

**M O D E L
STANDARDS
FOR SELF AUDIT
IN COMMUNITY
PHARMACY
IN ENGLAND**

4

Guidance for Relief Pharmacists

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INTRODUCTION TO AUDIT STANDARDS

The purpose of this document is to:-

- define the main aspects of professional pharmacy practice
- propose criteria for good service in each aspect
- list standards of practice which contribute to successful accomplishment of each criterion.

What is contained in the manuals?

You will find criteria which reflect good pharmaceutical care. Proposed standards are given and it is these which can be amended to reflect your particular practice. Should a standard be mandatory, this is brought to your attention in the text.

Delete any standard which is not applicable to your situation. If you find that you undertake activities not covered by these booklets, add standards to cover them.

Most of the standards given are for self-audit of activities which take place on pharmacy premises. These activities are generally considered to be the core business of community pharmacy. You will be able to carry out audits which measure current “ability” against such standards and, thus, enable you to improve your practice should it be necessary.

The appendices contain written systems of work. Such protocols are becoming increasingly necessary to demonstrate adherence to good standards of practice. They are model documents to be amended as necessary for an individual pharmacy.

How were the standards determined and for what purpose?

Professional audit is a process which can help an individual or group to achieve and maintain standards of practice within their everyday working environment. The standards to be achieved are chosen by the people involved and are usually based on professional or business requirements.

These manuals have been produced, with the help of a grant from the Department of Health, by a research team at Keele University. They contain suggested criteria which can be used as written or amended to suit your situation.

The research team developed an initial list of criteria and possible standards. After discussion with a steering group of practising community pharmacists, a second draft set of standards was produced. The initial standards were amended and widened to include further aspects of practice.

A pharmacist researcher visited all participating pharmacies to measure the relevance of the proposed standards to pharmacy practice. Following this observational analysis, results from this study were anonymised and fed back to the participating pharmacists for further comment and discussion. It became clear that:

- **Some of the proposed standards were only necessary in some, not all, pharmacies**
- **Other standards were not currently achieved but could easily become so if pharmacists were given model written systems for adaptation**

For every aspect of standard setting the team sought to identify suitable outcome measurements. Pharmacists could then use them, within an audit cycle, to show the benefits of standard setting within their practice.

The refined standards were sent to 100 community pharmacists in a number of locations to seek their views. All comments received were considered by the research team and the standards modified when appropriate.

How to use the manual

1. Choose an aspect of practice that you wish to audit. Discuss areas of concern with your staff. This will highlight particular problems which worry everyone. Narrow them down to one question which everyone feels needs to be answered.
2. Explain the purpose of the audit you are undertaking to everyone concerned. Emphasise that audit is to improve work flow, give better patient care, identify gaps in advice giving, not to find fault. If the exact purpose of the study is explained to all those involved in it, everyone should benefit.
3. Look through the criteria to find which set of standards applies to the question chosen for the audit. Decide which are relevant and delete any which do not apply. There may be other standards which relate to your situation. Add them if necessary.
4. Think about the period of time or the number of prescriptions which will be studied during the audit. Do not attempt too much. An audit gives a “snapshot in time” result and is not meant to be continuous process. The same “picture” can be taken at a point in the future to see how things have changed.
5. Decide who will collect the data and when and how they will do it. Consider the most appropriate time for data collection. It will not help you to only look at the process during a “quiet time”. Counselling may be easy when there are few prescriptions but more difficult when dispensing is in full swing!
6. Collect the data.
7. Look at the results and compare them with the standards which seemed to be appropriate to your audit question. If all standards have been met you may decide to set more challenging targets when you repeat the audit. If you were unhappy with the results, look at ways you could improve the situation. These may involve changes in procedure, staff training or developing written material for staff or patients.
8. Implement any changes which will improve your services to patients.
9. Re-audit, after a suitable period of time, to monitor the effectiveness of any changes.
10. Advertise your achievements! The staff involved should already know how the study turned out but the people you service and your purchasers, such as the Health Authority, local surgeries or Social Services, may also find the results interesting.

Introduction to Guidance for Relief Pharmacists Standards

The following criteria and standards ensure consistency of professional practice in your pharmacy.

Throughout this document where the standards proposed are close in wording or intent to those referred to in Royal Pharmaceutical Society documents this has been indicated. These are annotated as legal (L), ethical (E) and standards of good professional practice (S).

Criteria

- 4.1** *Relief pharmacists have the necessary information to ensure the smooth running of the pharmacy.*
- 4.2** *The qualifications of relief pharmacists are checked and displayed to ensure patients' safety.*

Case Studies

When the Cat's Away

1. Mrs Jones, a regular customer, brings in her monthly prescription for Temazepam capsules. She insists on green capsules which you happily order especially for her. Whilst you are on holiday the relief pharmacist dispenses yellow capsules which Mrs Jones returns. The relief pharmacist refuses to change them. When you return your dispenser tells you of the events and thinks that Mrs Jones will not return.
2. You come back from holiday to be told by your dispenser that the relief pharmacist insisted on seeing all customers who asked for a product to be recommended. This has annoyed the dispenser and staff who have all completed training which enables them to give advice and refer to the pharmacist when necessary.

4.1 Criterion

Relief pharmacists should have the necessary information to ensure the smooth running of the pharmacy.

Standards

1. Written information exists to enable a relief pharmacist to locate key procedure documents
2. Basic operational information is sent to the relief pharmacist prior to his employment.

Scoring	Score
Yes=2 No=0	

Total Score

Scoring hints for standard one

Use checklist below to measure the adequacy of your information for relief pharmacists.

General Management Information

1. Computer instructions.
2. Names, addresses and telephone numbers of key staff.
3. OTCs normally recommended.
4. List of GPs with telephone numbers.
5. List of residential homes with addresses and telephone numbers.
6. Plan of the pharmacy.
7. Dispensing procedure.
8. Ordering systems and wholesalers used.
9. Alarm systems.
10. Cash register instructions and cashing up procedure.
11. Emergency contact numbers.
12. Collection and delivery service details.
13. List of outstanding work.
14. Instruction on use of monitored dosage system.
15. Local map showing location of GP surgeries, residential homes etc.
16. No smoking policy.

10 or more items available	Score 8
5 or more items available	Score 4
Less than 5 items available	Score 0

Measurement Options

A questionnaire to establish relief pharmacist satisfaction with the information you provide.
Completion of the checklist.

Outcomes for the Pharmacist	Outcome for the patient/general practitioner and/or FHSA
Continuity of service	Continuity of service

4.2 Criterion

The qualifications of relief pharmacists are checked and displayed to ensure patient safety.

Standards

1. Relief pharmacist's qualifications are checked.
2. Relief pharmacist's registration certificate is displayed.*
3. A written contract is available for the relief pharmacist

Scoring	Score
Yes=3 No=0	
Yes=4 No=0	
Yes=3 No=0	
####	

Group Score for Total Score

RPSGB Reference

* L

Outcomes for the Pharmacist	Outcome for the Patient / General Practitioner and/or FHSA
Continuity of service.	Continuity of service.
	Patient safety.