

South East London Foundation Pharmacist Vocational Training Scheme (SEL FP VTS)

SEL FP VTS is an innovative and novel **multi-sector foundation pharmacist training** pilot providing early career pharmacists with the skills, knowledge and professional behaviours required to work successfully across all healthcare sectors. The vocational 'on the job' training and competency framework enables Foundation Pharmacists to better deliver safe and competent medicines optimisation and patient-centred care. In Year 1 and 2, Foundation Pharmacists completed a structured training framework. In Year 3, pharmacists who completed the foundation element have the opportunity to undertake the Clinically Enhanced Independent Prescribing (CEPIP) qualification. SEL FP VTS is a collaborative project with 16 individual organisations, with differing service models, needs and expectations, to develop a region-wide multi-sector foundation pharmacist training programme. SEL FP VTS Pilot started in Oct 2017 and is in Year 3 of the programme (Oct 2019-Sept 2020).

“The VTS programme has helped shaped my understanding of the profession and how pharmacy influences healthcare overall.”

“I would definitely recommend others to also join similar programmes and to not just commit themselves to being a sector specific pharmacist, we can be all rounded pharmacists that are able to flourish no matter which sector or what situation we are placed in.”

“With the structured guidance of the framework and the VTS team, I believe I have become a flexible and competent pharmacist, able to apply my skills in a variety of sectors and teams and make a positive contribution for patients.”

SEL FP VTS Stakeholders & Partners



Programme Information

SEL FP VTS pilot is a 3 year foundation pharmacist training programme which allows early career pharmacists to develop a base of knowledge, skills and experience of working in 3 main sectors of pharmacy practice – hospital community and GP practice – and to complete independent prescribing. The pilot started in Oct 2017 and is currently in Year 3 of the programme (Oct 2019-Sept 2020).

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SEL FP VTS - Contact Us

For further information on this innovative pilot foundation pharmacist training programme, including information on benefits, considerations, challenges, and lessons learned from this pilot, contact Jennifer Guffie, SEL FP VTS Training Programme Director.

Email: j.guffie@nhs.net



SECTORS & PLACEMENTS

For an overview of the programme, please click [here](#).

All Foundation Pharmacists completed placements in **hospital, community** pharmacy and **GP practice** as part of SEL FP VTS multi-sector pilot.

SEL FP VTS also worked with [NHS London Procurement Partnership \(NHS LPP\)](#) to develop new and innovative pilot placements for foundation pharmacists to gain experience of regional pharmacy procurement and medicines optimisation. Two pharmacists were given the opportunity to complete NHS LPP placements of 4 and 6 months, respectively, at the end of Year 2.



RECRUITMENT

SEL FP VTS used a multiple- employer model for the SEL VTS pilot. Each stakeholder employed at least 1 foundation pharmacist.

Due to the time constraints of the SEL VTS, it was not possible to develop a single standardised recruitment process for all the pharmacists for the programme. For hospital employers, the existing process used for STEP programme recruitment was used, and for the community pharmacy employers, recruitment was through their local processes from pre-registration. Although this was the most practical, it was recognised that in future, a cross sector panel for interviews would be more valuable. To reflect multisector working and assure governance of the recruitment process, SEL VTS recommends that a single agreed job description is agreed among stakeholders, as well as a standardised common recruitment process.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

[NHS Education for Scotland \(NES\) Foundation Framework](#) was adopted for SEL VTS because it was developed for multi-sector training for community, hospital and primary care pharmacy. The broadness of this framework allowed for it to be implemented across the sectors.

NES are an RPS Foundation School and the NES Foundation Framework meets the requirements of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Foundation Pharmacist Framework (RPS FPF).



EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SEL FP VTS has a Strategic Lead who worked with the SEL VTS has a Training Programme Director (TPD) to develop the programme. The SEL VTS TPD has oversight of the programme and developed and managed operational and educational aspects of the programme. The educational supervisors (ES) oversee the learning and progress for FP's during the programme across all placements. For each placement, SEL VTS FP's has a practice supervisor on site. In some placements, the educational supervisor is also the practice supervisor.

SEL FP VTS PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND SUPERVISION

SEL FP VTS STRATEGIC LEAD

SEL FP VTS TRAINING PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

EDUCATIONAL
SUPERVISOR

EDUCATIONAL
SUPERVISOR

EDUCATIONAL
SUPERVISOR

COMMUNITY PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR

Role added in 2018 to support community placements development

PRACTICE SUPERVISORS (Hospital & GP Placements)

Organisation-specific practice supervisors for all hospital & GP rotations and clinical areas of practice



ASSESSMENTS

SEL FP VTS, NES and RPS worked collaboratively to develop proposals for participating in the RPS Assessments pilot. SEL VTS pharmacists were the first cohort to undergo the RPS Assessments in 2019. RPS Assessments consisted of a portfolio assessment in August 2019 followed by a face-to-face assessment, called a professional discussion, in October 2019.

All 8 of the SEL VTS foundation pharmacists who submitted SEL VTS portfolio and attended the professional discussion passed the 2019 RPS Assessments.



PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

A **strategic South East London (SEL) Steering Group** was set up to oversee the pilot development and ensure key decisions are made with representatives from all stakeholders. As the programme progressed and to align with national developments around foundation pharmacist training, this evolved to the **SEL Foundation Board** to encompass representation from other organisations involved in foundation pharmacist training such as Kings Health Partners, CPPE, RPS and CCGs.

SEL FP VTS pilot is part of [Our Healthier South East London Sustainability and Transformation Partnership](#) (SEL STP) pharmacy workforce development and reports to the Integrating Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation (IPMO) Programme Board.

SEL FP VTS Local Faculty Group (LFG) was established as part of the quality assurance processes. This consists of stakeholder representatives from individual organisations as well as a SEL FP VTS foundation pharmacist representative. Individual stakeholders are responsible for communicating SEL VTS LFG outcomes to the individual organisational LFG or educational governance processes. In addition, the HEE process for Trainees Requiring Additional Support (TRAS) was adopted as a mechanism for managing foundation pharmacists with additional educational support and training needs.



INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBING

SEL FP VTS pilot will test completion of independent prescribing following foundation training in Year 3 of the programme (2019-2020).

As part of the VTS pilots, HEE have provided funded places on the Clinically Enhanced Pharmacist Independent Prescriber (CEPIP) course through King's College London (KCL) and Medway were made available to SEL FP VTS. All pharmacists were required to complete the KCL CEPIP application process.

SEL VTS pharmacists can only access the independent prescribing course as part of year 3 of SEL FP VTS pilot if they completed the foundation element of the programme and are successful at the RPS Assessments.

The rationale behind incorporating CEPIP into the SEL VTS Programme was:

- More pharmacists in patient-facing roles (IUCG, GP, Care homes, Residential homes, Nursing homes)
- More pharmacists possess IP, due to growing patient-facing clinical roles available
- Growing role of clinical pharmacists (NHS Long term plan), need a workforce with the right skills, competencies, behaviours & attributes in these roles – recognised value of independent prescribing skills.



Evaluations

Several evaluation processes are in place for evaluation of the SEL FP VTS pilot, commissioned by HEE. A 1 year evaluation report on SEL VTS is in progress with publication expected end-December 2019. GP Placement evaluation, RPS Assessment evaluation, and CEPIP evaluation will be completed in 2020. SEL FP VTS are also participating in NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Evaluation of NES Foundation Framework.



Considerations when developing system-wide foundation programme

SEL VTS worked collaboratively with 17 individual organisations, with differing needs and expectations to develop and deliver a pilot multi-sector foundation training programme. In the context where there is no structural legislation or governance to behave as one health and social care system and no minimum standard or training programme for training foundation pharmacists across all pharmacy sectors, SEL VTS encountered several challenges when implementing multi-sector foundation training. Some of the considerations from the SEL FP VTS pilot experience for other providers looking to develop cross system foundation training include:

- Develop a programme framework and syllabus to meet the training and service needs of **all sectors** and stakeholders
- Ensure all stakeholders have clear understanding of programme implementation and support required
- Ensure a standardised process for recruitment with all stakeholders/employers
- Consider the employment and contractual models required and impact of these on movement of pharmacists between sectors. Look for ways to ensure similar contracts across all foundation pharmacists and programme – ensure HR and contractual expertise is available

- Consider differences in sector working models, contracts and service needs such as hours of work, out of hours, oncall and weekend working requirements, and impact of movement between placements – what is expected from each placement, does this impact costs and pay?
- Manage foundation pharmacists expectations of the programme, areas of experience and supervision and support available from start of programme
- Consider options for IT platforms available for sharing information with stakeholders, and foundation pharmacists.
- Investigate assessment requirements for the programme and agree provider and process at start of programme. Consider electronic portfolio options available and how this will support assessments process.
- Communication – consider how information will be shared effectively with programme and stakeholders and foundation pharmacists. Ensure on the ground staff and practice supervisors understand the programme requirements and their support role.

For further information on the experience from this pilot, contact the Training Programme Director, Jennifer Guffie j.guffie@nhs.net.

Testimonials

“With the VTS programme, I have been able to experience a variety of pharmacy sectors providing me with the opportunity to develop into a **holistic professional**. I have an increased **understanding of a patient’s journey from secondary to primary care** and the interventions possible that a pharmacist can make to ensure that this transition is safe, efficient and patient focused.”

“Pharmacy sectors demand different skill sets and therefore I have been able to strengthen my core abilities as a professional such as communication, time management, problem solving and decision making. This has been aided further by the **VTS portfolio which encourages self-reflection, feedback from others and identifying my own learning needs.**”

“I feel that the programme provides us with the opportunity to **experience the ever expanding roles of pharmacist** throughout the healthcare system and to become well rounded individuals capable of **transferring our skill set regardless of the setting to improve continuity of patient care.**”

“Although I have had experience in community and hospital practice, the VTS programme has helped shaped my understanding of the profession and how pharmacy influences healthcare overall. With the structured guidance of the framework and the VTS team, I believe I have become a **flexible and competent** pharmacist, able to **apply my skills in a variety of sectors** and teams and make a **positive contribution for patients.**”

“This programme is **unique** and distinct from others as the support and guidance you receive from your **supervisor is invaluable**”

“I would definitely recommend others to join similar programmes and to not just commit themselves to being a sector specific pharmacist. We can be all **rounded pharmacists** that are able to **flourish no matter which sector** or what situation we are placed in and that is possibly the biggest thing I have taken from this programme.”

“I have expanded my clinical knowledge in specialist areas and enjoyed working as part of the ward multi-disciplinary team treating patients from admission in acutely unwell states until they are medically fit for discharge. In addition, I have taken on the role of a store manager in a community pharmacy managing staff, targets and rotas. Both roles have allowed me to **develop on my leadership skills and confidence in decision-making** when faced with ethical dilemmas.”