

RCGP Response to RPS England and The King's Fund: Vision for Pharmacy Practice Consultation

This section of the document lists the consultation questions. The questions can be completed electronically [here](#) or in Word format below.

Introduction

The health and care needs of the population are changing, and services need to change with them. The NHS and its partners have been on a journey towards more personalised care, delivered through a more joined up, integrated service. This aims for a future where services not only better support people when they need health and care, but also to help them stay well before that and to overcome inequalities. The need for change has become more urgent as the country learns to live with the Covid pandemic.

It is in this context that a vision for pharmacy is needed. There are so many opportunities for pharmacy teams to provide better support to patients and the public. These can build upon the strengths of a profession that spans the hospital sector, general practice and community pharmacy. Some of this potential was realised in examples of innovation across England before the pandemic, and at scale during it.

Yet we must also recognise that the potential of pharmacy teams to provide more direct patient care and integrate better has long been acknowledged. Progress has been made yet this has sometimes lacked pace and been difficult to spread. Alongside the vision we need to think about the barriers and enablers that will make ensure pharmacy can play its full part. This will need alignment with the current changes in NHS structures and to follow the Fuller Stocktake in thinking through action at neighbourhood, place and at system. We need a long-term vision backed by short-term actions.

The themes for a vision for pharmacy

This consultation outlines **six themes** (<https://www.rpharms.com/EnglandVision>) identified as core to a professional vision for pharmacy practice. The themes reflect aspirations of The Long-Term Plan and recent Fuller Stocktake as well as the aspirations of the pharmacy profession. The first three themes describe how pharmacy teams will better support patients and the public at neighbourhood, place and system. The second three themes concern how pharmacy teams will be enabled to provide this support and overcome barriers that have stood in the way of progress at pace.

This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Participation is optional and all responses will be kept anonymous. We are interested in hearing from everyone in the profession, including trainees and students. None of this information will be passed from RPS to anyone else in a way that can identify individuals. You can read more about how RPS uses personal information in our Privacy Policy* where you can also find more information about your rights in respect of your personal information, how you can contact our data protection officer and how you can raise issues about use of your personal information with the ICO.

Section 1: The Themes

This section discusses the six proposed overarching themes of the vision.

1. To what extent do you agree the themes in the consultation document describe what pharmacy practice in England should look like in 10 years?

Theme	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Theme 1. Supporting people and communities to live well for longer					x
Theme 2. Enabling people to live well with the medicines that they choose to take					x
Theme 3. Enhancing patient experience and access					x
Theme 4. Our pharmacy people				x	
Theme 5. Data, innovation and research				x	
Theme 6. Collaboration and leadership				x	

- a. If you answered Strongly disagree or disagree – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

2. Are there any themes you feel should be modified or removed?

Yes		No	x
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- a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

3. Are there any additional themes you feel should be included?

Yes		No	x
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- a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

Section 2: The Descriptors

The next questions ask you about the associated descriptors for each theme in the consultation document and what we want to see happen in the next three to five years for each theme.

Theme 1. Supporting people and communities to live well for longer

4. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years' time?

Yes	☒	No	☐
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- a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

5. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes	☐	No	☒
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- a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

6. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes	☐	No	☒
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- a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

7. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes	☒	No	☐
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- a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

Theme 2. Enabling people to live well with the medicines that they choose to take

8. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years' time?

Yes	☒	No	☐
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- a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

9. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

b. Pharmacy teams manage and complete episodes of care for people with common clinical conditions or acute presentations of illness, right through to patients with (often multiple) long-term conditions. – While we mainly agree with this, we think there are some clearer parameters required here, and this needs to be within the scope of practice for pharmacists and their roles within teams, particularly for those working in primary and community care, which deals with most undifferentiated concerns. For example, it would be appropriate for pharmacists to complete medicine reviews for those with complex conditions, and to deal with acute presentations of minor ailments, but if they were required to diagnose complex conditions, this would be a cause for concern. A line should be added to distinguish this.

10. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes		No	x
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

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11. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes	x	No	
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b. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

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Theme 3. Enhancing patient experience and access

12. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years' time?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

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13. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes	x	No	
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Commented [KS1]: Talks about person-centred care, different ways of access, and digital technology so could fit into Ruth's work

Commented [RE2]: No big concerns about the vision from me - positive focus on person centred care, conversations and patient choice

a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

“b. Pharmacy teams have access to clinical results to support patient care”. This is an important principle, however it should be made clear that results should only be shared where appropriate and necessary, and consideration should be given to what access is suitable for different members of the pharmacy team.

“b. pharmacy teams ... can [refer] ... seamlessly to the wider health and social care system”. Pharmacy teams should have some ability to refer easily, however this should not be a blanket approach and should only be carried out under certain circumstances and within an individual’s competencies. As outlined in answer to question 9, we think there needs to be clearer descriptions of the pharmacist’s future scope of practice and how these fit with other roles working in primary care. Learnings from evaluations of pilots such as Pharmacy First will also be required in determining future referrals systems between pharmacy teams and other parts of the system.

14. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes		No	x
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

15. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes	x	No	
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c. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

Theme 4. Our pharmacy people

16. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years’ time?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

17. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes	x	No	
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Commented [RE3]: This looks fine, the most relevant part for us is expansion of Pharmacy First which I assume we'd support from a workload perspective

Commented [KS4]: Workforce related - Kelly

a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

"h. The boundaries between sectors are blurred and pharmacy professionals routinely work across patient pathways with their skills recognised wherever they practice." – We agree that it is important that pharmacy, primary care, and secondary care are more joined up in their working, as a way to improve workload for staff across the system and provide better care for patients. However, we need to make sure that each clinician is working within their scope of practice that they are trained and prepared for. While training and skills of pharmacists and others may evolve over time, as set out by this vision. there will still be certain parameters for healthcare professionals from each sector and this needs to be understood throughout the system.

18. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes		No	X
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

19. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes	x	No	
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d. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

Theme 5. Data, innovation and research

20. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years' time?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

21. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

"a. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in all settings access and input into one shared digital record with real time updates so that patients do not need to repeat themselves with every healthcare professional." This is a positive principle, but as

Commented [KS5]: Some parts of the data may relate to Ruth's work, some of innovation aspects could link to clinical so Aislinn too
Not sure if we'd want to bring research team into this?

Commented [AS6R5]: @Kelly Sarsfield have added one more point under Ruth's below to make sure that they keep in line with national guidelines.

Commented [RE7]: This all looks fine in general, focus on digital health tools, data for pop health and quality assurance

outlined above, consideration would need to be given to role-based access and robust authorship and audit trails.

"b. Technology is utilised to empower people to get the best from health and medicines. Pharmacy teams are the recognised systems leaders of the medicines digital health agenda. This includes digital apps, wearables, diagnostics, and disease and medicine management tools." This seems a sensible role. It is important that all such digital health technologies have a robust evidence base and safety assurance, and that suitable processes are in place for monitoring readings and results without leading to excess workload.

22. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes		No	x
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

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23. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes		No	x
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e. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

"1. Interoperability with read write access to patient medical notes across the healthcare system with effective communication pathways." We would support the ambition here, but this is quite a broad statement: ensuring only the minimum necessary data is shared, appropriate role-based access and audit trails would all need to be considered.

Theme 6. Collaboration and leadership

24. Do you feel that the descriptors under this theme reflect the priorities for pharmacy practice in ten years' time?

Yes	x	No	
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a. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

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25. Are there any descriptors in this theme that you think should be modified or removed?

Yes		No	x
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

Commented [KS8]: Refers to ICSs so could link to Georgia's work

Commented [GF9R8]: Everything looks fine to me here - agree that pharmacy should be considered a key part of integrated care and that leadership development will be required to ensure it's effective

26. Are there any major descriptors in this theme that you think are missing?

Yes		No	x
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a. If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

27. Do you feel the statements of what we want to see happen in the next three to five years are appropriate?

Yes	x	No	
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f. If you answered NO – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.

28. Do you have any additional comments that have not been covered by the previous questions?

Overall, the RCGP supports the direction of travel set out in this consultation. Pharmacists play a crucial role in primary care and across the health and care system. Further growing and supporting a highly skilled and diverse pharmacy workforce will be crucial to delivering high-quality patient care in the future as part of multi-disciplinary teams. A variety of enablers and actions will be required to ensure this vision is delivered effectively and safely, to get the best outcomes for patients. This must include careful consideration of the role(s) that pharmacists play as part of multi-disciplinary teams, particularly within primary care. Some further evidence is also required to determine the optimal role that pharmacists should play, and so this vision may need to be adapted over time as learnings become available from pilots and other developments.

Commented [KS10]: Place to add our overall thoughts

Commented [DF11R10]: I think we need a few sentences here - positive overall but with some caveats. I've quickly thrown some in

Section 3: Barriers and enablers

This section asks you about the barriers and enablers to achieving the vision.

29. Please rank the enabling themes listed below which you feel will support achieving the vision?

- Our pharmacy people
- Data, innovation and research
- Collaboration and leadership

1	Data, innovation and research
2	Our pharmacy people
3	Collaboration and leadership

30. Are there any other enablers that you feel are more important than those listed above?

Yes		No	x
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a. *If you answered YES – Please explain the reason(s) to your answer above.*

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31. Please rank the barriers listed below in order of importance to hindering achievement of the vision?

- Workforce pressures
- Interoperability of digital systems
- Funding models

1	Workforce pressures
2	Interoperability of digital systems
3	Funding models

32. Are there any other barriers that you feel are more important than those listed above to hindering achievement of the vision?

Yes		No	x
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a. *If you answered YES – Please detail what barriers you feel are more important.*

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Section 4: Examples of innovative practice

We would really like to hear about any innovative pharmacy practice work that you are involved in or ideas that you have.

If you have a good example, case study or idea, please let us know by emailing us at england@rpharms.com. You can send us anything that you may have already written up, such as a poster submission or business case, or just email us with your details and we will arrange a time to call you to chat about it.

Section 5: About you

This section is not mandatory; however we would like to acknowledge those who have taken the time to respond to this consultation survey in the Vision when published.

You can read more about how the RPS uses your data in our Privacy Policy:

<https://www.rpharms.com/footer-links/terms-conditions/privacy-policy>

33. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- **If organisation**, Name of organisation: Royal College of General Practitioners
- **If individual response**, Your name and job role:

34. Do you give consent for your details to be included in the document when published?

Yes	☒	No	☐
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