

FACE2FACE

Head of Pharmacy Development, Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland

Katherine Kidd, Head of Pharmacy Development, Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland.

Email: kkidd@communitypharmacyni.co.uk



Katherine Kidd

Question:

What is your job title?

Answer:

Head of Pharmacy Development with Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI), which represents Northern Ireland's community pharmacy contractors regarding negotiations on services, the pharmacy contract and remuneration/reimbursement.

What are your main responsibilities/duties?

My role focuses on supporting service development and implementation within community pharmacy, working collaboratively with both commissioners and policy makers. This involves reviewing and seeking ways to improve existing pharmacy services, as well as identifying and developing new opportunities. I also support the Chief Executive in addressing professional pharmacy issues related to the work of CPNI. I have responsibility for CPNI's Margins Survey Unit, which seeks to understand the extent to which retained profits on medicines purchased contribute to community pharmacy funding, and deal with Drug Tariff issues.

To whom do you report and where does the post fit in the management structure?

I report directly to the Chief Executive, CPNI and Head of Policy and Development, CPNI. The organisation is governed by a Board of Directors to which I also report.

When was the post first established?

The post was established 1 November 2011.

Are you the first post holder?

Yes, I am the first post-holder and have held the position since the post was created over two years ago. Prior to this I was happily working as a community pharmacist when I saw my current job advertised and it immediately appealed to me. I was already actively involved in providing community pharmacy services, and was keen to expand this area as I could see huge potential for community pharmacists helping to improve the health of the 123,000 people that use pharmacies every day in Northern Ireland.

What have been the main difficulties in establishing/developing the post to its current level?

As the post was a new role, I was starting with a blank canvas. While this can initially be daunting and sometimes overwhelming, I found that the support

and guidance of the CPNI team enabled me to quickly define and establish the post into its current format. The flexibility of being the first post-holder allowed me to put my own stamp on the direction of the role - which is really exciting.

What have been the main achievements/successes of the post?

One success which immediately springs to mind is the introduction of the Medicines Use Reviews (MURs) service in April 2013. The service is tailored towards patients with respiratory conditions (e.g. asthma) and seeks to improve outcomes for these patients by enhancing how their medicines are used. It was great to see so many pharmacists attending the training sessions required to deliver this important patient service and, most recently, to learn from the pharmacists the positive impact it is having on patient health. I would hope to see this service expanded to patients with other conditions.

On a personal level, it's working closely with community pharmacy contractors and building solid working relationships; this gives me a fresh perspective into issues that affect them. The majority of community pharmacists in Northern Ireland work independently and can at times feel isolated, so it is important to develop and offer a network of support.

"One of the main priorities for the future will be to assist in the roll out of the new pharmacy contract."

What are the main challenges/priorities for future development within the post which you currently face?

One of the main priorities for the future will be to assist in the roll out of the new pharmacy contract. Community pharmacy is currently operating within interim arrangements to allow time for key pieces of financial work to be carried out and these are progressing steadily. CPNI meanwhile is working collaboratively with the Health and Social Care Board and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, not only on these investigations but also on a service development plan which will see the continued implementation of new community pharmacy based services which will translate into a new contract framework. These developments will influence the direction of community pharmacy services and this presents significant possibilities for the future of community pharmacy. I am confident that, once a contract is in place, we can further develop opportunities which will offer an enhanced and diverse range of services, expertly delivered by community pharmacies across Northern Ireland.

I would also be keen to see IT developments within community pharmacy, such as linking community pharmacies electronically with other healthcare providers. It would undoubtedly enrich the level of service offered to patients.

What are the key competencies required to do the post and what options are available for training?

Excellent organisation skills are a key part of the role as you need to manage a varied and often complex workload. You also need to be a good communicator as part of the job involves building working relationships with partner organisations, both at a local and national level. A sound knowledge of the profession is essential, as a clear understanding of the skills and expertise community pharmacists possess as healthcare professionals allows you to develop services which can be successfully delivered to meet patient needs. In terms



IT developments to link community pharmacies electronically with other healthcare providers is essential.

of training opportunities, pharmacists in Northern Ireland are required to document thirty hours of Continual Professional Development (CPD) per year. I often undertake training to support any learning needs I have identified in my practice ranging from online training to workshops to distance learning courses.

How does the post fit with general career development opportunities within the profession?

Community pharmacists in Northern Ireland have access to first class education providers such as Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development (NICPLD). The training available from this institution helps to underpin the development of services such as MURs. My post supports my career development path as each year I engage in Continual Professional Development (CPD) to complete a variety of training programmes according to my needs ranging from computer to clinical training. My experience of being a community pharmacist and delivering services is a great asset when developing both new and existing services.

The development of a range of services offers community pharmacists the opportunity for additional training, development and competencies which undoubtedly will present career opportunities for ambitious and progressive pharmacists.

How do you think the post might be developed in the future?

With two diverse and exciting years under my belt, I feel that the steady progress which has been made is ready to be built upon. With a contract in place, we could improve and develop new services which meet the needs of the changing population. Data suggests that 83% of the population in Northern Ireland currently use the same pharmacy. This presents pharmacy with opportunities such as providing a long-term conditions management service, which would greatly benefit the patient. It is still early days for the post and as both new services and Transforming Your Care are implemented with the support of Integrated Care Partnerships I believe the post will diversify and develop further with the likelihood of additional roles within the CPNI team to support service development.

What messages would you give to others who might be establishing/developing a similar post?

Embrace the opportunity whole-heartedly as it is an exciting and ever-changing role.

Take the time to learn from those around you and never be afraid to seek advice. Also, never under-estimate the importance of looking at the role of community pharmacy from another perspective, as this can provide valuable insight into how a service could be developed and delivered.