

The 2017/18 Practice Review

Practice Review will be introduced for all pharmacists practising in patient-facing roles in 2018 and the first group of pharmacists were randomly selected by the PSI this autumn.

This represents the final step in establishing a CPD system for pharmacists in Ireland as set out under Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2015 (S.I. No. 553/2015) (CPD Rules 2015). The IOP is committed to enabling the profession to prepare for this process as it has done for other aspects of the CPD system, such as ePortfolio Review. A pilot Practice Review process took place in 2017 involving over 100 pharmacists with a range of experience from a variety of practice backgrounds. Peer pharmacists have supported the development of the process by shaping the content, developing cases and questions, participating as Practice Reviewers and taking part in standard setting processes. These pharmacists provided feedback throughout the process and the overall

reaction was broadly positive. Practice Review continues to be a peer-led process with pharmacists from patient-facing roles involved throughout many aspects of Practice Review. Liz Hoctor, Professional Development and Learning Manager, IPU, sat down with Michelle Scott, Practice Review Project Lead, IOP, to discuss some of the questions that pharmacists might have.

1. What does Practice Review involve?

Practice Review comprises of two components; the Standardised Pharmacy Interactions (SPIs) and the Clinical Knowledge Review (CKR).

The SPIs are simulated pharmacy cases which are designed to be reflective of situations with which pharmacists practising in patient-facing roles would be expected to be capable of dealing with, such as counselling a patient on a prescription medication, providing advice to someone on the treatment of a minor ailment or dealing with an enquiry from a healthcare professional. The SPIs address the competencies dealing with patient care as addressed in the legislation; Gathering Information, Management Strategies (including patient education) and follow-up, and Communication (including counselling skills). They have



"This [detailed feedback report] allows pharmacists to identify areas of strength and potential areas for further development."

been designed, developed and reviewed by peer pharmacists. Practice Review will include seven SPIs, in addition to an initial trial-run SPI, which will not contribute to the review.

The CKR enables pharmacists to demonstrate competence in the area of clinical knowledge, as identified in the legislation. In this review, pharmacists are presented with 18 patient cases and are asked to answer three multiple choice questions (MCQs) relating to each case. In order to reflect realistic practice settings, the CKR is an 'open book' format and pharmacists will therefore have access to references. All questions and cases have been written by pharmacists to be reflective of practice and designed to review a level of baseline competence. Further information on each of the Practice Review components is available in the Practice Review support resources on www.iop.ie.

2. I have been selected for Practice Review but I cannot make either of the dates – what should I do?

The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) manages all applications for exemptions from Practice Review under its Extenuating Circumstances process. If circumstances apply to you, which would have an impact on your ability to present for Practice Review, you should contact the PSI in accordance with their Extenuating Circumstances policy. This policy and the relevant application form are available on the PSI website. All applications submitted will be managed by the PSI on a confidential case-by-case basis. The PSI's initial communication outlines a timeline for this process. In



situations where unforeseen extenuating circumstances arise outside of this timeframe but prior to the Practice Review event, applications should still be made to the PSI and should include evidence as to why it was not possible to submit in advance of the specified deadline.

3. I have been selected for Practice Review for the Saturday date but cannot make it – can I swap to the Sunday date?

Practice Review will usually take place on one weekend in April and October each year, with two events taking place on each weekend (one on Saturday and one on Sunday). The selection of these dates will bear in mind the impact of school holidays and festive events, such as the Easter and Halloween bank holidays. The selection process for Practice Review is managed entirely by the PSI. If circumstances arise where you cannot present for Practice Review on your allocated date, you should contact the PSI directly.

4. I have to travel to Dublin for Practice Review – what time will it start and finish?

Practice Review events will commence at approximately 10.00am and finish at approximately 4.00pm. During this time, pharmacists will be guided through the process by the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IOP) staff and facilitators.

Tea, coffee and refreshments will be provided throughout the day.

5. Will a laptop and reference books be provided at the Practice Review or will I bring my own?

In order to reflect 'real-life' practice scenarios, pharmacists will be provided with access to a computer with internet access during the SPIs. This means that pharmacists may access any helpful websites or online references that they might ordinarily use. When peer pharmacists are developing the SPI cases, they can also decide what props or references should be made available to the pharmacist. Therefore, a number of items will be provided to the pharmacist for each SPI. These may include the following:

- A pen and paper to facilitate note-taking if required;
- A laminated sheet containing an introduction for the SPI they are about to encounter;
- Any additional information that the pharmacist may require for the SPI (e.g. a copy of the patient medication record); and
- Any props relevant to the SPI. These may include appropriate reference sources, e.g. British National Formulary, British National Formulary for Children, Summary of Product Characteristics (SPCs) and/or Patient Information Leaflets, calculator, medication and prescriptions.

Everything that is required to undertake the SPI successfully will be provided to the pharmacist.

During the Clinical Knowledge Review (CKR), each pharmacist will be provided with their own computer station. In order to reflect realistic practice settings, the CKR is an 'open book' format and pharmacists will therefore have access to references. The essential references to which pharmacists should have access in their pharmacy setting are described in the *PSI Guidelines on the Equipment Requirements of a Retail Pharmacy Business*. These are the references that will be made available to pharmacists and it is possible to answer all of the MCQs within the CKR by referring to these references.

All references will be provided in an online format and pharmacists are welcome to bring their own hardcopies of the listed references to the CKR, along with any other additional resources that they feel they will require. It is advised to bring the most up-to-date versions of hardcopy references.

6. Which dispensary software will be used at the Practice Review – I am only familiar with one type?

Practice Review is designed to review the four competencies dealing with patient care as identified by the CPD Rules 2015. These are clinical knowledge, the ability to gather and interpret appropriately information from and about patients, patient management and education and communication (including counselling) skills. Practice Review is not designed to review the practice of dispensing; therefore, the following would not form part of Practice Review: pharmacy

law, practical dispensing skills including labelling of medication, prescription types, drug schemes and reimbursement of medication, medication costs etc. This means that there will be no dispensary software used during Practice Review and all props, where relevant, will be pre-labelled appropriately. This enables pharmacists to focus specifically on gathering the information, providing information and communicating it in a way that the patient understands.

7. I would not be comfortable being assessed by a pharmacist who knows me personally. How will this be addressed?

Practice Review is designed to be a robust and fair process. Every effort has been made to ensure that this is the case. The IIOP recognises that under certain circumstances, potential conflicts of interest may arise during the course of Practice Review. The IIOP is committed to ensuring that potential conflicts never manifest as actual conflicts which affect the outcome of Practice Review. Practice Reviewers must review, and be seen to review, the pharmacist and their performance during SPIs, without prejudice or conflict from any direction. These peer pharmacists have received standardised training to ensure that this is the case. The IIOP has also developed a *Conflict of Interest Policy* to identify any potential conflicts of interest and to address these appropriately. Further information is available in the policies section of the Practice Review Support Resources.

8. I was selected for the ePortfolio Review last year. Why do I have to do the Practice Review as well – it's very time consuming?

The CPD Rules 2015 state that the Practice Review must take account of the review of the report on the pharmacist's CPD

activities, i.e. the ePortfolio Review. Therefore, according to the PSI, all pharmacists practising in a patient-facing role who have been called for ePortfolio Review in previous years are eligible for selection for Practice Review. Up to a maximum of 144 pharmacists practising in patient-facing roles will undertake Practice Review each year.

9. I was selected for the ePortfolio Review in 2016/17 but did not meet the standard. As a result, I am automatically part of the ePortfolio Review 2017/18. Now I have been selected for the Practice Review in April 2018; this is very stressful.

We appreciate that this may be stressful and the IIOP is committed to supporting and enabling pharmacists throughout the process.

10. Can I apply for an exemption to Practice Review due to extenuating circumstances like the ePortfolio Review?

The PSI operates an extenuating circumstances process in a similar way to that for ePortfolio Review. The extenuating circumstances policy is available on the PSI website and provides further information on the application process and examples of extenuating circumstances.

11. I am the superintendent pharmacist of a number of pharmacies so I only spend the odd day in the pharmacy. Can I skip the Practice Review?

Superintendent pharmacists are identified in the legislation (CPD Rules 2015) as practising in a patient-facing role. The PSI has also provided further clarification on this. Practice Review is applicable to pharmacists practising

in patient-facing roles regardless of the frequency that they meet with patients. The core competencies of clinical knowledge, gathering information, management strategies and communication skills apply to all pharmacists practising in patient-facing roles. During the Practice Review pilot, pharmacists from a variety of practice backgrounds, roles and experience levels were involved as participants and these included superintendent pharmacists and other pharmacists with limited day-to-day contact with patients. Feedback from the pilot was positive and all pharmacists demonstrated competence during the process.

12. I do not work as a patient-facing pharmacist, yet I have been selected for Practice Review. What should I do?

The PSI manages the selection process for Practice Review; therefore, it is advised that pharmacists contact the PSI directly if this situation arises.

13. What will happen if I don't go to the Practice Review?

In cases where a pharmacist does not participate in Practice Review, the Executive Director of the IIOP shall be obliged to refer the pharmacist to the PSI in accordance with the CPD Rules 2015. This will be done following communication with the pharmacist.

14. What will happen if I don't meet the standard of the Practice Review?

Practice Review is intended to be educational and supportive. With this in mind, it is vital that the IIOP provides ongoing support to pharmacists in identifying their developmental needs.

In some cases, pharmacists may find that performance in one or more of the competencies may not have been as they would have expected and the outcome

may show that further review is required in one or more defined competencies during Practice Review. If this is the case, the IIOP will provide support in line with the educational and supportive ethos of Practice Review.

Pharmacists will receive a detailed feedback report which will show how they performed in each of the four competencies in comparison to the average results for all pharmacists who have undertaken the same Practice Review. This allows pharmacists to identify areas of strength and potential areas for further development. The report will also indicate if it has been possible to ascertain if pharmacists have demonstrated an appropriate level of competence in each of the four competencies during Practice Review. Depending on the outcome, pharmacists may be directed towards specific remediation activities and/or required to undertake another full or partial Practice Review.

Pharmacists may be afforded further opportunities to undertake relevant components of Practice Review to a maximum of two subsequent Practice Review attempts which must be undertaken within one year of notification of initial outcome.

15. Where can I get more information?

The IIOP has developed a suite of useful support resources, which are now available by clicking the Practice Review link on www.iop.ie (you must be logged in to view the support resources). These resources have been broken down into short lessons for ease of reference and are available in a variety of formats: printable guides, interactive guides and video guides. Information is also included on relevant policies and there is a Q&A section.

There has also been a Practice Review roadshow taking place at various locations throughout Ireland. One of the roadshows has been recorded and will be available on the IIOP website for pharmacists to view.