

## **Outline curriculum for a training programme to prepare optometrists to practise as Independent/Supplementary Prescribers.**

### **1. Aim**

To prepare optometrists to practise as independent/supplementary prescribers and to meet the standards set by the General Optical Council for entry on to the appropriate specialist therapeutic prescribing register.

### **2. Learning outcomes**

Following completion of the appropriate training programme, an optometrist should be able to demonstrate:

- [a] an understanding of his or her role as an independent prescriber, an awareness of the limitations of his or her experience and an ability to work within the limits of his or her professional competence
- [b] an ability to take a comprehensive medical history and examine the eye and adnexa using appropriate instrumentation and clinical techniques
- [c] knowledge of the pathophysiology, clinical features and natural course of the conditions being treated
- [d] an ability to identify the nature and severity of the presenting condition and to generate an appropriate patient-specific clinical management plan
- [e] an ability to monitor the response to treatment, to review both the working and the differential diagnosis, and to modify treatment or refer / consult / seek guidance as appropriate
- [f] an ability to prescribe, safely, appropriately and cost effectively
- [g] an ability to take a shared approach to decision making by assessing patients' needs for medicines, taking account of their preferences and values and those of their carers when making prescribing decisions
- [h] an ability, when working as a supplementary prescriber, to work within a prescribing partnership and to accept the scope and limitations of a patient-specific clinical management plan
- [i] an ability to critically evaluate sources of information, advice and decision support in prescribing practice, taking into account current evidence based practice
- [j] an understanding of the public health issues related to medicines use
- [k] an understanding of the legal, ethical and professional framework for accountability and responsibility in relation to prescribing
- [l] an ability to work within clinical governance frameworks that include audit of prescribing practice and personal development

### **3. Indicative content**

- [a] Clinical and pharmaceutical knowledge
  - Principles of pharmacology
    - Pharmacokinetics & pharmacodynamics of topical ophthalmic & systemically administered medicines
    - Drug design, formulation and delivery

- Physiological/pathological alterations in drug response e.g. age, ethnicity, pregnant or breastfeeding women, co-morbidity
- Potential for unwanted effects e.g. allergy, adverse drug reactions, interactions
- o Pathogenesis, clinical features natural history and management of the conditions for which the optometrist intends to prescribe
- o Action, indications, cautions, contraindications and side effects of drugs used in the treatment of disorders of the eye and adnexa

[b] History taking, examination techniques, decision making and review

- o History taking
  - Presenting symptoms
  - Medical and medication history
- o Methods of ocular assessment
  - Equipment and techniques
  - Diagnostic tests
- o Concept of a working diagnosis
- o Development of a treatment plan including selection and optimisation of a drug regimen
- o Patient-specific clinical management plans in the context of a supplementary prescribing partnership
- o Principles of concordance
- o Assessment of responses to treatment against the objectives of the treatment plan/clinical management plan
- o Identifying and reporting adverse drug reactions

[c] Prescribing in an individual and team context

- o Autonomous working and clinical decision making within professional expertise and competence – knowing when and how to refer / consult / seek guidance from another member of the healthcare team
- o Effective communication and team working with other professionals
- o The responsibility of an independent prescriber in the development, delivery and review of a patient-specific clinical management plan
- o The responsibility of a supplementary prescriber in collaborating with an independent prescriber in the the delivery and review of a patient-specific clinical management plan
- o Negotiating support/training for prescribing role
- o Development and maintenance of professional knowledge and competence in relation to the condition(s) which the optometrist intends to manage (with or without the prescription of drugs)

[d] Evidence based practice and clinical governance in relation to prescribing

- o Principles of evidence based practice and critical appraisal skills
- o Information systems / decision making support tools
- o Auditing, monitoring and evaluating prescribing practice
- o Local and professional clinical governance policies and procedures
- o Risk assessment and risk management

- Reflective practice, continuing professional development and support networks

[e] Legal basis of prescribing

- Drug legislation
- Drug licensing
- Legislation affecting prescribing practice
- Prescription writing/ prescription pads

[f] Prescribing safely and professionally

- Sources of drug information
- Record keeping
- Medication errors
- Influences on prescribing practice
- Patient confidentiality and data protection
- Professional codes of practice
- Inappropriate prescribing and misuse of medicines
- Local and national policies impacting on prescribing practice
- Local and national frameworks for medicines use
- Antimicrobial use and resistance
- Budgetary constraints at local and national level
- Safe Disposal of Medicines