



Pharmacy and SIGN Clinical Engagement Compact



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The Pharmacy and SIGN Compact is a partnership agreement between the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) in Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and pharmacists who work with us. It is designed to facilitate a clearer understanding about what we can expect from each other to ensure meaningful and sustainable relationships with clinical communities and take forward improvements to patient care.

SIGN Council is the policy making body for SIGN with overall responsibility for methodology and editorial policy.

One RPS SIGN Council member is nominated by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. The RPS SIGN Council member represents RPS and pharmacy, and this involves consulting widely with other specialist pharmacy groups. Members determine the overall direction of SIGN's development and play a key role in shaping the SIGN guideline programme. Some are also actively involved in aspects of the guideline development process and all provide input into the prioritisation of topics for guideline development groups.

RPS SIGN Council member has a Deputy who is someone in the early part of their careers and they will have an opportunity to attend SIGN Council meetings. The RPS SIGN Council member will mentor and support the RPS early careers representative.

Guideline Development Groups are multidisciplinary and include a pharmacist with expertise in the clinical area. This is a professional leadership role that aligns to advanced pharmacy practice and is an opportunity to develop critical appraisal skills to produce recommendations within the guideline.



Working with SIGN Council and Guidelines Development Groups (GDG's)

Royal Pharmaceutical Society and Healthcare Improvement Scotland with SIGN will:

- Ensure clear and transparent processes are in place to support you to work with us
- Share information with you about our work
- Provide support for your career development and ensure continuous professional development recognition
- Provide engagement and networking opportunities, both within our organisations and at national level
- Work with you to continually review and improve our approach to engaging with pharmacists
- Provide opportunities for peer support

GDG's Pharmacists will:

- Provide pharmaceutical expertise, prescribing data oversight and a detailed knowledge of medicines legislation to the SIGN guideline development process
- Ensure proposed SIGN recommendations align with Scottish Medicines Consortium advice and NHSScotland guidance around use of licensed, unlicensed and off-label use of medicines within an appropriate governance framework
- Be part of a multidisciplinary group conducting a systematic review to identify and critically appraise the evidence to produce recommendations to explicitly linked to the supporting evidence
- Help SIGN identify key stakeholder groups to consult with
- Act as an ambassador for the SIGN
- Communicate as appropriate with Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- Help communicate SIGN recommendations to the clinical community

- Clearly articulate the support that you will require to help you to work with us
- Accept and provide feedback constructively
- Produce guidelines using a robust and rigorous methodology in line with current best practice

RPS SIGN Council Pharmacists will:

- Attend all meetings of SIGN Council or to arrange for a deputy to attend in their place. RPS Deputy will be in their early part of their career.
- Represent the views of their nominating body
- Feed back to their nominating body information on the activities of SIGN
- Assist in selecting guideline development group Chairs and members
- Attend open national open meetings to discuss draft guidelines in their speciality
- Participate in the editorial group for guidelines relevant to their speciality
- Participate in promotional activities following publication of guidelines in their speciality.



Clinical Engagement Benefits for Pharmacists

Benefits to you:

- Your contribution is acknowledged and will provide support for advanced pharmacy practice.
- Enhanced training and skills opportunities
- Opportunity to develop the skills to critically appraise an evidence base and inform recommendations
- Opportunity to work with multidisciplinary colleagues who have a shared focus on improving patient care
- Contributes to your continued professional development and strengthens the recognition of your expertise
- An opportunity to contribute and influence at a national level
- Provides multidisciplinary networking opportunities across NHSScotland and beyond

Benefits to your organisation:

- The potential to build capacity, capability and leadership within your team to deliver lasting improvements
- Enabling collaborative work locally and nationally
- National recognition as a healthcare organisation committed to supporting evidence based practice and quality improvement
- Efficient and effective way of supporting, developing and training staff
- Improvement support to enable clinicians to apply their learning in a local setting
- Transferable knowledge, skills and experience that can be shared with colleagues locally
- Shared focus on improving healthcare

“For over 10 years I was the RPS representative on the steering group for the SIGN/British Thoracic Society asthma guideline and for part of that time I was the co-chair and then chair of the pharmacology section. My involvement included reviewing papers, input into rewording of various sections of the guideline based on the considered judgements of the review groups, influence on the changes to the layout of the diagram for management and presenting at the British Thoracic Society open meeting where the guideline undergoes open peer review. The process has allowed me to expand my knowledge of asthma management and to enhance my leadership skills in coordinating a multidisciplinary review group.”

Dr Anne Boyter

Director of teaching and Deputy Head of Institute, Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences, University of Strathclyde

“Update of the SIGN Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) guideline was a great way to work with a diverse range of professionals and public to bring evidence alive, and support quality delivery of care. It helped me develop my critical appraisal skills and deepen my understanding of what makes good quality evidence. I have been able to translate this learning into my own practice to support me when undertaking research, supporting others with, and translation of evidence into practice.”

Anne Thomson

*Lead Pharmacist, Clinical Services
NHSGGC Pharmacy
Chair – Royal Pharmaceutical Society Primary Care Expert Advisory Group*

“I recently had the opportunity to Chair the guideline development group for SIGN 160: Management of suspected bacterial lower urinary tract infection in adult women. Urinary tract infection (UTI) has been area of interest for me for many years and I attended the launch meeting for SIGN 88, the first SIGN UTI guideline, back in 2006. I work for the Scottish Antimicrobial Prescribing Group which is part of Healthcare Improvement Scotland which also hosts SIGN, in fact the two groups are both within the Evidence Directorate. I was therefore fairly familiar with how SIGN operates but I hadn't realised just how systematic and robust their processes were for searching and appraising the literature to inform their guidelines. I already knew many of the guideline group members and quickly also got to know those I didn't. I found the experience rewarding and intellectually stimulating as we debated and discussed the evidence and how it should be crafted into recommendations for practice. Some people might think that chairing a guideline group would be daunting, but the SIGN Programme Manager leads most of the work within the meetings. Between meetings, following consultation on the draft guideline and in the run up to publication the Chair does need to work closely with the SIGN team to pull things together but again I found this interesting to see what goes into the shiny new guideline that appears on the SIGN website. All in all a great learning experience and CPD opportunity.”

Dr Jacqueline Sneddon FRPharmS FFRPS

Project Lead for Scottish Antimicrobial Prescribing Group

Chair – Royal Pharmaceutical Society Antimicrobial Expert Advisory Group

“Working with SIGN Council as an RPS Representative has given me the opportunity to actively promote the role of pharmacy within SIGN. I joined SIGN Council during the Covid-19 pandemic in September 2020 so it was great to understand how SIGN has already changed its processes to meet the needs of Covid-19 and the rapidly emerging evidence. Being on SIGN Council has allowed me to provide input to the strategic vision and collaborate with other multi-professional stakeholders within SIGN and RPS. It a rewarding role representing the profession and advising how the evidence-based recommendations of GDC's will impact on pharmacy.”

Arlene Coulson

*Lead Clinical Pharmacist
(Specialist Services and Surgery)
Neurology Specialist Pharmacist
NHS Tayside
SIGN Council Representative
(Royal Pharmaceutical Society)*

“As a pharmacist on the group for the latest update of SIGN 142, I attended 3-4 meetings over a period of 12-18 months and was tasked with reviewing evidence for one of the newer treatments for osteoporosis with a Consultant Biochemist from elsewhere in Scotland. We read papers that had already been sourced and presented summarised evidence to the rest of the group along with our proposed recommendations. As part of the wider group, we agreed on the final recommendations for SIGN 142 together.

I felt I provided a valuable contribution that differed from other members of the multidisciplinary panel because of my expert knowledge of medicines; particularly the logistics of supply and the governance processes involved with medicines management.

It is encouraging that SIGN now has its first ever Pharmacist Chair, Angela Timoney, and is testament to the valuable input that pharmacists provide to national and international guidelines development. ”

Naomi Scott

*Lead Pharmacist,
NHS Lothian Rheumatic Diseases Unit*

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The Healthcare Environment Inspectorate, the Scottish Health Council, the Scottish Health Technologies Group, the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) and the Scottish Medicines Consortium are part of our organisation.

We are happy to consider requests for other languages or formats. Please contact HIS Equality and Diversity Advisor on [0141 225 6999](tel:01412256999) or email contactpublicinvolvement.his@nhs.net



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SIGN
Evidence-based
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