

Dispensing Assistant factsheet

What is a dispensing assistant?

A dispensing assistant, also known as a pharmacy assistant, is an important member of the pharmacy team. Dispensing assistants work on the front line of health care supporting patients in a range of community settings.

The work under the supervision of a pharmacist and provide assistance to the pharmacist and pharmacy technician.

What does a dispensing assistant do?

Dispensing assistants are often the first point of contact for patients. They play an essential role in:

- Receiving prescriptions
- Assembling prescribed items
- Assisting in the issuing of prescribed items
- Ordering, receiving and maintaining medicine stock
- Listening and providing advice to patients
- Efficient running of the dispensary

How do I become a dispensing assistant?

Dispensing assistants work under the guidance of a pharmacist.

- Training to become a dispensing assistant is vocational and you will need to be employed by a community pharmacy either full time or part time.
- Whilst employed, you will need to take the relevant modules of the Level 2 certificate in pharmacy service skills. This qualification must be recognised or accredited by the General Pharmaceutical Council.

Visit the [GPhC website](#) to find accredited or recognised courses.

What are the entry requirements to become a dispensing assistant?

The entry requirements vary by employer, but applicants usually require GCSEs or equivalent.

Reasons to train as dispensing assistant

1. If you want to help people to get well.
2. If you want to work directly with patients, helping them get their medicines safely and effectively.
3. If you want to support health services which make a difference to patients.
4. If you want to work in a fast-paced professional healthcare environment.

What skills and personal characteristics do I need to become a dispensing assistant?

- Interested in people's health
- Good interpersonal, communication and social skills
- Professional
- Attention to detail