



Faculty of  
**Medical Leadership  
and Management**

**NHS**  
England



# Fellow information pack

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**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's  
Clinical Fellow Scheme 2026/27**

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# About the Scheme

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Across the health and social care system, both the use of medicines and the delivery of pharmacy services are evolving to meet new needs. To secure the best possible outcomes for patients and populations, we need inclusive, skilled, and forward-thinking leaders who can shape policy, influence change, and collaborate across organisations and sectors.

The scheme provides a unique opportunity for pharmacists to step into healthcare leadership roles in England, broaden their experiences and contribute meaningfully to a diverse range of workstreams. It is open to pharmacists from all sectors and backgrounds who are aspiring leaders, particularly those who have not held a senior leadership role in pharmacy. The scheme also plays an important role in developing diverse talent as part of our Inclusive Pharmacy Practice commitment.

Fellows undertake a 12-month secondment, stepping out of their respective organisations to work directly with senior leaders in a host organisation. Host placements are confirmed each year and may span a range of national bodies, partner organisations, or other system facing teams. This offers an unparalleled opportunity to develop a range of skills including strategic decision making and leadership, policy development, communication, stakeholder management and collaborative working.

Within their host organisation, fellows lead and contribute to high profile programmes aligned to national priorities and have opportunities to work across patient safety, health inequalities, medicines optimisation, digitisation, service transformation and workforce development.

The Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) manages the scheme on behalf of NHS England. As part of the wider development programme, FMLM brings together clinical fellows from pharmacy, medicine, dentistry, healthcare science, nursing, midwifery, and allied health professions across the UK, enabling a rich cross-professional community of learning, networking and shared leadership development.

Good luck with your application,  
David WebbFRPharmS  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England



# Eligibility and selection criteria

<b>Qualifications</b>
- Master of Pharmacy degree or equivalent enabling UK registration.
<b>Eligibility</b>
- Applicants must be pharmacists registered with the GPhC, eligible to work in the UK, not holding senior leadership roles, and able to demonstrate significant contribution to practice.
<b>Language skills</b>
- Applicants must demonstrate effective English communication skills suitable for clinical and leadership practice. Where alternative evidence of language proficiency is available, this may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
<b>Career Stage</b>
- Applicants must provide complete employment history and evidence of performance appropriate to career stage.

In addition to the eligibility requirements listed on the previous page, the **personal specification** found below will be used as part of the assessment process at the application and interview stages of the recruitment process:

<b>Knowledge and experience</b>
<b>Essential:</b>
- Leadership and management experience with reflection on impact. - Active post registration development. - Clear leadership aspirations. - Understanding leadership frameworks (RPS, FMLM, NHS Leadership Academy). - Understanding NHS structures and management. - Effective teamwork and leadership. - Knowledge of the English healthcare system. - Understanding safe, effective, and equitable healthcare delivery. - Understanding QI, patient safety, clinical risk, and evidence-based practice. - Experience in QI, evaluation, audit, innovation, or service redesign. - Evidence of clinical excellence.
<b>Desirable:</b>
- Additional qualifications such as PGDip, MSc, or PhD. - Achievements outside pharmacy. - Leadership experience. - Understanding broader healthcare issues including workforce, digital transformation, inequalities, and system reform. - Understanding of population health. - Experience applying QI methodologies. - Teaching experience. - Coaching or mentoring.

- Policy or guideline development.

### Skills, values and behaviours

#### **Essential:**

- Initiative, drive, and enthusiasm.
- Commitment to professional development.
- Ability to use feedback constructively.
- Integrity and openness.
- Reflective practice.
- Effective teamwork.
- Organisational capability.
- Ability to manage competing priorities.
- Resilience and adaptability.
- Accountability.
- Rapid learning.
- Excellent communication and influencing skills.
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Professional probity.
- IT competence.

#### **Desirable:**

- Writing or publication experience.
- Experience presenting complex information.
- Leadership experience.

# Recruitment timeline

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The recruitment timeline\* for the 2026/27 scheme is as follows:

Dates*	Stage
26 January 2026	Applications open.
22 February 2026	Applications close.
By 3 March 2026	Candidates notified of shortlisting outcomes.
10 March 2026 – AM Session	Virtual Host Evening – <b>SAVE THE DATE.</b>
19 March 2026	Virtual Interviews – <b>SAVE THE DATE.</b>
By 2 April 2026	Candidates notified of interview outcomes.
1 September 2026	Scheme commences.

*\*Dates may be subject to change.*

# Application guidance

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## Application stage

Applications must be received online via an application form on the FMLM website by 9pm GMT on 22 February 2026. Applications received beyond this time will not be accepted.

## Drafting and submitting your application

Candidates will provide personal and professional information. Candidates should refer to the selection criteria in this document and the FMLM's Leadership and Management Standards when answering all questions.

- Successful candidates should be able to express important information concisely.
- Application form answers will be assessed against the selection criteria, and evidence will be sought to demonstrate this throughout applications, interviews, and references.
- All criteria will be assessed appropriately against each candidate's career level.
- Shortlisting is conducted against rigorous criteria and is undertaken anonymously.
- Do not unsubscribe to bulk emails, as this will prevent us from contacting you regarding your application.
- We are committed to ensuring we facilitate equitable recruitment; please let us know if you have any issues with the accessibility of the process.
- Please ensure you keep a copy of your application form responses locally as we cannot be held responsible for any loss of data during the application completion process.

## Data protection

- The data we collect is held by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme, a joint partnership between the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) and NHS England.
- The information you provide, including relevant and sensitive personal data, will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. It will only be shared with individuals and organisations directly involved in the administration and operation of the scheme, where such sharing is lawful, necessary, and proportionate to the scheme's objectives. Appropriate safeguards will be in place to protect your data and ensure compliance with data protection principles.

## **Shortlisting stage**

Candidates will be notified of shortlisting outcomes by 3 March 2026.

## **Host evening**

A virtual host evening event will take place via Zoom for all shortlisted applicants to attend on 10 March between 11-12pm GMT. This is a helpful networking session for shortlisted prospective fellows to have the opportunity to talk to host organisations to understand more about each organisation and the type of work you might be involved in as part of your fellowship. You will meet in small groups with each host representative(s) to hear about the organisation and ask questions of the host and current clinical fellows. Job descriptions and event link will be released to shortlisted candidates before the host evening.

## **Being matched to a Host Organisation**

- Some organisations have more than one site/office across the UK. You may be expected to travel between sites by your host organisation so ensure that you read the job descriptions thoroughly before submitting your preferences.
- Successful candidates will only be offered the post that is allocated; there is no option to change posts so preferences should be carefully considered.
- FMLM is unable to facilitate changing posts or movement between offices.

## Interview stage

Interviews will be held virtually on 19 March 2026.

Before the interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Shortlisted candidates will be sent available interview slots, which are given on a first come first served basis. Interviews will be held virtually for maximum accessibility; therefore, alternative dates are not available.</li><li>- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide a copy of an up-to-date CV.</li><li>- Shortlisted candidates will be sent a link to the interview platform and will need to submit the following information <u>at least 72 hours before</u> the interview:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Photo ID</b> (a passport or driving licence) to confirm your identity.</li><li>2. <b>For candidates employed on fixed-term or rotational contracts:</b> confirmation from employer that a secondment can be supported</li><li>3. <b>For candidates not in fixed positions (e.g., academic fellows, locum, portfolio roles):</b> written confirmation of continued employment or agreement in principle to support a secondment</li></ol></li></ul>
Non-UK/EU applicants will be contacted separately with regards to confirming their right to work status.
During the interview
The interview is comprised of a scenario task (released one week before the interview) and a question and answer-based panel interview.
After the interview
All candidates will be notified of the outcome within two weeks of interviews.
<u>Successful candidates</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Successful candidates will be sent guidance on next steps.</li><li>- Candidates will need to submit a reference within two weeks of accepting the post from their most recent employer. Appointment is subject to satisfactory receipt of a reference.</li><li>- Successful candidates will not receive feedback from the interview; this is due to capacity and the high volume of candidates.</li></ul>
<u>Unsuccessful candidates</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Unsuccessful candidates will be sent feedback on their interview within six weeks of interview.</li></ul>

# Appointment conditions

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## Salary arrangements

- The salary model for each post is offered at Agenda for Change 8a or 8b / equivalent salary range for those paid outside of the Agenda for Change model.
- The salary for each post will vary within this range between host organisations due to individual employment/contractual arrangements. Full details of posts and individual salaries will be available to shortlisted candidates in a job description pack.
- Once in post, agreed work-related travel expenses should be negotiated between the clinical fellow and the host organisation. Relocation and daily commuting fees are not covered. Secondment contracts vary so, if successful, individuals will need to consider their contract and discuss expenses with the employer and host organisation.

## Contract arrangements

Successful candidates will be contracted by way of secondment from a current employer on existing employment terms and conditions.

Some host organisations may offer a fixed-term contract; this will be made clear in the job description pack, as will posts offered at less than full time (LTFT). There are no guarantees that fixed-term contracts or LTFT posts will be available at the time of publishing this guidance.

Contract arrangements are negotiable between successful candidates, employing organisations and host organisations. **FMLM are not responsible for contract or salary arrangements/agreements.**

## Seeking support from your employer

FMLM has provided a short overview document that candidates should find useful when discussing with employers their interest in applying to the scheme. This guidance highlights the multiple benefits of the scheme for both the candidate and the employer. Candidates can access the *Guidance for Employers* supporting document in the Supporting Documents section of the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme webpage.

# Working Arrangements

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A full list of 2026/27 host organisations will be made available to shortlisted candidates. The scheme makes every effort to identify posts outside of London.

Shortlisted candidates are invited to an online host evening, where they will have the opportunity to meet with senior leaders and clinical fellows from each host organisation to find out more about the organisation and opportunities available.

## Less than full time posts

- Some posts may be available as less than full time (LTFT) or flexible. This will be detailed and confirmed in the job descriptions for each host organisation.
- Due to the intensive nature of the scheme and the window being limited to 12 months, LTFT posts are usually offered as 0.8 FTE or 0.6 FTE as a minimum.
- Requests for LTFT or flexible working will be considered by host organisations on a post-by-post basis and the decision as to whether this can be accommodated will reside with them.
- A schedule for the development programme will be circulated to successful candidates in summer 2026. Full attendance is required, regardless of LTFT post status.

# Insights from clinical fellows



## TESTIMONIAL

“This fellowship was, without a doubt, the best decision I've made in my career so far. It has opened doors I never imagined, allowing me to work alongside senior leaders, contribute to national projects, and understand system-wide strategy in a whole new way. Beyond the skills and experience, this journey has transformed how I see leadership, influence, and the power of collaboration. The time is flying by far too quickly. If you're thinking about applying—do it! Stop doubting yourself. You have nothing to lose and so much to gain. I couldn't recommend it more!”

Suzanne Al-Rawi, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow 24/25



## TESTIMONIAL

“The fellowship has been a truly transformative experience. Applying was one of the best decisions I have made for my career. The exposure to national leadership, the opportunity to work on national projects, and the space to reflect on and strengthen my own leadership accelerated my development in ways I did not anticipate. Being part of a genuinely supportive learning community, with peers and leaders who both challenge and inspire, has been invaluable. The insights, confidence and connections I gained continue to shape the leader I am becoming. If you are looking for an opportunity that will stretch you, broaden your perspective, and support your growth as a leader, I would strongly encourage you to apply. The Fellowship offers access, development and experiences that stay with you long after the year ends.”

Anum Iqbal, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Clinical Fellow 2025-2026



## TESTIMONIAL

“I'm forever grateful for the fellowship in affording me the opportunity to work closely with and develop friendships with likeminded peers and leaders working in the wider healthcare system. It is through these connections and through learning about others' career journeys that inspired me to consider wider possibilities within my own career. I was given the space (out of clinical practice) and mentorship from very experienced colleagues to think about what mattered to me and what I wanted to achieve from my career, which completely changed my trajectory. This was such a privilege, and I would encourage anyone to grab this opportunity with both hands – you never know where it'll take you!”

Emma Wright, Public Health Registrar, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Alumni

**TESTIMONIAL**

The Fellowship was one of the most formative experiences of my career. It didn't just give me exposure - it fundamentally changed how I understood national leadership. Working directly with some of the most senior and often talented figures in the NHS taught me how policy decisions are made: the ambiguity, the competing pressures, and the complexity that sits behind every national decision. That experience built a level of confidence and resilience I've carried into every role since.

The Fellowship also gave me something that has proved even more valuable over time - relationships. A decade on, I still draw on the network I formed during that year, people I learned from, collaborated with, and trusted. Those connections have supported me through my journey into various leadership roles, and ultimately back into a national leadership role, where I am currently.

For anyone considering applying, the Fellowship is more than a development opportunity. It is a rare chance to develop skills in navigating a complex system of decision making, to contribute meaningfully at a national level, and to build a foundation of confidence, clarity and connection that will stay with you long after the programme ends.

Rahul Singal, Chief Pharmacy and Medicines Information Officer, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Alumni

**TESTIMONIAL**

I've always been drawn to leadership in healthcare, particularly how strategy becomes real change on the frontline, who makes decisions, who holds accountability, and how systems truly work. The Fellowship has given me exactly that insight.

Open access to senior leaders, honest conversations, and the opportunity to learn from their experiences have been invaluable. Working on national projects and engaging with stakeholders I had never previously encountered has broadened my perspective more than I expected. My placement in Digital Medicine has pushed me well outside my comfort zone, and that's where the real growth has happened. The role has challenged me, stretched my thinking, and deepened my understanding of what leadership truly means.

For anyone with passion and a genuine commitment to improving healthcare, I wholeheartedly encourage you to apply. This Fellowship doesn't just develop leaders, it inspires them.

Marina Khan, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Clinical Fellow 2025-2026

**TESTIMONIAL**

The FMLM CPhO fellowship was one of the most rewarding parts of my career. I had a wide range of experiences and a lot of learning time with senior leaders. I'd highly recommend the scheme to any pharmacist or clinician thinking about taking that next step. I'd recommend it wholeheartedly. If you're even half-thinking about it, put the application in. You'll thank yourself later.

Brian MacKenna, Specialist Pharmacist Advisor & Medicines Data Clinical Lead, NHS England, Director of NHS Service Analytics at Bennett Institute, Chief Pharmaceutical Alumni



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The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Fellowship was a pivotal moment in my career. Being given the opportunity to lead on national implementation of programmes to improve the training and experience of foundation trainee pharmacists gave me the chance to grow my confidence, influence, and network across pharmacy, while building strong relationships with fellow pharmacist, medical and dental clinical fellows. The fellowship offered opportunities to learn directly from senior leaders, contribute to national policy by applying my frontline clinical expertise, and deepen my insight into system leadership, seeing firsthand the vital role pharmacy plays in shaping healthcare policy. It taught me what great leadership looks like, and equally, the principles I want to uphold in my own leadership journey.

This experience opened my eyes to the breadth of opportunities available to pharmacists. It laid the foundation for my roles at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and ultimately paved the way for becoming Director for England. The network, insights, and confidence I gained have been truly invaluable—I still draw on them every day. If you're considering applying, don't hesitate. This fellowship is a transformative experience that will challenge, inspire, and shape your future.

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Amandeep Kaur Doll, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Director of England, Chief Pharmaceutical Alumni.

# Frequently asked questions

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## 1. I have senior leadership experience. Does that enhance my application?

The scheme is aimed at developing future leaders and is not suitable for those that hold or have held established or senior leadership roles in pharmacy.

## 2. I am a pharmacy technician. Can I apply?

This scheme is open to fully qualified pharmacists only as it is developed for the specific leadership development needs of this clinical profession. Pharmacy Technicians can access the CPhO Pharmacy Technician Fellowship and also a wide range of leadership development programmes through the [NHS Leadership Academy](#).

## 3. Can international or EEA pharmacists apply?

The scheme is open to all qualified pharmacists that satisfy the eligibility and selection criteria, who have full GPhC registration and are eligible to work in the UK or participate in this scheme according to visa requirements.

If you are uncertain whether your visa entitles you to work in the UK and participate in this scheme, please seek further information from the UK Visas and Immigration website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>.

*Please note that participating organisations, including FMLM, NHS England or host organisations are unable to provide sponsorship to international candidates.*

## 4. Can I defer entry?

We are unable to accept applications for deferred entry to the scheme. All posts will commence in September 2026.

## 5. I am a past Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow. Can I reapply?

Pharmacists that have been through the scheme are not permitted to reapply for the scheme.

## 6. I am unable to attend the interview date. Is there an alternative?

Interviews will be held virtually for maximum accessibility; therefore, alternative dates are not available.

## 7. Can I speak to the host organisations or current clinical fellows in person or over the telephone?

Given the number of applicants for this scheme, we are unable to provide contact details for host organisations or current clinical fellows. However, if shortlisted, you will have the opportunity to meet them during the scheduled host evening to gain information about the fellowship experience and to ask questions. If contacted directly via other channels, current clinical fellows will not discuss any specifics or provide additional details around the selection process

# Contact us

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For further information or queries, please contact:

✉ [clinicalfellowsscheme@fmlm.ac.uk](mailto:clinicalfellowsscheme@fmlm.ac.uk)

📞 + 44 (0) 203 137 3643