information on Non-Medical Prescribing competencies can be found on the Royal College of Pharmacy (formerly Royal Pharmaceutical Society) website ([A Competency Framework for all Prescribers | RPS](#)); this document has been endorsed for use in Northern Ireland by PFNI.

The General Pharmaceutical Council, GPhC, has also produced a [Guidance Document for Pharmacist Prescribers](#).

Your boundaries and scope of clinical practice should be well defined by you. They should be communicated clearly to your employer, line manager and the pharmacy team you are working with at the outset. This is an evolving area of practice; therefore, you should have processes and habits in place that make sure you are aware of changes to clinical practice and prescribing governance in a timely manner.

Locums

Many early career pharmacists choose to undertake work as a locum pharmacist in the weeks and months after first registration, to allow them to sample different work environments and industries, helping them to figure out what they like best. Here, we remind you of some obligations when undertaking this nature of work.

It can be helpful for your own records to create a checklist of questions to ask when first undertaking locum work in a pharmacy, and of routine morning and evening duties.

A suggested, but not exhaustive, list can be found in **Appendix C**.

Responsible Pharmacist

It is a legal requirement to display a notice of the Responsible Pharmacist's name & registration number. You can generate such a notice [here](#).

You must complete the Responsible Pharmacist log. This may be hard copy, or electronic. Many pharmacies use digital records to manage the Responsible Pharmacist log, Controlled Drugs Records and other day-to-day records.

PharmSmart is a software provider frequently used to do this. You can use the same individual account in every pharmacy which uses the PharmSmart platform. If you do not already have an account, you can create one [here](#).

Some pharmacies use their own/other software systems (e.g. PharmCD). These are generally branch-based and can be managed within each pharmacy or chain.

You must also read and establish your professional comfort with before signing store-based standard operating procedures. If you are working for a chain of pharmacies, the SOPs in each stand-alone store should be read and signed; signing in one store does not cover you across them all. If you identify any area of concern, you should document this and bring to the attention of the superintendent pharmacist prior to undertaking the activity you are concerned with.

Pharmacy First

Know that not all Pharmacy First services are available in every pharmacy. You should check with the pharmacy before first starting to locum there and familiarise yourself with the services you may be asked to deliver. When delivering Pharmacy First services, you must understand the service specifications, and in particular the specific eligibility criteria, indications, formulary and referral pathway.

As before, the relevant SOPs/PGDs relating to Pharmacy First must be signed in every pharmacy that you work in BEFORE undertaking the services for patients.

You must read the SOP and PGD and sign before commencing service delivery. Each pharmacy will have printed versions of PGDs and Service Specifications, but links to the relevant documentation can also be found below:

- Everyday Health Conditions (these do not have any PGDs but do have Treatment Algorithms which can be used)
- Emergency Hormonal Contraception
- Uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) in women aged 16-64 years
- Sore Throat Service
- Pharmacy First Pilot Service for Treatment of Shingles

Errors and Mistakes

While every effort should be taken to prevent the likelihood of an error, every pharmacist will be faced with being implicated in at least one during their career. While as healthcare professionals our focus is on patient safety, this can be a stressful and worrisome experience, particularly for newly qualified pharmacists. Here are some suggestions to effectively and professionally manage the situation:

1. **Patient Safety First:** Act immediately to minimise any harm to the patient, explain what happened to the patient, and assess for any harm. This may include directing the patient to their GP or A&E. In February 2026 NI Department of Health published “[Being Open Framework for Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland](#)” - you should familiarise yourself with this document and the duty upon you to be open, honest and transparent in any proceedings following an error, and to promote a positive learning culture at work. This complements the professional standards outlined in [The Code of Conduct Ethics and Performance](#) for pharmacists in Northern Ireland, which you must abide by at all times.
2. **Report and Record:** Inform the Responsible Pharmacist/Superintendent Pharmacist/ Pharmacy owner as appropriate. The company should have an SOP for how to deal with errors which you should follow. It should also have an error log for you to complete. This error log should be reviewed regularly and used not punitively, but as a learning tool to mitigate the risk of further error. SPPG also host a portal for anonymous reporting of medicines incidents relating to community pharmacy, you can access this [here](#).
3. **Seek support:** You may wish to seek support from your indemnity provider and/or trade union early, especially if you have been involved in a Serious Adverse Incident.
4. **Reflect on the Root Cause:** Write a reflective account to help identify what went wrong and how this could be avoided in future e.g. causative factors such as similar packaging, high workload, distractions etc. Any concerns should be discussed with the pharmacy team and lead to improvements in your workplace to avoid this happening again. Avoid a blame culture.
5. **Share Learning:** Discuss with your colleagues and peers, create an open culture where everyone can learn from each other's experiences.
6. **Keep it in perspective:** Serious Adverse Incidents are thankfully rare, and near misses are how the profession can learn how to avoid them. Seek support if you are worried or upset by the experience – for support organisations please see *Section Four – Support*.

Raising Concerns

Speaking up about any concern pharmacists have at work is important to safeguard people receiving care and to identify wrongdoing and risks to public service delivery. When standards of care or behaviour fall below acceptable levels, pharmacists have a duty to speak up.

The Pharmaceutical Society of NI have issued [guidance](#) on this, and you should be familiar with this document when practicing.

SECTION FOUR: Support

There is a wide variety of support available for pharmacists in Northern Ireland, from financial, wellbeing and mental health support to career, CPD and general health support.

If the nature of support you require is not outlined clearly below, or in this document, please contact Pharmacy.Forum@psni.org.uk for more information, support or signposting as necessary.

Pharmacy Forum NI (PFNI)

PFNI is the professional leadership body for pharmacists in Northern Ireland.

The Early Career Pharmacist Working Group within the Forum is comprised of registered pharmacists with less than five years qualification, who collaborate to support their peers. Applications for participation are distributed through the monthly bulletin.

Pharmacists Advice and Support Service (PASS)

PASS provides a range of **free, impartial and confidential** services. These include:

- Information and signposting to sources of support
- Wellbeing services (including an online support hub, a 24/7 helpline and counselling through **Lena** (by Inspire), a locally based, independent organisation).
- Short term financial assistance (available from PASS charitable funds, based on application and evidence) – all of this is confidential.

You will always be treated with respect, courtesy and without judgement, in total confidence. The Society, as regulator, is **never given any details** of who has contacted PASS.

Employers

HSC Trusts offer many services through Occupational Health, including counselling, stress management and other mental health services. They may also be able to help with physiotherapy or other occupational health services if your work is being affected. For more information, contact your line manager or local occupational health team.

For example, the Belfast HSCT has “BWell” which is the hub for staff wellbeing, and GP federations offer employees access to the Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme for support, counselling and advice.

Some employers offer private healthcare cover, which may include access to a private GP or private counselling services. Check with your employer if this is an option for you and how to access the service if it is.

Minding Your Head

Provides support services and signposts you to the most appropriate help. Visit <https://www.mindingyourhead.info/> for more information.

SECTION FIVE: What's Next?

- Look out for plans from NICPLD regarding further development programmes such as Enhanced Practice for prescribing pharmacists.
- Be aware of changes in professional leadership that may offer opportunity to expand your network, such as local alignment with the Royal College of Pharmacy
- Get involved in working groups such as the Early Career Pharmacist group with Pharmacy Forum NI.
- Seek out opportunities to help shape and influence the pharmacy profession including apprentice to Pharmacy Forum Committee positions.
- Consider options for further pharmacy-based education/research opportunities – PgDip, PgCert, MSc, PhD. Funding options available including student finance, CW Young Fund or employers. This can further strengthen your prescribing confidence and help you specialise (e.g. if moving towards GP/hospital, or even potentially to community soon).
- Make sure to always keep abreast of government issued drug safety warnings. These are always disseminated through employer channels, but depending on your place of work you may not receive them. You can access them [here](#).
- Keep up to date on new developments and changes in the profession – any changes to legislation, regulation clinical guidelines will all effect your practice, and it is your responsibility to be aware of these.

Glossary, Acronyms, Organisations & Resources

The Society (PSNI)	Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland	Regulator for pharmacies, pharmacists and trainees in Northern Ireland.
PFNI	Pharmacy Forum Northern Ireland	Professional leadership body for pharmacists in Northern Ireland.
PASS	Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service	Branch of the PFNI which exists to provide support services to pharmacists and trainees of the Society, as well as former pharmacists, surviving spouses/civil partners and their dependants in times of need by offering: - Information and signposting to sources of support - Wellbeing services - Short-term financial assistance. The Society is never given any details of who has contacted PASS.
NICPLD	Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning & Development	Acts as the statutory education body for pharmacy in NI and to develop and deliver a range of workforce development programmes and continuing professional development opportunities.
BSO	Business Services Organisation	Non-Departmental Public body (ALB) providing a wide range of business support functions and specialist professional services to the wider Health and Social Care (HSC) sector in Northern Ireland.
SPPG	Strategic Planning and Performance Group	Formerly the HSCB (Health & Social Care Board). Part of the DOH NI which plans and oversees the delivery of health and social care services for the population of Northern Ireland.
DOH (NI)	Department of Health (Northern Ireland)	Branch of the Northern Ireland Executive (government) responsible for policy and issues relating to health. Led by the Health Minister and encompasses the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer.
PHA	Public Health Agency	Multi-disciplinary, regional body within the HSC system, working to improve and protect the health of population.
HSCNI	Health & Social Care Northern Ireland	Publicly funded healthcare system in Northern Ireland. Although separate to the National Health Service (NHS), it is considered a part of the overall national health service in the United Kingdom.

TRADE UNIONS		
PDA	Pharmacists' Defence Association	Representative body for pharmacists which supports individual employed and locum pharmacists and those in training across all sectors.
GHP (The Guild)	Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists	Professional and trade union-backed membership organisation for pharmacists in the managed service (this means hospital pharmacy and general practice/primary care-based pharmacists), working for the NHS across the UK (part of Unite the Union).
Unite	Unite the Union	Being the largest trade union in UK and Ireland, it is dedicated to serving the best interests of its members, protecting workers' rights and equality and diversity in the workplace.

TRADE BODIES		
NPA	National Pharmacy Association	Representative body of independent and independent multiple community pharmacies across the UK and a provider of services to the pharmacy sector.
UCA-NI	Ulster Chemists' Association (Northern Ireland)	Local organisation providing support, representation and communication services to Community Pharmacy and Pharmacists in Northern Ireland.
CPNI	Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland	CPNI represents community pharmacy contractors in negotiations on services, the pharmacy contract and remuneration and reimbursement with Department of Health and the Strategic Planning and Performance Group of the Department of Health.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS		
GPhC	General Pharmaceutical Council	Regulator for pharmacies, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).
RCP (RPS)	Royal College of Pharmacy (formerly the Royal Pharmaceutical Society)	Professional leadership body for pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).
PSI	The Pharmacy Regulator in Republic of Ireland	The statutory body responsible for regulating pharmacist and pharmacies in the public interest, in the Republic of Ireland.
NICE	National Institute for Health & Care Excellence	UK-wide public body which provides evidence-based guidance, standards, and information to improve health and social care. It assists the identification of most effective treatments while ensuring value for money.
MRG	Medicines Regulatory Group	Provides specialist professional advice to the Minister, Department of Health and wider HSC, other government Departments and national and international partner enforcement agencies on key matters relating to medicines regulation.
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency	UK government executive agency responsible for ensuring that medicines and medical devices work and are acceptably safe. It regulates clinical trials, licenses products, and monitors safety.

Appendix A: Locum Checklist

- ✚ Make sure you have a record of when the booking was made and with whom, lest there be any dispute down the line.
- ✚ Ascertain the pharmacy opening hours, services that are delivered from the pharmacy and reconcile these with your skills, and the rate of pay for the hours worked, paying particular attention to lunchtime arrangements.
- ✚ Make sure to arrive on time, allowing adequate time for travel/traffic/parking.
- ✚ Bring a packed lunch – there may not always be provision for you to purchase something locally, and you may not have a break (not all pharmacies close for lunch or have a protected lunchtime).
- ✚ Print your own RP sign – it is the easiest way to ensure it can be mounted immediately.
- ✚ Sign into the RP register!
- ✚ Read, make yourself comfortable with and sign the store SOPs.
- ✚ Introductions – take time to introduce yourself to each staff member and learn each of their respective roles and responsibilities. **A name badge may be helpful for patients and staff.**
- ✚ Familiarise yourself with dispensary layout. Are shelves arranged alphabetically? Are certain medications stored in one section? Where is overstock held? Any other nuance?
- ✚ Make sure that the fridge temperature log has been completed.
- ✚ Take custody of the keys for the CD safe.
- ✚ Ascertain who has keys and necessary alarm codes for store lock up – do not leave this to the last minute.
- ✚ Familiarise yourself with anticipated daily or weekly dispensing and ensure that there is sufficient stock for that day and the next.
- ✚ To optimise workflow, find out:
 - What time wholesaler deliveries arrive.
 - What time and how the bulk of prescriptions are received.
 - Arrangements and cut off times for home/care home deliveries.
 - Ordering format – manual ordering only or is it done through a cascade?
 - The cut off times for same and next day drug deliveries from wholesale dealers, and who has responsibility for submitting these.
- ✚ Leave notes for the Responsible Pharmacist the following day, to include details of any unresolved issues or irregularities that arise over the course of the day. Leave your contact details readily accessible should the pharmacist need to contact you for clarification.
- ✚ Keep a full record of all shifts worked, including locations, hours, lunch break, and hourly pay (see below for an example).

Appendix B: Locum Invoice

Pharmacist Details:			
Name		PSNI Reg. Number	
Address			
Email Address		Phone Number	

Invoice Number		Date	<i>Note this is the date that the invoice is being sent</i>
----------------	--	------	---

Bill to:			
Employer Name			
Address			
Email Address		Phone Number	

Date	Description	Hours	Rate	Amount
<i>Insert date of locum shift</i>	Locum Pharmacist Services <i>Insert name of shop</i>	<i>Insert hours worked</i>	<i>£X/hour</i>	<i>Insert total fee due</i>
			TOTAL	<i>Insert total amount owed</i>

PAYMENT DETAILS			
Bank Name	Account Name	Sort Code	Account Number

Appendix C: Locum Records

Below is a sample of records which you should retain for accountancy and tax records. You may wish to copy this table into a Microsoft Excel workbook and use it to keep track of your locum work.

Pharmacy	Booking type	Booked by	Date	Time Start	Time Finish	Time Lunch (hrs)	Total Worked (hrs)	Rate of Pay /Hour (£)	Total Pay	Invoiced?	Payment Received?	Invoice No	Total Received	Date Received	Notes	HMRC	Tax Payable (£)	Mileage (each way)	Total Mileage	Mileage Claim @ 55p/mile (£)
Health Street Pharmacy	Direct Booking	Joe Bloggs 07123456789	05/08/2025	09:00	17:30	1.00	7.50	25.00	187.5	YES	YES	1234PF	187.5	11/08/2025		20%	37.5	6	12	5.40
GetWell Pharmacy	Locate A Locum	agency@agency.com	06/08/2025	09:00	18:00	1.00	8.00	27.50	220	YES	YES	1235PF	220	28/08/2025		20%	44.00	22	44	19.80

