

Dear Colleagues,

We hope you are safe and well.

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a period of self-isolation and strict social distancing measures, with ongoing government restrictions to face to face gatherings planned to continue for the foreseeable future. It is also recognised that even if the control measures are lifted, the pharmacy workforce will be needed to help respond to the pandemic and its aftermath in the coming months and Oriel employers may be unable to free up their staff to attend the MMIs in September. We have therefore been planning contingencies to allow the National Recruitment Scheme (NRS) to adapt should the need arise.

During analysis of the viability of potential contingencies, we were acutely aware that none of the options being proposed would be ideal, but we have observed and learned from the rapid changes needing to be made across all specialty recruitment, and approached our conclusions on the basis of what we feel is the fairest and least onerous way for candidates to demonstrate their capabilities during these unique times, whilst also ensuring that for our employers the delivery process used must remain robust and evidence-based.

Therefore, in consultation with our valued stakeholders including employers, the Pharmacy Schools Council, the BPSA, Health Education England Pharmacy Deans and senior leadership we are writing to inform you that a decision has been made to **cancel the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)** for the Pre-Registration Pharmacy 2020 Recruitment cycle. Consequently, for this year there will be no requirement for your organisation to free up staff to attend the interviews.

The Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and Numeracy Assessment **will continue to be used** to evaluate candidate performance. We are working with our test centre partner to provide the widest scope for testing possible, including the capability for candidates unable to return to the UK to test in countries worldwide.

Considering the importance of the attributes not tested within the SJTs but assessed in the MMIs, we will be signposting candidates to training resources that they may find helpful to use in preparation for their pre-registration training.

For community pharmacies in England with no HEE-funded posts: We are in an unprecedented situation and appreciate your patience throughout this, but also understand that this news may change your decision to partake in this year's recruitment process for pre-registration pharmacists. Therefore, if you would like to withdraw your training programmes, we kindly request you submit your withdrawal to preregpharmacyrecruitment@hee.nhs.uk. The deadline will be **17:00 on 1st June 2020**. Please note late withdrawals will not be accepted. N.B. GP split places funded via HEE must be recruited to via the National Recruitment Scheme.

We recommend that you also read our updated privacy policy (see attachment) to update your knowledge on how we use your contact information.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,

Pharmacy National Recruitment Office