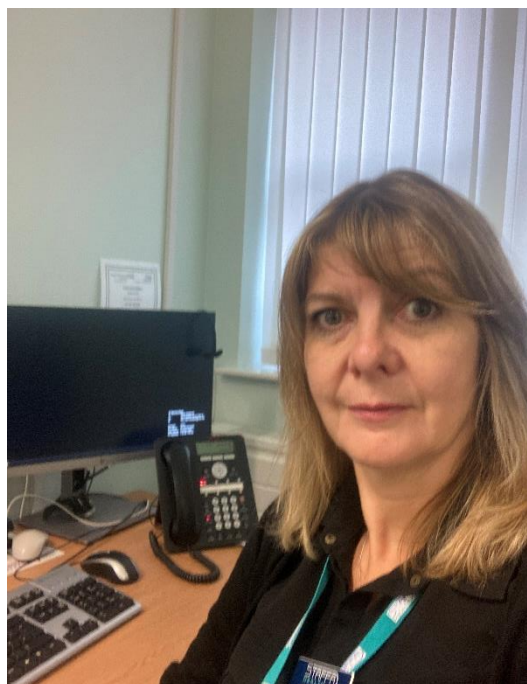


# Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy technicians are registered professional members of the pharmacy team who prepare and manage the supply of medicines and give advice to patients and customers.

## Case study: Andrea Wass

Andrea Wass, Pharmacy Technician at Staffa Health, started her A' Levels but wasn't enjoying studying and saw two trainee Pharmacy Technician jobs advertised – one at a hospital in Sheffield and one at Boots. She liked science and working with people, and wanted to get out and earn some money so applied for both. She got the job at Boots and stayed there for 26 years, qualifying as a dispenser, helping to set up the nursing home business visiting care homes and checking off the medication with staff. She then became an Accuracy Checker and worked at Boots regional headquarters as Regional Training Co-ordinator. After some time, she felt she needed a fresh challenge as she was conscious of becoming complacent and decided to seek other opportunities.



Andrea worked for the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on the 'Spearhead Cardiovascular risk assessment' pilot, working with people with coronary heart disease. She did a Cardiovascular Disease Risk Assessment Diploma at the University of Warwick and would then meet with patients to discuss their medication and lifestyle to establish whether they had been properly diagnosed, whether they were prescribed the correct medication and were taking it correctly. Andrea saw it as her role to understand why someone wasn't taking their medication appropriately and to make it easier for them to take it – something she has continued into her current role. Andrea then worked in the Medicines Management Team at the CCG where she completed her clinical diploma in Drugs and Therapeutics. This enabled her to broaden her work to do medication pre-reviews to support the GPs in

reviewing primarily nursing home and housebound patients, optimizing and deprescribing medication to improve compliance, minimize risks and increase safety.

After various rounds of CCG re-structuring, Andrea decided that the work she most wanted to do was in General Practice and applied for and got the job as a Pharmacy Technician at Staffa Health – a multi-site General Practice in Derbyshire. There are 17,000 patients registered with the practice, five partners plus salaried GPs, and six nurse clinicians. There's a part-time pharmacist, with Andrea working three days a week, and the pharmacy team are piloting some admin support to help pull out reports from the system. Andrea has been there for about a year but has worked with them for about five years previously in her CCG role.

In her current role she is responsible for:

- Supporting the practice's medication review process.
- Processing hospital discharges and medicines reconciliation.
- Identifying other issues from discharge (such as a suggestion that someone be referred to a memory clinic) and passing this onto the relevant team within the practice.
- Liaising with the hospital where there are inconsistencies or discrepancies on the discharge plan.
- Liaising with local pharmacies, particularly around dosette boxes and blister packs.
- Sorting out supply issues, particularly as demand for certain drugs has increased as a result of Covid19.
- Setting up monitoring systems to improve safety of prescribing of specific medication.
- Responding to queries from GPs and district nurses about medication, for example, if a patient can't swallow tablets is the medication available in a liquid form?

Andrea has seen an increasing demand in the role of pharmacy technicians particularly in primary care. What Andrea loves about her job is feeling valued by the clinicians and patients. It can be anything from identifying alternative products for a clinician to prescribe or quite simple things like getting a patients prescriptions renewed at the same time so they don't have to make multiple trips to the surgery and pharmacist, or finding a way for them to take all their medication at a time when there is someone to supervise it. As she says, a job that involves helping and talking to patients to help them make informed decisions and playing a part in a support network to clinicians feels very worthwhile and satisfying.

**Read more about the role:**

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/roles-pharmacy/pharmacy-technician>

**Read more about training to become a pharmacy technician:**

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/medicines-optimisation/training-pharmacy-technicians>



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