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: Anthony Johnson

Anthony has been a pharmacy technician since 2002. He left school not really knowing what he wanted to do and heard about the role at an apprenticeship event. He completed his apprenticeship at Kingsway Mental Health Trust, doing an NVQ3 in Pharmaceutical Sciences and working across several hospitals in the city. Once he had qualified he continued working at Kingsway Mental Health Trust and then became a senior technician at Derby Royal Infirmary, working shifts to support a 24/7 pharmacy service. He then became the team leader for the out-patient service where he got involved in supporting the electronic prescribing project, which eventually led to his current role as the project lead for electronic prescribing and medicines administration, utilising a new system

Derby has had an e-prescribing system for some time, which Anthony had been supporting as a senior technician. He is now working on the implementation of a new system, working with the IT department and suppliers to ensure the new system is as effective as possible, whilst keeping all the benefits of the existing system. These include:

- Guiding clinicians through the trust guidelines for particular illnesses or medications.
- Triggering alerts if a patient has incorrect dosages, drug interactions, co-morbidities or allergies.
- Completely eliminating the mis-prescribing of Methotrexate – a drug which should only be given weekly, except for certain types of cancers. Within the existing system security only certain doctors on certain wards at certain times can prescribe a daily dose of this drug, which means the e-prescribing system has to be updated when staff change. This creates more work for the e-prescribing team but has eliminated mis-prescribing of this drug.

- Providing on-screen information to doctors. This is a mixed blessing in that there may be so much information that it's over-whelming so Anthony is working with the trust governance teams and IT supplier to tailor alerts potentially triggered according to the grade of doctor or location (ward) within the trust so that less experienced doctors receive more alerts.

The new system is currently being tested in several pilot areas and will go live in 2020

Anthony has always been interested in IT and in a previous role had liaised with the IT department who were based on another site. This has led him to his involvement with e-prescribing and it was the head of IT who suggested he apply for his current role.

Working as a pharmacy technician can be much more than working with medicines and patients, and having an understanding of IT has given Anthony opportunities to support wider trust business objectives. He would recommend that anyone should take opportunities to get involved with change within their organisation, as it provides entry into any number of different job areas.

"

Anyone should take opportunities to get involved with change within their organization.

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

Developing people
for health and
healthcare

www.hee.nhs.uk

THE NHS
CONSTITUTION
the NHS belongs to us all