

Position statement: The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pharmacy

This statement sets out the GPhC's position on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pharmacy practice, revalidation and education and training. It also sets out the responsibilities of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy owners when using AI.

What is Artificial Intelligence and how can it be used in pharmacy practice and education and training?

An Artificial Intelligence system is defined as a 'machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments.'¹

AI can be used in a range of ways that may be relevant to pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacies, for example:

- diagnosis and prescribing
- clinical checks in pharmacy dispensing systems
- supporting operational tasks within pharmacy services
- transcribing patient notes or other information
- supporting reflection or assessments in the context of education, training and revalidation.

Our role

The GPhC regulates pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and registered pharmacies to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public. Our work includes:

- setting, monitoring and enforcing standards for registered pharmacies, pharmacy education, training and professional standards for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.
- providing guidance to the people we regulate on how to meet the standards we set.
- investigating concerns about pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacies and taking action to protect patients and the public.

¹ Definition of AI as adopted by countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) including the UK Government: [Understand AI - AI Knowledge Hub](#)

Our position

AI and other technologies are reshaping how pharmacy services and care are delivered. This has the potential to benefit patients and the public but also creates new risks that need to be managed.

We are committed to ensuring our regulation keeps pace with these changes and safeguards patient care and public confidence, whilst enabling innovation. We want to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to provide trusted, safe, effective pharmacy care and work with other healthcare regulators and organisations to protect patients and the public.

Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacies must make sure they meet our standards at all times. This includes where AI or other technology are being used to support the delivery of pharmacy services, or in other areas such as pharmacy education and training.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are personally accountable for their professional practice, even when AI is being used. They must always be prepared to justify their decisions and actions, explaining how they have exercised their professional judgement.

AI is developing rapidly. We will continue to keep our standards and guidance under review to ensure they support the safe and effective use of AI in pharmacy. We will also continue to work with other regulatory bodies to consider the impact of AI in healthcare and collectively seek to address any emergent regulatory gaps or overlaps that may emerge.

If any concerns are raised with us regarding a pharmacist, pharmacy technician or pharmacy and their use of AI, we will use our established processes to investigate the concerns. This may include investigating concerns that a pharmacist or pharmacy technician has not appropriately used their professional judgement and clinical decision-making when using AI tools.

The GPhC does not have a role in regulating AI tools/ products or in assessing their clinical safety or technical performance.

In the UK, many AI products designed for use in healthcare are regulated as medical devices by the Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA). We work closely with the MHRA and other regulatory bodies and organisations with a role to play in supporting the safe use of AI technology within health and care services and are contributing to its National Commission into the Regulation of AI in Healthcare.

Meeting our standards when using AI

Responsibilities of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are expected to meet our **Standards for pharmacy professionals** at all times and to follow supporting guidance.

In order to meet these standards, we would expect pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to:

- understand how AI tools are intended to be used, their limitations and biases.
- ensure they have undertaken relevant training and have the necessary knowledge and skills for any AI tools they use.
- review outputs from AI tools for accuracy, bias or misleading information.
- be transparent about their use of AI tools.
- meet patient confidentiality and data protection requirements, including reviewing how information is stored, used or shared.

- explain to patients how AI is being used in their care, and any associated risks or benefits.
- seek consent from patients and the public where necessary.
- behave professionally, including demonstrating honesty and integrity.
- raise any concerns about AI use, errors or risks in line with the duty of candour.
- not use AI in any way that puts patients and the public at risk of harm.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians remain personally accountable for all decisions and actions when using AI. AI should not replace clinical decision making and professional judgement.

Revalidation

It is important that AI is used responsibly and professionally when undertaking revalidation.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must make sure that their revalidation submissions are accurate and true. It is not appropriate for a pharmacist or a pharmacy technician to use AI to create full revalidation submissions or falsify information, and if they do so, they may face further investigation.

If pharmacists and pharmacy technicians use AI to support their revalidation, they must ensure this is done in a responsible and transparent way.

We have published further advice on the use of AI in revalidation.

Responsibilities of pharmacy owners and registered pharmacies

Pharmacy owners and superintendent pharmacists are expected to meet our **Standards for registered pharmacies** at all times and to follow supporting guidance.

In order to meet these standards, we would expect pharmacy owners and superintendent pharmacists to do the following, and to be able to demonstrate this during pharmacy inspections:

- carry out due diligence to make sure AI tools are safe, appropriate and used in line with their intended purpose.
- have clear governance arrangements, including risk assessments, data security, patient confidentiality and information governance.
- make sure any AI tools used are supported by suitable training, so staff understand the system and its limitations.
- make sure AI tools are monitored and reviewed as part of routine quality and risk management.

During inspections, our inspectors will also look for evidence that the standards for registered pharmacies are being met when AI tools are being used — including in relation to governance, staff competence, equipment, data protection and safety.

Our **inspection decision making framework** provides examples which demonstrate how pharmacies can contribute towards the safe and responsible use of technology and medical devices, which would include the use of AI.

Responsibilities of education and training providers and learners

AI can support learning by improving efficiency, enabling realistic simulations and offering personalised learning tools.

However, risks include over-reliance on AI tools, loss of core skills, and exposure to biased or inaccurate outputs.

Education providers should support learners to:

- understand both the benefits and risks of AI.
- develop the skills to use AI ethically, safely and effectively.
- meet GPhC standards and learning outcomes and ensure the authenticity of assessments.

We have published further advice on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pharmacy education. (link to be added)

We have also published a joint statement with other health professional regulators **on using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in health and care professional education.**