

NHS England sets out proposals for more efficient and responsive access to medicines for patients

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Proposals allowing certain health professions to prescribe or supply and administer medicines for patients have been published today (Thursday) by NHS England.

The proposals would apply across the United Kingdom, and would enable four groups of registered allied health professions (AHPs) – radiographers, paramedics, dietitians and orthoptists – to prescribe or supply and administer medicines, giving patients responsive access to treatment.

For many patients an AHP is their lead clinician, yet they often do not have access to the appropriate prescribing or supply and administration of medicines mechanisms. This means the patient may have to make an additional appointment with their GP or doctor to get the medicines they need.

The proposals would enable new ways of working to make better use of AHPs' skills, providing a more efficient and convenient service for patients while reducing demand on other services.

NHS England is consulting on these proposals, which cover:

- [Independent prescribing by radiographers](#)
- [Independent prescribing by paramedics](#)
- [Supplementary prescribing by dietitians](#)
- [Use of exemptions within the Human Medicines Regulations \(2012\) by orthoptists](#)

Suzanne Rastrick, Chief Allied Health Professions officer at NHS England said today: “Our proposals will allow patients to get the medicines they need without delay, instead of having to make separate appointments to see their doctor or GP.

“Breaking down barriers in how care is provided between different parts of the NHS is key to the vision set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View.

“Extension of prescribing and supply mechanisms for these four professions creates a more flexible workforce, able to innovate to provide services that are more responsive to the needs of patients, and reduce demand in other parts of the healthcare system.”

The four separate consultations have been launched today by NHS England in partnership with the devolved administrations, the Department of Health and the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency.

The consultations have been posted on [NHS England's consultation hub website](#).

The consultations on proposals to introduce independent prescribing for paramedics and radiographers will run for 12 weeks from 26 February. The consultations on proposals for dietitians and orthoptists will run for eight weeks from 26 February

- [Consultation Hub](#)
- [Find Consultations](#)

Proposals to introduce independent prescribing by paramedics across the United Kingdom

Overview

In recent years, the NHS has allowed a wider range of allied health professions (AHPs) to prescribe or supply and administer medicines to patients.

This is because for many patients an AHP is their lead clinician, yet they often do not have access to the appropriate prescribing or supply and administration of medicines mechanisms.

Introducing these changes makes it easier for patients to get access to the medicines that they need in a timely manner so they gain maximum benefit.

The NHS is now consulting on proposals to enable paramedics, working at an advanced level and who have undergone the appropriate training, to be able to become independent prescribers of medicines across the United Kingdom.

The proposed changes will enable the development of new roles and new ways of working which will better utilise the skills of paramedics and therefore support the delivery of safe, effective services that are focused on the patient experience whilst also being cost effective.

NHS England is currently consulting on proposals to allow four allied health professions to be able to prescribe or supply and administer medicines, as appropriate for their patients. These are:

- [Independent prescribing by radiographers](#)
- [Independent prescribing by paramedics](#);
- [Supplementary prescribing by dietitians](#); and
- [The use of exemptions within the Human Medicines Regulations \(2012\) by orthoptists](#).

The proposals for radiographers, paramedics, dietitians and orthoptists would require changes to be made to medicines legislation.

All four separate consultations can be found on this consultation hub website.

The following documents relate to the proposals for paramedics to become independent prescribers across the United Kingdom, and which should be read before completing the consultation response form:

[Consultation on proposals to introduce independent prescribing by paramedics across the United Kingdom](#) – the main consultation document which sets out the proposals.

[Patient and public summary of the main consultation document](#).

[The Consultation Stage Impact Assessment](#) - contains evidence of the actual (where available) and estimated costs, benefits and risks of the introduction of independent prescribing by paramedics. The consultation is an opportunity to gather additional evidence to further inform the costs, benefits and risks.

[Draft Practice Guidance for Paramedic Independent Prescribers](#) – this has been developed by the College of Paramedics and provides information which would underpin the decision-making and actions of paramedics who are annotated with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as independent prescribers.

[Draft Outline Curriculum Framework for Education Programmes to Prepare Paramedics as Independent Prescribers](#) - the College of Paramedics has worked in partnership with several other AHP professional bodies to develop a draft outline curriculum aimed at education providers intending to develop education programmes and individuals interested in education programmes for paramedics to fulfil the requirements for annotation on the HCPC register as independent prescribers.

[A pdf version of the consultation response form.](#)

Alternative formats

The patient and public summary document can also be requested in alternative formats, such as easy read, Welsh language, large print and audio. Please contact: enquiries.ahp@nhs.net

The consultation remains open for 12 weeks and responses should be sent to arrive no later than **22 May 2015**, after which the consultation will be closed.

Why We Are Consulting

This document covers the consultation on proposals to enable paramedics, working at an advanced level and who have undergone the appropriate training, to be able to prescribe medicines independently.

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[Online Survey](#)

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