Declaration of Competence for pharmacy services

> A guide to using the Declaration of Competence (DoC) system

Introduction

This document has been developed as an introduction to the DoC system. It supports pharmacy professionals to use the DoC system and navigate through the process efficiently.

Your regulatory responsibilities

Pharmacy professionals must ensure they meet the Standards and guidance for pharmacy professionals set by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). Pharmacy professionals are personally responsible for keeping their knowledge and skills up-to-date and relevant to their roles and responsibilities. They must also undertake continuing professional development (CPD) relevant to their scope of practice.

Pharmacy owners and superintendent pharmacists must make sure the GPhC Standards for Registered Pharmacies are met. They are responsible for creating and maintaining the right environment, both organisational and physical, for the safe and effective practice of pharmacy. This includes ensuring pharmacy teams (including locums) have the appropriate skills, qualifications and competence for their role and the tasks they carry out.

The Declaration of Competence (DoC) system

The DoC system is a self-assessment and declaration process which provides pharmacy professionals with a framework to demonstrate to themselves, their employers and the service commissioners that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to provide a specific pharmacy service. It encourages self-reflection on practice and peer review and provides a structured approach to supporting pharmacy professionals in their CPD.

The DoC system includes details of available learning and assessment to support pharmacy professionals and their teams in meeting a range of core and service-specific competencies, which include the clinical, ethical, cultural and legal aspects of providing this service. Pharmacy professionals must meet the requirements in the GPhC's *Standards for pharmacy professionals*, and, additionally:

- Must continually work towards developing their consultation skills in order to meet the

Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice: Practice Standards for England, as determined by NHS England

- Must meet their responsibilities for safeguarding

The DoC system includes a self-assessment framework against the core and service-specific competencies expected of all pharmacy professionals providing the service. It has been developed in conjunction with the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate education (CPPE), national experts and professional groups. The self-assessment takes into account:

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance
- National guidance from expert groups relating specifically to the topic

Structure of the DoC system

The DoC system has three sections:

Section A: The DoC self-assessment framework

Section A contains the key competencies expected of all pharmacy professionals providing this service. Before signing your DoC statement you must ensure you have met all the competencies in Section A.

Section B: Recommended learning and assessment

Section B includes the suggested learning and assessment you should consider if you are unable to meet the competencies in Section A. Learning and assessment is linked to both the core and service-specific competencies for the service to help you identify and meet your learning needs.

DoC statement

The final section is the DoC statement. You must print and sign this to acknowledge your professional responsibility for being competent to provide the service.

How to access the DoC system

The DoC system is available on the CPPE website at: cppe.ac.uk/doc

Here you will find more information relating to the DoC system and how to complete it. You can also find the DoC for the specific service you would like to provide or continue providing by looking under 'Select a service to begin' in the right-hand panel.

In order to access the complete DoC you need to log in to the CPPE website. You will then be asked for permission to share your data with commissioners and IT system suppliers such as PharmOutcomes. Sharing information relating to the learning and assessment you have completed will enable you to be service-ready and also facilitate a more efficient commissioning and payment process. You will only be asked to do this once.

You are then ready to work through the DoC system.

How to work through the DoC system

STEP 1: The DoC framework

Select a service from CPPE's DoC page, then select Step 1 of the DoC system. Download the self-assessment framework for the required service and save it to your device. Each DoC has been designed as an interactive PDF which you can type into and save.

Aim: To reflect on previous learning, assessment and experience, and self-assess your competence to provide the service (Section A of the download document).

As you complete step 1 of the DoC framework, you should:

I. Reflect on previous learning and what you already know in relation to the service topic.

II. Consider the core competencies for consultation skills and safeguarding. These are mandatory for all DoCs. What learning and assessment have you done to meet these?

III. Review the service-specific competencies and complete each section with evidence and information of the learning, experience and assessment, and other training you have completed to meet each competency.

The first core competency says:

Do you meet or are you actively working towards the *Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice: Practice Standards for England*?

If you confirm that you are 'actively working towards' the standards, you are declaring that you are undertaking the relevant learning and CPD to meet the standards. It is expected that you will have accessed the standards and associated learning to meet this requirement and that you will complete the assessment within 12 months of signing the Declaration of Competence statement.

As a pharmacy professional you should continuously seek to develop your consultation skills throughout your career and, therefore, this topic should regularly feature in your CPD plan. If you have not yet completed the assessment, you should be able to provide evidence of the consultation skills learning you have undertaken.

Top tips and notes for Step 1

- Working through Step 1 will identify any gaps in your competence. You are professionally accountable for declaring your own competence and any gaps must be met by completing additional learning and assessment (see below). Doing this supports you in providing evidence of competence to your employer and service commissioner.
  Remember: If you are offering a completely new service, then you may have many gaps to fill.

- Think about your experiences in a holistic way – there may be crossover between

different services (eg, competencies for gaining consent).

- Consider alternative methods of meeting competencies; for example, peer review and work-shadowing sessions with colleagues or other healthcare professionals.

- Consider what learning you have recently completed as part of your CPD, and which areas of learning and development may need updating.

STEPs 2 and 3: Learning and Assessment

Aim: To fill any gaps in your knowledge or competence in order to provide the service (Section B of the download document).

As you complete steps 2 and 3 of the DoC framework, you should:

I.   Review the suggested learning and assessment resources listed in Section B of your downloaded DoC document.

II.   Complete the relevant learning and assessment so you can meet the identified competency gaps.

III. Revisit the DoC framework you downloaded and started to complete in Step 1, and add any additional learning which supports you in meeting your competency gaps.

IV.   When you are assured that you meet each of the competencies, move on to Step 4.

Top tips and notes for Steps 2 and 3

- Accessing Steps 2 and 3 of your chosen service's DoC page should remind you of the learning (Step 2) and assessment (Step 3) that you have already completed. Accessing steps 2 and 3 will also show you any relevant learning and assessments which have not yet been completed.

- Note that some DoCs for specific services include mandatory/specified training at regular intervals (eg, practical injection technique for influenza vaccination). You may feel you are already competent in this area, but it is your professional responsibility to ensure you complete this training when specified.

- Consider when you last completed the learning and assessment. Could it now be out-of-date?

- If you are still unsure whether you can declare your competence after completing steps 2 and 3, you should revisit the learning and assessment.

- If you are confident you meet all the competencies in the DoC framework and can provide evidence of your learning and assessment, go to step 4 of the CPPE DoC webpage.

STEP 4: Download, print and sign your declaration

Aim: To generate your personal DoC statement which can be kept with you on the pharmacy premises as evidence to provide a service.

I. From step 4 of your chosen service's DoC page, download and save your personal statement of declaration to your computer.

II. This is pre-populated with the CPPE personal learning and assessment completed for the service, and the relevant dates of completion. Add any additional details of other learning and assessment (for example, from employers or other training providers). This may include practical face-to-face training (eg, in vaccination technique).

III. Tick the boxes against all relevant statements.

IV. Print off your declaration statement.

V. You **must** sign and date the declaration to demonstrate your competence.

STEP 5: Keep your records up to date

Aim: To confirm your personal Declaration of Competence and keep your records up to date.

I. Confirm that you have signed your statement of declaration by ticking the box, and indicate the date the statement was signed.

Top tips and notes for step 5

- By completing step 5 you are confirming that you meet all the competencies in the DoC framework, and that you can provide evidence to that effect.

- Completing step 5 also updates your *My CPPE* record with the details of when you last declared your competence for the service.

- Making a declaration whilst not meeting the competencies may constitute or be treated as a fitness to practise issue.

Keeping up to date

- Downloading the DoC framework to your device will help you keep up to date. However, the DoC framework is updated regularly, so you should periodically check that you are working through the most up-to-date version.

- Revisit and work through the DoC at least every two years, according to the service specification, to reassess your competence.

- You are professionally responsible for keeping up to date with any changes in practice, national guidance or policy. You should reassess your competence to provide a service on an ongoing basis by responding to new guidance, standards and relevant learning, and assessment updates.

Supporting your professional development

The DoC system complements the following professional standards and frameworks which support you in developing your practice and progressing your career.

The Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice: Practice Standards for England

As part of the wider NHS, all pharmacy professionals are responsible for demonstrating a person-centred approach to your consultation practice. The Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice: Practice Standards for England outline the key knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of all pharmacy professionals in a patient-facing role. You can use the standards as a reflective tool to support you in identifying the skills and behaviours you demonstrate well and those which require further development.

- The Consultation Skills for Pharmacy Practice: Practice Standards for England

Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Professional Development Programmes

Working through the reflective process of the DoC system will complement your professional development by building evidence for your Foundation Practice Framework (FPF) and supporting your progression through the membership stages of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Faculty.

- Royal Pharmaceutical Society Foundation Pharmacy Framework
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society Faculty Advanced Pharmacy Framework (APF)

Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) Foundation Pharmacy Framework (FPF)

The Foundation Pharmacy Framework (FPF) supports pharmacy technicians in developing and embedding key knowledge, skills and attitudes in their first one to two years of practice. It also provides a foundation block for pharmacy technicians wishing to go on to advanced practice roles such as medicines management, accuracy checking and enhanced community pharmacy services.

- Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) Foundation Pharmacy Framework

Endorsement and support

NHS England supports the Declaration of Competence system for use across England. The system has received endorsement from the following national pharmacy organisations:

- Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS)
- Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC)
- Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK)
- National Pharmacy Association (NPA)
- Association of Independent Multiple Pharmacies (AIMp)
- Company Chemists' Association (CCA)