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Establishing a baseline of learning & development for general practice pharmacy professionals in Bristol, North Somerset, & South Gloucestershire (BNSSG)

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Introduction

- The number of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians has increased in general practice with the introduction of the 'Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme' (ARRS)
- All pharmacy professionals employed in this way must undertake a specific pathway of learning (the Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway (PCPEP) run by CPPE (Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education))
- Little was known about what further development was required after this pathway or for those who did not have access to this learning due to being directly employed by the GP practice

Aim

To establish a baseline of existing learning, the use of competency frameworks to support this learning and explore what communities of practice were in place. It also looked at additional learning needs including those wanting to or currently working at an advanced level of practice.

Methods

- An anonymous questionnaire distributed to all members of the pharmacy workforce working in GP practices or Primary Care Networks across BNSSG (119 pharmacists and 36 pharmacy technicians)
- Mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions to investigate existing learning needs, current programmes of study and the use of competency frameworks to support learning
- Also Investigated whether respondents used 'communities of practice' to support their learning and what future networks may be required

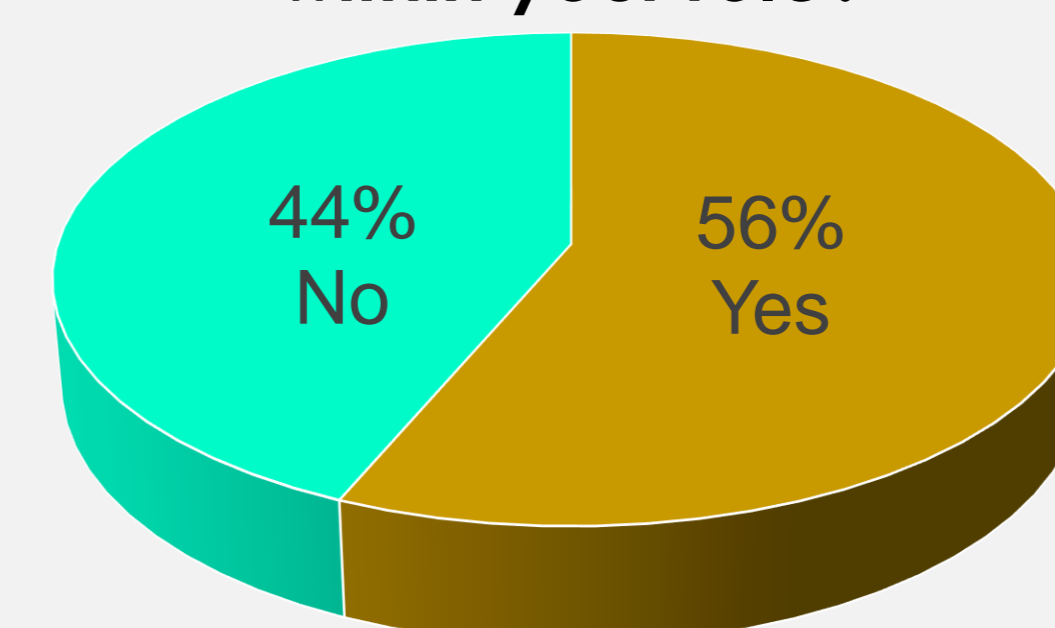
Limitations

This intervention only reviewed a proportion of the overall pharmacy workforce in general practice which is a limitation of the study; however, it gave a broad overview of the current need for learning and development in the local area.

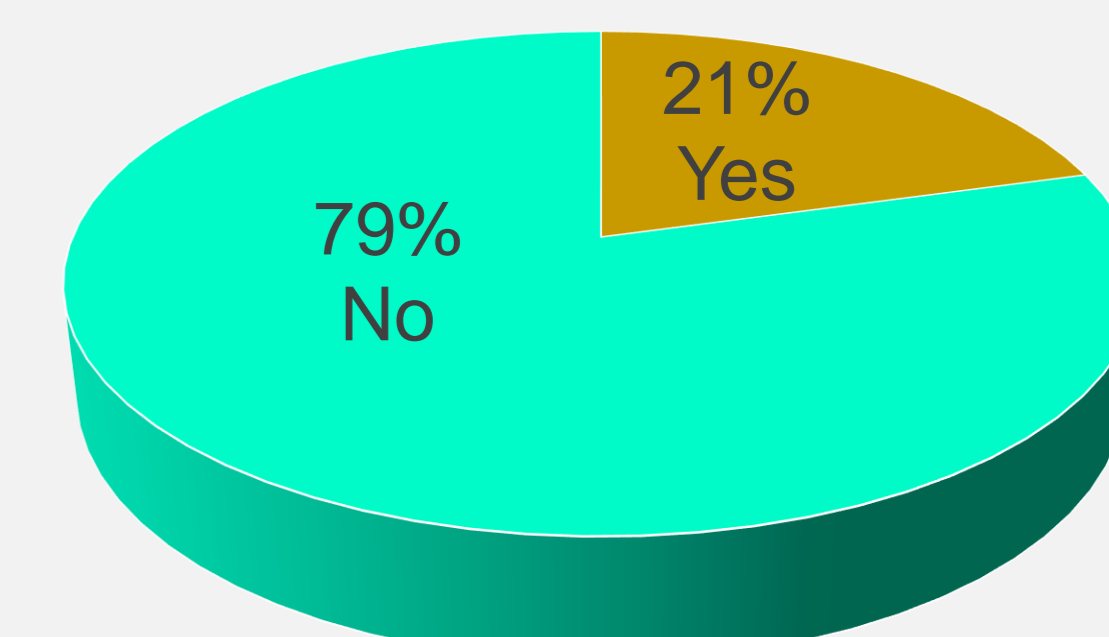
Results

- 25% response rate (n=39) - 29 pharmacists (24%) and 10 pharmacy technicians (28%)
- 15 respondents were either on the accredited pathway or had completed it (38%)
- 30 respondents belong to one or more network groups (81%) but some were not involved in any.
- 73% (n=28) of the respondents supported the development of more communities of practice although some suggested the purpose should be clear and the impact on work-life balance considered.

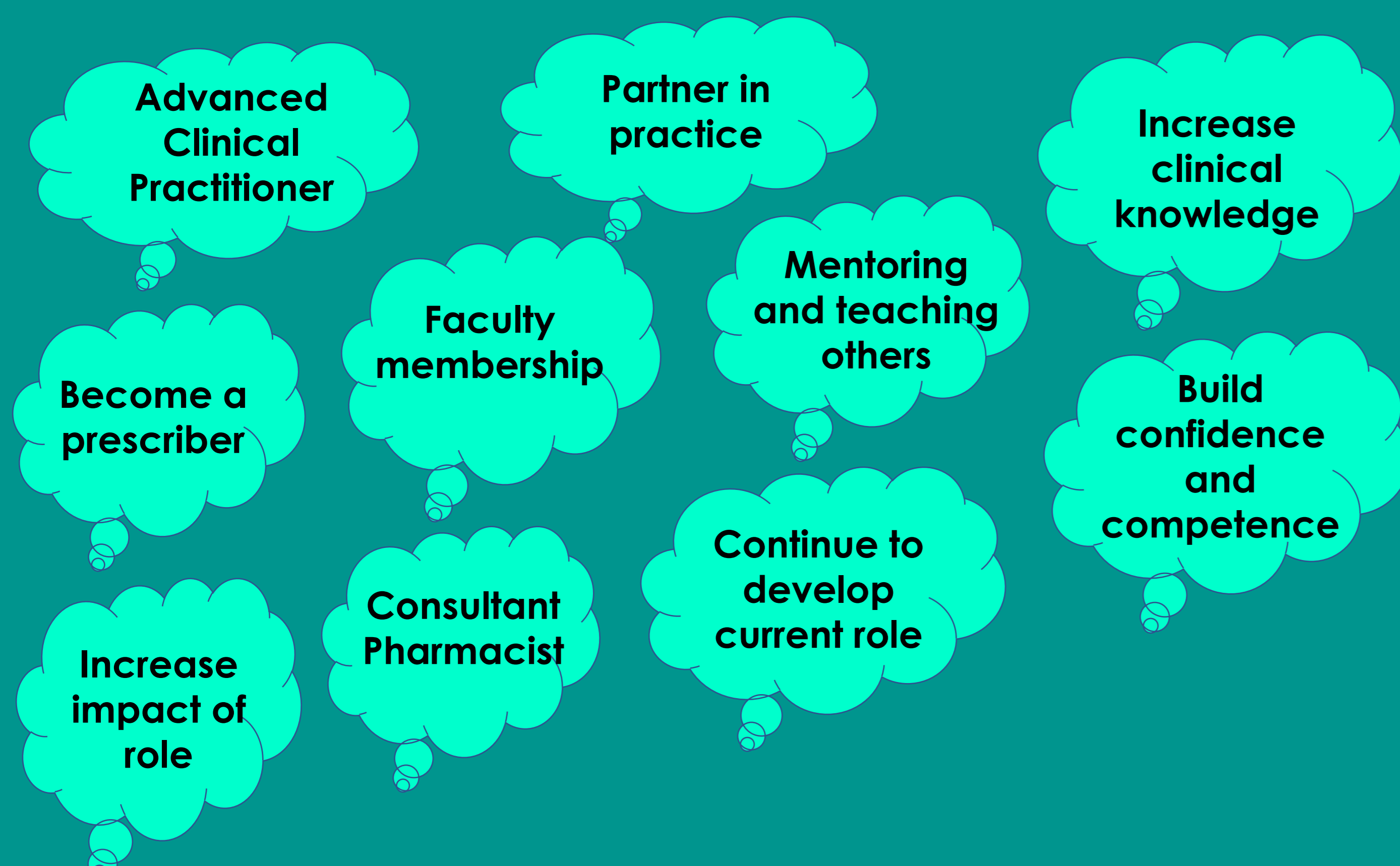
Do you have any protected 'CPD' / Development time within your role?



Are you using any frameworks / curricula to map your competencies to demonstrate your skills / ongoing development?



Career aspirations of respondents



Discussion and conclusion

- It was clear that the pharmacy workforce in general practice in BNSSG required more support for career development
- The results have shaped the role of the Pharmacy Lead within the Training Hub
- Guidance has been produced to support practices with understanding roles of pharmacy professionals and their development needs including protected time
- Funding has been approved for supporting advanced clinical skills by pharmacists in general practice
- A community of practice has been developed to enable peer discussions and support amongst pharmacy professionals
- A networking / development event is scheduled for Nov 2022 to support the pharmacy professionals working in general practice in BNSSG and is very well supported

Acknowledgements

- Thanks to the pharmacy professionals who undertook this survey
- Thanks to the BNSSG Training Hub team who provided support to this work & are crucial in driving the advanced practice agenda for all professionals

There is further work to be done to support the learning and development of the workforce in general practice. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Core Advanced Curriculum and the use of already established frameworks will enable pharmacy professionals to demonstrate their skills and competence and will be used to identify their learning needs.