

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK for Specialist Oncology Pharmacists



BOPA Education and Training Committee

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Competencies can be defined as the qualities or characteristics of a person relating to effective or superior performance.

We can all recognise a good practitioner but it isn't always easy to say exactly what it is that makes that person good; competency frameworks aim to crystallize that information and set out the attributes required for effective performance at predefined levels.

Competencies mainly fall into two different areas, they can be knowledge or behavioural based.

They can define the level of knowledge required for personnel operating at different levels; for instance the detailed knowledge required to be a specialist in a particular area is not required for someone working in a supervised capacity.

Behavioural competencies relate to how pharmacists act in different circumstances, they relate to communication and collaboration with patients, their relatives and friends and other members of the cancer team.

How can competencies be used?

Competencies can be used both on an individual level and with a more strategic approach. Individually they can be used to measure performance against pre-set criteria.

Competencies can help individuals and their managers look at how they do their job. They can be used to plan ahead, for instance: What do I have to be good at to be effective in my job? This can relate to both current and future roles.

Competencies can also be used as a reflective tool and help answer the question: How do I know I'm carrying out my job effectively?

Uses of the competency Framework

By mapping their performance against the competency framework pharmacists are able to identify gaps in knowledge and skills and

use this information to identify their personal training and development needs.

On a more strategic level a competency framework for oncology pharmacists can be used as a method to inform the commissioning, development and provision of training and development for oncology pharmacists.

This would be of use for any potential providers of training and development; within trusts, through the workforce development confederations or Schools of Pharmacy interested in providing postgraduate training in Oncology Pharmacy Practice.

A competency framework will support recruitment and selection procedures by providing a defined structure for the development of personal specifications.

Similar use of the framework will provide support for appraisals and development of professional development plans.

All of this builds on the needs of pharmacists to effectively demonstrate their own continuous professional development to the Pharmaceutical Society.

Structure of Framework

In keeping with the competencies for clinical pharmacists three levels of practice have been adopted¹ The first is defined as *Foundation* level and consists of competencies essential for any pharmacist providing care for cancer patients.

Pharmacists at this level will have a basic level of understanding of the principles involved in diagnosing and treating the commoner forms of cancer.

These pharmacists will usually be working under the guidance of a more experienced oncology pharmacist and may not necessarily wish to specialise further as oncology pharmacists themselves.

This level really represents the minimum level of competence for any pharmacist having an oncology clinical input.

The second level of practice is defined as *Excellence*. This is aimed at pharmacists who demonstrate a commitment to oncology

practice. Any pharmacist called an oncology pharmacist or equivalent should be at or aiming for this level of practice.

Pharmacists practising at this level will have an in depth knowledge of the treatment and support of patients with a wider range of cancers. This is the minimum desirable level for a pharmacist practising in oncology without the lead of a more experienced pharmacist.

The third level of practice is defined as **Mastery**. This describes the activity of a pharmacist acknowledged to be a specialist in oncology pharmacy practice. Pharmacists operating at this level will usually have a more strategic view of oncology pharmacy. They will have considerable in depth knowledge across a wide range of conditions.

The three levels in the competency framework are not necessarily discrete. Each level builds on the one before creating a wider viewpoint at each stage thus there is a gradation in understanding at different levels.

Pharmacists mapping their activities will find themselves operating across several levels. This facilitates the formulation of professional development plans.

Main Dimensions of Framework

The main dimensions of the framework can be divided into knowledge based and behavioural competencies

Knowledge based competencies cover:

- Understanding cancer and its treatment
- Pharmaceutical considerations in the provision of care for cancer patients
- Supportive and palliative care
- Health promotion and education

These are areas that should be included in pharmacists’ own continuous professional development programmes

Behavioural competencies cover:

- Intra professional collaboration
- Communication
- Informing, involving and supporting patients

These competencies would lend themselves to assessment through portfolio development.

Evidence of Competency

It is up to each individual and their manager to decide how each competency is best demonstrated. Knowledge based competencies can be demonstrated through use of multiple choice questions or successful completion of continuous educational activities. Behavioural competencies can be demonstrated through reflective statements and records kept of clinical activities.

Summary

The BOPA competency framework for specialist oncology pharmacists is a tool that can be used by individual pharmacists in the development of their personal careers as well as planning their own continuous professional development. There will be fluidity between Foundation, Excellence and Mastery levels, with the assumption that once individuals are competent at one level they would continue to develop skills in the next. Skills in areas within sections will not develop at equal rates, so that at any one time an individual may be at foundation level in one section but mastery in another. The framework can also be used by the profession to define effective activity at different levels and use this information to commission or design educational courses for oncology pharmacists.

1 G Davies, D Webb, D McRobbie, I Bates. **A Competency based approach to fitness for practice.** *Pharmaceutical Journal* 2002: (268) 104-106.

	Foundation	Excellence As Foundation Plus	Mastery As Excellence Plus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pharmacists at this level will have a basic level of understanding of the principles involved in diagnosing and treating the commoner forms of cancer. These pharmacists will usually be working under the guidance of a more experienced oncology pharmacist and may not necessarily wish to specialise further as oncology pharmacists themselves ● This level represents the minimum level of competence for any pharmacist having an oncology clinical input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is aimed at pharmacists who demonstrate a commitment to oncology practice. Any pharmacist called an oncology pharmacist or equivalent should be at or aiming for this level of practice. Pharmacists practising at this level will have an in depth knowledge of the treatment and support of patients with a wider range of cancers ● This is the minimum desirable level for a pharmacist practising in oncology without the lead of a more experienced pharmacist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This describes the activity of a pharmacist acknowledged to be a specialist in oncology pharmacy practice. Pharmacists operating at this level will usually have a more strategic view of oncology pharmacy ● They will have considerable in depth knowledge across a wide range of conditions.
Understanding Cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understands the causes of cancer and has an awareness of the disease process ● Knowledge of the key roles of the oncology, haematology and palliative care teams ● Understands the structure of cancer services e.g. role of networks, the difference between units and centres etc. ● Understands common terminology used in cancer ● Understands impact of cancer on patients and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the patient’s cancer journey. ● Understands likely disease progression within their scope of practice and impact on patients cancer journey. ● Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the treatments, therapies and the role a higher-level practitioner plays in the holistic care of the patient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assesses and advises on the impact national initiatives will have upon local cancer services ● Develops recommendations on the delivery of innovative cancer practice. ● Actively participates in the development and configuration of cancer services within their locality. ● Personally contributes to and utilises evidence to inform own practice and that of others.

	Foundation	Excellence As Foundation Plus	Mastery As Excellence Plus
Understanding Cancer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge to act as a specialist resource for advice and support to health professionals, patients and carers. ● Provides education and training to health professionals, patients and carers within own specialist area ● Knowledge of the national cancer agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of specialist centres for specific cancers.
Epidemiology of cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incidence and prevalence of common cancers (breast, lung and colorectal) and those within their scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incidence and prevalence of cancers treated within their Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of incidence and prevalence of cancers treated within their network ● Knowledge of changing trends in cancer epidemiology
Pathophysiology and symptoms of cancer	The cancers within the scope of practice Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Characteristics ● Common metastatic presentations ● Associated Symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of anatomic characteristics of cancers and their metastatic presentations encountered within their Trust ● Symptoms associated with these cancers ● Knowledge of relevant genes and awareness that they are not necessarily cancer specific e.g. HER2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Characteristics of cancers, treated within the network including rare tumours and childhood cancers their metastatic presentations, symptoms and relevant genes.
General therapeutics and treatment goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curative, adjuvant, neo-adjuvant and palliative goals, when these each apply and the clinical implications ● Patients expectations of treatment ● Awareness of the use of combined modality treatment e.g. chemoradiation ● Awareness of the use of systemic therapy, radiotherapy, surgical oncology and supportive care to achieve goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use of advanced therapeutics (e.g. bone marrow/stem cell transplant) to achieve goals ● Knowledge of locally used staging and its role in treatment decisions ● Staging systems and their role in treatment decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychosocial goals associated with systemic therapy ● Understanding of patient decision-making processes
Principles of chemotherapy	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classification and mechanism of action of chemotherapy and hormonal agents ● Cell cycle and cell kill hypothesis ● Scheduling and basic principles of combination chemotherapy ● Ways of monitoring tumour responses and disease progression 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classification and mechanism of action of other cancer treatment drugs ● Differentiation between drugs from same class ● Modulation of chemotherapy drugs by non-chemotherapy agents ● Pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of chemotherapy and other cancer treatment drugs ● Measurement of response, survival and other tumour outcomes for cancers within scope of practice 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pharmacogenetics of chemotherapy drugs ● Principles of new anticancer drug development ● Principles of gene therapy ● Principles of drug resistance ● Differentiation of survival outcomes (overall, progression-free, relapse free, etc.); meaning of complete, partial responses, stable disease, etc.
Regimens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of first line and relapse regimens used within scope of practice ● Demonstrates ability to accurately verify chemotherapy prescriptions within scope of practice 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First line and relapse regimens for cancers treated within Trust ● Ability to advise on and query appropriateness of prescribed regimens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develops network wide protocols combining drug regimen and supportive treatment, monitoring and dosage adjustment criteria

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Regimens		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of current treatment guidelines e.g. NICE, SIGN etc. ● Able to assessment compliance and ability to manage oral chemotherapy ● Able to demonstrate an appropriate treatment schedule for a chemotherapy regimen with supportive treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implements new treatment protocols and guidelines
Monitoring and management of common toxicities of cancer treatment	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring and management of regimen toxicities (including those that are dose limiting) used within scope of practice ● Monitoring blood counts with chemotherapy ● Treatment and prevention of common toxicities ● Dose reductions or delays for neutropenia and other toxicities for regimens used within scope of practice. ● Dose reductions in renal and hepatic impairment ● Documentation of toxicities ● Monitoring organ function tests with drugs that may cause organ toxicities 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring and management of toxicities of regimens used within Trust ● Monitoring effectiveness of antiemetic therapy ● Dose modification strategies ● Identification of patients at risk of toxicity ● Distinction between early and late onset toxicities, accumulation effect (incl. paediatric and young patients) ● Toxicity grading scales ● Documentation of extravasation ● Evaluation, development and implementation of policies and guidelines to minimise toxicities ● Knowledge of policies to reduce occurrence or treat toxicities relevant to diseases treated within Trust, e.g. use of irradiated blood products with fludarabine or management of GVHD 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring other objective and subjective toxicities, including pain ● Evaluation of cancer outcome tests ● Unusual drug toxicities ● Advantages and disadvantages of assessment tools for measuring specific toxicities ● Ensures systems in place to communicate potential side effects and management of them to primary and other secondary health workers
Common symptoms of disease or treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of symptoms and management of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mucositis ● Neutropenia ● Pain ● Extravasation ● Hypercalcaemia ● Diarrhoea ● Nausea and vomiting ● Constipation ● Palmar-plantar ● Hypersensitivity reactions ● Tumour lysis syndrome ● Common symptom control drugs, including analgesics ● Antibiotic regimens and growth factors for febrile neutropenia ● Use of mesna ● Use of folinic acid rescue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understands and makes recommendations for the management of symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Electrolyte disturbances ● Infections ● Dyspnoea ● Bleeding ● Obstruction ● Ifosfamide encephalopathy ● Hydration regimes and management of fluid balance ● Alkalinisation of urine ● Symptoms and management of oncological emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Superior vena cava obstruction ● Spinal cord compression ● Hypersensitivity reactions ● Anaemia and the role of epoetin/blood ● Develops and evaluates local drug related policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develops network treatment protocols for management of symptoms of disease or treatment ● Disseminates evaluated research on chemotherapy drugs, advises on formulary changes, and informs policies ● Acts as expert advisor/stakeholder for national policies and guidelines

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Calculation of chemotherapy doses, including body surface area (BSA) determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to perform dose calculations using weight or BSA ● Able to use locally available BSA calculators (adult and paediatric) ● Able to use calculation of carboplatin dosing using Calvert equation ● Awareness of dose banding, capping and rounding doses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to calculate lean body weight and ideal BSA ● Knowledge of issues surrounding obesity, renal and hepatic function and low albumins etc on dosing ● Able to perform dosing calculations for chemotherapy in paediatric populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of different mathematical models for dose calculation
Routes of administration of commonly used systemic agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of routes by which drugs used within scope of practice can be given ● Awareness of national and local intrathecal policy and practical implications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of routes by which drugs used within Trust can be given ● Awareness of differences in formulations required for different routes ● Awareness of clinical relevance of infusion rate for different chemotherapy drugs ● Awareness of rationale behind order in which chemotherapy drugs are given and their timing ● Awareness of policy for home administration of chemotherapy relevant to scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of routes by which drugs within the Network can be given ● Awareness of development of local policies in accordance with national guidelines
Use of speciality devices for drug administration, including infusion pumps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrates awareness of use of pole-mounted intravenous pumps in the hospital ● Able to describe drugs used, within scope of practice, which require filters, specific lines etc ● Awareness of stability, compatibility and storage for drugs used within scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of use and advantages and disadvantages of different types of administration devices used within local area for chemotherapy and symptom control ● Awareness of stability, compatibility and storage conditions required for chemotherapy drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of new infusion devices and technological advances relevant to chemotherapy administration ● Knowledge of alternative approaches to therapy, e.g. Circadian rhythm infusions, pulsed therapy
Procedures for safe handling of chemotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of basic safe handling procedures for pharmacy and chemotherapy nursing staff including spillage, disposal of chemotherapeutic waste ● Demonstrates basic understanding of occupational hazards of exposure to chemotherapy drugs and waste ● Understands causes of exposure to chemotherapy ● Able to describe precautions when extemporaneously preparing or manufacturing oral formulations of chemotherapy (e.g. for paediatrics or clinical trial materials) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensures measures are in place to minimise risks when patients are having chemotherapy at home (oral and iv) ● Able to provide advice for patients re: handling chemotherapy at home (spills, handling of contaminated linen etc) ● Knowledge of practical and administrative aspects of legislative requirements for safe handling/waste management ● Able to provide advice for patients and carers re: handling potentially contaminated waste at home ● Able to provide advice for pregnant and breastfeeding staff re: handling chemotherapy and contaminated waste ● Knowledge of personnel monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understands occupational exposure ● Understands implications of developing technologies e.g. gene therapy products and monoclonal antibodies

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Documentation of systemic treatment orders and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of pharmaceutical care activities and outcomes including those specific to oncology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of treatments outcomes, pharmaceutical interventions and advice related to chemotherapy on health records Documentation of clinical trial requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of systemic therapy in electronic or automated systems for health records Knowledge and evaluation of different prescribing systems/prescription formats (including computerised)
Interactions between cancer treatment/supportive care drugs and other drugs/foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands clinical significance of drug-drug and drug-food interactions with chemotherapy drugs and drugs used to prevent and alleviate symptoms, within area of practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands clinical significance of drug-drug and drug-food interactions with chemotherapy drugs, and drugs used to prevent and alleviate symptoms used within Trust. Knowledge of chemotherapy drugs which are sensitised by radiotherapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to assess potential of interactions with investigational agents Knowledge of clinical significance of drug-drug and drug-food interactions to individual patients circumstances
Advice on complimentary and alternative medicine in relation to chemotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of commonly used alternative medicines for cancer applications within scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands reasons why cancer and haematology patients use alternative medicines Understands evidence of effectiveness and safety for complementary and alternative medications used within scope of practice Able to access information on complementary and alternate therapies used within oncology/haematology Knowledge of contra-indications to alternative therapies within scope of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to critically appraise evidence for alternative medicines and therapies used within network
Goals of supportive and palliative care for cancer patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands common goals for reduction of pain and adverse symptoms seen within scope of practice Understands total pain management 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands psychosocial needs of cancer patients Knowledge and evaluation of drug treatments for relieving symptoms not usually used within network practice Understands measurement of supportive care outcomes and QOL
Use of supportive care and symptom management treatments	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of analgesics and adjuvant therapy for pain management Awareness of management and treatment protocols for cancer/haematological symptoms (e.g. constipation, diarrhoea, dyspnoea, cough, etc.) seen within scope of practice 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic pain management Application of pharmaceutical care for symptom control Evaluation of symptom control protocols and practices within network Use of radiotherapy and chemotherapy for supportive care and pain management within scope of practice 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of pharmacologic interventions with other treatments Use of radiotherapy and chemotherapy for supportive care and pain management within network
Health promotion and education	<p>Demonstrates awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The causes and prevention of cancer Health education and promotion issues Resources available for health promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the principle of health promotion and the causes of cancer and apply these within their practice Actively participate in health promotion of healthy lifestyles to foster cancer prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the principles of health promotion in relation to cancers within the network Be involved in the education and promotion of health lifestyles in cancer patients, their families, staff and the general public

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Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of the screening programs available for the general public and cancer patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of the screening programs available within the Network and the implications of these for patients and the general public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the screening programs available including genetic screening/counselling ● Demonstrates an understanding of the impact screening programs may have on service delivery and cancer patients and their families
Funding/ Commissioning issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of role/implications of advisory bodies e.g. NICE/Scottish Medicines Consortium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of the funding streams available for new cancer drugs and how to access them ● Able to monitor and report on trends in expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to develop business case for new developments ● Actively participates in the planning process ● Awareness of effect of new developments on workflow capacity
Communication with caregivers in the home, in other institutions and in the community	<p>Knowledge of communication channels within scope of practice with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Patient's family members and close friends from the community ● Home care nursing and other caregivers in the home ● Other caregivers, including those from referral sites ● Awareness of confidentiality/sensitivity issues in cancer care 	<p>Knowledge of communication channels within network including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cancer treatment specialists from whom referrals are received ● Family physician communications ● Other local specialists for related care ● Local cancer society representatives ● Home care agencies, for consultative advice 	<p>Knowledge of communication channels outside network including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specialists for consultation or advice
Informing, involving and supporting patients	<p>Within their scope of practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of information and support needs of patients and their families and the organisations that can provide information and support. ● Knowledge to impart information to patients and their carers in an appropriate format/language on their systemic treatment and supportive care medications (regimen schedule, possible side effects and their management and prevention) ● Knowledge of education and patient information leaflets patients and carers should receive for specific regimens/treatments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of the groups of patients and carers who have more difficulty in accessing information and the tools available to assist them. ● Knowledge of the main local and national support groups and how to access them. ● Knowledge of pharmacy involvement in patient education on chemotherapy programs, including ambulatory pump programs, oral chemotherapy assessment and education ● Awareness of patient user involvement initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to utilise all forms of patient information to enable the patient to have a better understanding of their diagnosis and treatment plan. This will include the use of tools for patient/carers from the minority groups. ● Recognises deficits in patient's information, developing and implementing new material. ● Ensures consistent information across the patient care pathway ● Develops protocols and procedures to ensure patients receive all relevant information ● Develops links with some support groups and be able to provide/record information relating to these groups to facilitate patient choice. ● Utilises a range of techniques to monitor patient/user satisfactions with the service. ● Knowledge of public awareness on cancer treatment regimens and symptom management ● Involvement in comprehensive patient education programs

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Inter-professional collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the care pathway for cancer/ haematology patients within their scope of practice. ● Knowledge of how to access healthcare professionals from across the cancer care pathway. ● Able to work with nurses and local physicians to provide care – as part of a multidisciplinary team ● Knowledge of how to access referral centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the integrated care pathway for areas within their Trust ● Communicates effectively within multi-professional team meetings ● Knowledge to initiate and participate in case conferences with all professionals involved in the delivery of patients care. ● Team development of local oncology program professionals, to solve problems ● Knowledge of how to access local palliative care team and to be able to advise on drug related matters ● Knowledge basis to allow Working with multiple different specialists, including medical and radiation oncologists, surgeons, haematologists, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourages and supports colleagues becoming actively involved in the networking process. ● Evaluates and Establishes inter-professional and inter-agency protocols/- guidelines/patient care pathways ● Participates in inter-professional/inter-agency evaluation and audit ● Develops network links with all key stakeholders at a local, regional and national level. ● Ability to work with academic and research teams
Clinical trials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose of clinical trials in oncology patients ● Understands clinical trial endpoints in cancer trials ● Able to undertake and supervise dispensing of clinical trials open within scope of practice ● Knowledge of documentation requirements & understands clinical trials at local/Trust level. ● Awareness of the role of other practitioners involved in running clinical trials and how to access them ● Basic understanding of all the clinical trials supported at the local site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic research design and application for oncology ● Access to clinical trials in Network ● Knowledge of the principles of ICH-GCP and the EU Directive ● Ethical considerations specific to oncology ● Understands the role of national and international organisations such as MRC/CRC/EORTC ● Knowledge of how to Set up clinical trials in local Trust ● Identifies areas where research or audit could improve practice/service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understands clinical trial design and application at the local site and across the country (especially nationally funded/badged trials) ● Aware of most relevant clinical trials underway for patient populations served within Network (including NCRN studies and important trials with other groups) ● Aware of immediate and future potential impact on service resulting from the trials participation (funding, staffing and training) ● Knowledge of practice which allows ability to identify research questions and initiate research activity ● Critically evaluates clinical trials and audit and implications for future clinical practice ● Ensures communication with primary care of clinical trials open within Network ● Advises on drug aspects of clinical trial protocols ● Assists with the preparation of patient information in line with local practice