



Consultation on the Competency Framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners

We are consulting on a competency framework for designated prescribing practitioners. The consultation will be open for a six-week period from Friday 21st June to Friday 2nd August 2019. Consultation responses can be completed electronically ([DPPframeworkform](#)) or in word format. If using word format please send consultation responses to support@rpharms.com. All consultation questions are listed at the end of this document on page 14. Where questions relate to a specific part of the document the questions will also be highlighted in the main body of text.

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1. Introduction

Since the introduction of non-medical prescribing, trainees have undertaken a period of learning in practice (PLP) to consolidate and contextualise the academic learning delivered by the programme provider. The PLP enables the trainee to put theory into practice; to develop and demonstrate competence as a prescriber under the supervision of an experienced prescribing practitioner. Traditionally, medically qualified doctors have carried out the role, as a designated medical practitioner (DMP).

In 2006, the Department of Health and Social Care described the role of the DMP as critical and highly responsible in educating and assessing the trainee non-medical prescriber (NMP) (1). Specifically, in ascertaining whether trainees have met the necessary learning outcomes and acquired competencies, as defined by the relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and the approved Higher Education Institute (HEI) running the prescribing programme.

Professional regulatory changes in 2018/19 will enable some non-medical prescribers (NMPs) to take on this designated practitioner role for the PLP, in addition to DMPs continuing to carry out this role. These regulatory changes will improve access to training opportunities for those eligible to prescribe, with potential to increase numbers of NMPs. This will improve patient access to appropriate practitioners.

The PLP is critical to the development of safe and effective prescribers. The designated practitioner role is central to the PLP, and as such assuring the quality of this role is essential. In 2005 the National Prescribing Centre (NPC) published *A guide to help doctors prepare for and carry out the role of designated medical practitioner* (2). This document outlined eligibility criteria and a set of broad competency areas for the DMP role. Since publication, the guidance has been used by many of the HEIs who provide non-medical prescribing courses. Following the recent regulatory changes, there is now a need for guidance to reflect the expansion of this role to include NMPs.

To address this need the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) has led the development of a competency framework for those taking on this role. This framework has been developed by an independent multi-professional steering group, for use by all prescribing professions.

Definition of Designated Prescribing Practitioner

The term Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP) will be used throughout this framework to describe the role of the designated practitioner responsible for the non-medical prescribing trainee's period of learning in practice (PLP). It will act as an umbrella term to bring a number of different profession specific titles for the role together. The titles covered by this overarching term (when applied in the context of prescribing training) are:

- Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP)
- Practice Assessor
- Practice Supervisor
- Practice Educator
- Designated Medical Practitioner (DMP)

The aim of the DPP role:

“To oversee, support and assess the competence of non-medical prescribing trainees, in collaboration with academic and workplace partners, during the period of learning in practice”

Eligibility for the DPP role

The following requirements underpin the competencies within the framework, and should be met by all DPPs:

a. Regulatory requirements

Any prescriber taking on the DPP role must be registered with their professional regulator. All non-medical prescribers undertaking the DPP role should have the necessary annotation for a prescriber as required by their regulator.

b. A Competency Framework for All Prescribers

The expectation of any registered health professional practitioner acting in the DPP role is the ability to demonstrate they meet all competencies within the Competency framework for all Prescribers (3). The framework can be accessed [here](#).

Consultation Question: Is the title 'Designated Prescribing Practitioner' clear and unambiguous as an umbrella term to describe the role for the purpose of the multi-professional framework?

2. The Need for the Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework

- The DPP role is central to the PLP, which is a critical aspect of NMP training. The competency framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners (DPPs) has been developed to underpin quality in training during the PLP.
- The competencies in this framework will help prescribers to be effective DPPs who are able to optimise the PLP for NMPs in training, working with academic partners, to ensure the quality and safety of future non-medical prescribers.
- The framework has been developed for multi-professional use and provides the opportunity to bring prescribing professions together to ensure consistency in the competencies required of all healthcare professionals carrying out the same role.
- The framework has a wide range of uses and is pertinent to a number of groups involved in different aspects of NMP training. Some potential user groups and uses of the framework are outlined below:

- **Programme providers**

The framework will help programme providers to:

- ensure DPPs have the required competencies for the role
- inform the development of training for DPPs
- support DPPs to maintain and further develop the skills required to be effective in the role
- as a tool to support the provision of feedback to DPPs

- **Designated Prescribing Practitioners (DPPs)**

The framework will help DPPs to:

- understand the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours required of someone taking on the role
- self-assess and demonstrate their competence to take on the role
- develop confidence in their ability to take on the role
- target continuing professional development or revalidation

- **Programme Accreditors**

The framework will help accreditors:

- reviewing programme providers quality assurance process for DPPs, by using the framework as a tool to support this process'

- **NMP trainees**

The framework will help NMP trainees to:

- understand the role of the DPP
- identify an appropriate DPP
- consider the role as a potential area for their future development

- **Organisational NMP Leads**

The framework will help Organisational NMP Leads:

- as a tool to support governance processes around the period of learning in practice

- to support prospective NMP trainees to identify suitable DPPs

3. The Scope of the Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework

- The framework has been developed for multi-professional use. It covers the competencies required of a prescriber, in any profession, taking on the DPP role for trainees during the PLP.
- The DPP competency framework is a generic framework for any prescriber working in the DPP role, it does not contain competency statements that relate to specific professions or sectors of practice.
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) standards describe two roles key to delivering the PLP, practice supervisor and practice assessor (4). The competencies in this framework apply to any prescriber in the practice assessor role during the PLP, although many of the competencies will also be relevant to those in a practice supervisor role.
- The framework reflects the key competencies needed by all DPPs but must be contextualised to reflect different environments and areas of practice.
- Theme 7 of the framework outlines the competencies required of the DPP in creating an effective environment for learning.
 - The learning environment will be dependent on the practice setting, location, size and type of organisation, amongst other variables, and the competencies within Theme 7 should be contextualised to reflect this.
 - The employing organisation, where relevant, has a responsibility to the DPP to create an environment in which they can facilitate learning.
 - The employing organisation, where relevant, should ensure that the necessary resource and support is provided to enable the DPP to effectively carry out their role.
 - Whilst the DPP is expected to ensure the environment in which they practice is appropriately resourced to facilitate the trainee to meet their learning needs and outcomes, elements of this may be outside their control.

Consultation Question: Is the scope and purpose of the Competency framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners clear?

4. The framework development process

The framework was developed by an independent multi-disciplinary steering group, validation group and project board following a NICE accredited process and involving public consultation.

For more details of:

- the process used to update the framework see Appendix 1
- the professionals and patients involved in the process see Appendix 2

A literature review was undertaken in January 2019 to identify key evidence relating to the DMP role to inform the development of the competency framework. The literature search was conducted by The King's Fund. See Appendix 3 for further details of the literature review methodology.

An independent multi-professional steering group was assembled, with representation including prescribers across prescribing professions, DMPs, non-medical prescribing programme providers, organisational NMP leads and lay members. The steering group was chaired by an independent Chair. All members were asked to make a declaration of interest. See Appendix 2 for steering group membership details.

A Project Board was assembled, with representation from across GB, to provide a strategic overview for the framework. Representation included NHS England, NHS Education for Scotland, Health Education and Innovation Wales, Health Education England, Professional Regulators, Royal Colleges and NICE. See Appendix 2 for membership details.

A virtual reference group of individuals and organisations including practitioners from across the prescribing professions, organisational NMP leads and higher education institutes was created to provide multi-professional support and engagement for the development of the framework. See Appendix 2 for membership details.

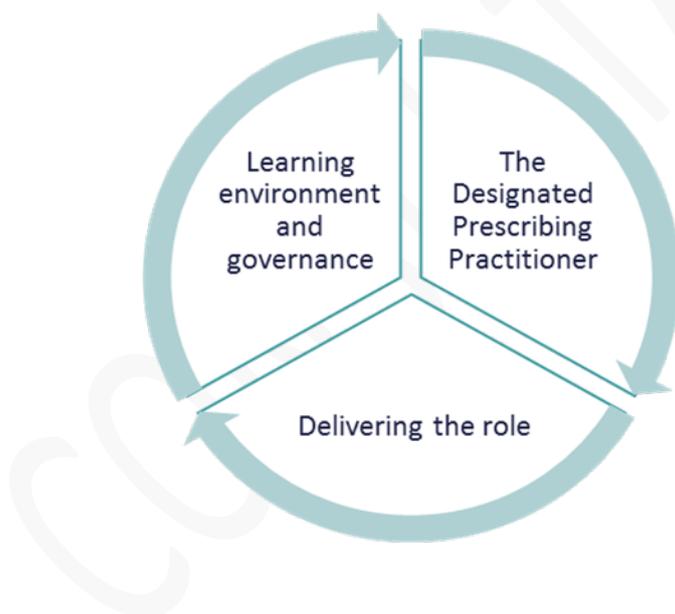
5. The Competency Framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners

The competencies within the framework are split across three sections:

- The first section looks at the required competencies of an individual taking on the DPP role
- The second focuses on the competencies required in delivering the role
- The third focuses on the learning environment and governance of the period of learning in practice

Consultation Question: Does this format appropriately reflect the DPP role?

Figure 1: The structure of the Competency framework for DPPs



Within the three sections are eight key themes, as shown in table 1, each of these themes contains a number of competency statements relating to the DPP role

Table 1: The structure of the Competency framework for DPPs

The Designated Prescribing Practitioner
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal characteristics 2. Professional skills and knowledge 3. Teaching and training skills
Delivering the role
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Working in Partnership 5. Prioritising patient care 6. Developing in the role
Learning Environment and Governance
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Learning environment 8. Governance

Consultation Question: In order to ensure that all the statements in the framework are relevant to safe and effective prescribing supervisors please rank each competency statement using the following scale: 1=less important 2=important 3=highly important.

The Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP)

1. Personal Characteristics

The practitioner taking on the DPP role:

1.1	Recognises the value and responsibility of the DPP role
1.2	Demonstrates leadership through their clinical practice
1.3	Demonstrates a desire to support trainees
1.4	Displays professional integrity, is objective in supervision and/or assessment
1.5	Is open, approachable and empathetic
1.6	Creates a learning culture through their practice

2. Professional Skills and Knowledge

The practitioner taking on the DPP role:

2.1	Works in line with legal, regulatory, professional and organisational standards
2.2	Demonstrates an appropriate level of prescribing experience
2.3	Is an active prescriber with appropriate knowledge and experience of the trainee's area of clinical practice
2.4	Has up-to-date patient facing, clinical and diagnostic skills and evidence of demonstrating competence in an area of practice relevant to the trainee
2.5	Understands the scope and legal remit of non-medical prescribing for different professions

3. Teaching and training skills

The practitioner taking on the DPP role:

3.1	Has some experience or training in teaching and/or supervising in practice
3.2	Has an understanding of different teaching methods to facilitate learning in practice and adapt to individual student needs
3.3	Articulates decision making processes and justifies the rationale for decisions when teaching or training others
3.4	Has knowledge of a range of methods of assessment and experience of conducting assessment of trainees in clinical practice
3.5	Delivers timely and regular constructive feedback
3.6	Facilitates learning by encouraging critical thinking and reflection

Delivering the role

4. Working in Partnership

In delivering the role, the DPP is able to:

4.1	Work together with the trainee to understand their baseline knowledge and skills, and together jointly create a development plan for meeting learning outcomes
4.2	Regularly assess the trainee at appropriate intervals to guide gradual handover of elements of the process that lead to prescribing
4.3	Work in partnership with the trainee, other practitioners and the programme provider to confirm the competence of the trainee
4.4	Communicate any concerns regarding trainee to the programme provider in a timely manner

4.5	Ensure a multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to training, recognising the importance of the trainee learning from other professions to deliver a broad learning experience
4.6	Recognise own limits in capacity, knowledge and skills and areas of practice where other practitioners may be better placed to support learning
4.7	Facilitate trainee access to other appropriate practitioners to enable the trainee to meet their learning needs and the programme learning outcomes

5. Prioritising Patient Care

In delivering the role, the DPP is able to:

5.1	Ensure safe and effective patient care remains central to practice through effective supervision
5.2	Ensure patients are informed of and consent to trainee presence at consultations
5.3	Take appropriate action if has concerns regarding the trainee's practice
5.4	Identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour by the trainee
5.5	Act in the interest of patient and public safety when making decisions on trainee competence

6. Developing in the role

In delivering the role, the DPP:

6.1	Is open to learn and be challenged
6.2	Uses feedback from trainee and others, and uses this to improve their practice
6.3	Undertakes and records CPD specific to DPP role and provides evidence of development of skills relevant to the role
6.4	Identifies when help is required in DPP role and when, and where, to seek support
6.5	Regularly reflects on role as a DPP and potential for improving

Learning Environment and Governance

7. Learning environment

To ensure an appropriate environment for learning the DPP:

7.1	Dedicates sufficient time to supporting the trainee throughout their period of learning in practice
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7.2	Creates an environment that promotes equality, inclusivity and diversity
7.3	Creates an environment that encourages participation and open discussion to support learning

8. Governance

The DPP:

8.1	Ensures that there are appropriate governance structures in place within the workplace
8.2	Understands the wider governance structure surrounding the DPP role, including the programme provider, employing organisation, professional regulator and others
8.3	Understands the role and responsibilities of the DPP within this governance structure
8.4	Ensures familiarity with process of escalating concerns about a trainee, and, where appropriate, engages with this process
8.5	Engages with employing organisation, including organisational NMP Lead (where appropriate) to ensure support and resources are available to undertake DPP role
8.6	Awareness of support available for both supervisor and trainees and how to access this support

Glossary

Active prescriber: Consults with patients and makes prescribing decisions based on clinical assessment with sufficient frequency to maintain competence. Reflects and audits prescribing practice to identify developmental needs.

Experienced prescriber: An active prescriber who would usually have at least 3 years' prescribing experience.

Competency framework: A structure which describes the competencies (demonstrable knowledge, skills, characteristics and behaviours) central to effective performance in a role.

Higher Education Institute (HEI): The University through which the non-medical prescribing programme is delivered

Non-medical prescriber (NMP): This term encompasses both independent and supplementary prescribers as well as community nurse prescribers.

Organisational non-medical prescribing lead: The person with responsibility for promoting and co-ordinating NMP within the organisation, who also works to integrate and expand NMP into service planning. They may also assess and monitor the quality of prescribing practice, providing professional advice and support within the organisation.

Period of learning in practice (PLP): The time spent in a clinical setting, under the supervision of the prescribing supervisor, putting academic learning into practice.

Programme Provider: The programme team delivering the non-medical prescribing course

Trainee: The individual undertaking the non-medical prescribing course.

References

- (1) Department of Health. Improving Patients' Access to Medicines: A Guide to Implementing Nurse and Pharmacist Independent Prescribing within the NHS in England. A Guide to Implementing Nurse and Pharmacist Independent Prescribing within the NHS in England. 2006.
- (2) National Prescribing Centre. Training non-medical prescribers in practice. A guide to help doctors prepare for and carry out the role of designated medical practitioner. 2005.
- (3) Royal Pharmaceutical Society. A competency framework for all prescribers. 2016 [cited 2018 Dec 6]. Available from: <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/prescribers-competency-framework>
- (4) Nursing and Midwifery Council. Standards for Prescribing Programmes. Available from : <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-prescribers/standards-for-prescribing-programmes/>
- (5) prescribers/standards-for-prescribing-programmes/

Appendices

Appendix 1 The development process [to be inserted into final document]

Appendix 2 Acknowledgements [to be inserted into final document]

Appendix 3 Literature review [to be inserted into final document]

Consultation Questions

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

1. Is the title 'Designated Prescribing Practitioner' clear and unambiguous as an umbrella term to describe the role for the purpose of this multi-professional framework?

YES/NO

2. If you answered 'no' or 'don't know' to question1, would either of the following terms be an appropriate alternative?
 - a. Designated Prescribing Practice Assessor
 - b. Designated Assessor for Prescribing Practice
 - c. Neither

3. Is the scope and purpose of the Competency framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners clear?

YES/NO

4. The framework has been developed under the following three key sections:
 1. The Designated Prescribing Practitioner (DPP)
 2. Delivering the role
 3. Learning environment and wider governance.

Does this format appropriate reflect the DPP role?

YES/NO

5. If you answered 'no' or 'don't know' to above questions, please expand on your answer here
6. In order to ensure that all the statements in the framework are relevant and required of an effective DPP, please rank each statement using the following scale: 1=less important, 2=important 3=highly important

The Designated Prescribing Practitioner

1. Personal Characteristics

The practitioner taking on the DPP role:

		Rank
1.1	Recognises the value and responsibility of the DPP role	
1.2	Demonstrates leadership through their clinical practice	
1.3	Demonstrates a desire to support trainees	
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3. Teaching and training skills

The practitioner taking on the DPP role:

3.1	Has some experience or training in teaching and/or supervising in practice	
3.2	Has an understanding of a range of teaching methods to facilitate learning in practice and adapt to individual student needs	
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Delivering the role

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In delivering the role, the DPP is able to:

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4.3	Work in partnership with the trainee, other practitioners and the programme provider to confirm competence of the trainee	
4.4	Communicate any concerns regarding trainee to the programme provider in a timely manner	
4.5	Promote a multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to training, recognising the importance of the trainee learning from other professions to deliver a broad learning experience	
4.6	Recognise own limits in capacity, knowledge and skills and areas of practice where other practitioners may be better placed to support learning	
4.7	Facilitate trainee access to other appropriate practitioners to enable the trainee to meet their learning needs and the programme learning outcomes	

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In delivering the role, the DPP:

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6.4	Identifies when help is required in DPP role and when, and where, to seek support	
6.5	Regularly reflects on role as a DPP and potential for improving	

Learning Environment and Governance

7. Learning environment

To ensure an appropriate environment for learning the DPP:

7.1	Dedicates sufficient time to supporting the trainee throughout their period or learning in practice	
7.2	Creates an environment that promotes equality, inclusivity and diversity	
7.3	Creates an environment that encourages participation and open discussion to support learning	

8. Governance

The DPP:

8.1	Ensures that there are appropriate governance structures in place within the workplace	
8.2	Understands wider governance structure surrounding the DPP role, including the programme provider, employing organisation, professional regulator and others	
8.3	Understands the role and responsibilities of the DPP within this governance structure	
8.4	Ensures familiarity with process of escalating concerns about a trainee, and, where appropriate, engages with this process	
8.5	Engages with employing organisation, including organisational NMP Lead (where appropriate) to ensure has support and resources to undertake DPP role	
8.6	Awareness of support available for both supervisor and trainees and how to access this support	

7. Any additional comments on the competencies within any section of the framework?
8. Does the framework reflect the key behaviours required of an effective DPP. If no, where are the gaps?
9. Are there any statements that you think are in the wrong place in the framework?

10. Is the framework sufficiently generic to apply to DPPs from all professional backgrounds? If no, what needs modification?
11. How might you/your organisation use the framework once it is published?
12. How could you/your organisation help to promote the framework once it is published?
13. What might be the financial and/or organisation barriers to using this framework in practice?
14. Are there any supporting references or resources that you think should be highlighted to support implementation of the guidance?
15. Do you have any other comments about the document?

Please ensure to provide the following information with your response:

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

If organisation:

Name of organisation

How many people does your organisation represent?

If individual response:

Job Title

Thank you for responding to the consultation. Please send your consultation response to support@rpharms.com