

Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA) - Guidance for FPDs

What is the PSA?

The Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA), introduced in 2016, is an online assessment of competency in the safe and effective prescribing of medications. It is **an essential requirement for sign off at the end of F1 year**, to allow F1 doctors to progress to F2 training.

Most UK Medical graduates will have passed the PSA exam during Final Year in Medical School, but a small number will have failed. Some medical schools permit the student to graduate without the PSA although this is not the norm. Newly qualified doctors entering the UK Foundation programme who did not attend a UK Medical School have not had the chance to sit the PSA prior to starting F1. Therefore, each year there are some F1 doctors starting work who have yet to sit and pass the PSA exam. If the PSA was passed more than two years before starting foundation training, it will need to be successfully retaken before completion of the F1 year.

How do we know which F1 doctors do not have the PSA?

The UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) sends the names of new F1 doctors who have not passed PSA to all Foundation Schools in July each year. The Foundation Schools then inform the relevant Associate postgraduate Deans and FPDs in each hospital where the doctors will be working. The FPD should inform the DME team, named Educational Supervisor (ES) and Clinical Supervisor (CS) to ensure the correct support is in place. The local team should make a judgement on what level of support and supervision is required for each F1. This may range from no additional input required

What support should the FPD provide?

The FPD should aim to meet the FY at the earliest opportunity to discuss with the FD the educational and clinical support available. The FD should be signposted to the educational resources namely the prescribing modules on the LiFT platform accessed through the trainees TURAS LEARN tile and the eLfh modules which are dedicated to Foundation training. The FPD should also liaise with the ES and CS to ensure adequate clinical supervision is provided. Early contact with the ward/ department pharmacist is advisable. It is important to recognise that F1s who have yet to pass PSA do not need to have restrictions or countersignatures on their prescriptions and should be treated as any other FY however they should be encouraged to seek advice and supervision. It is the decision of the unit/ department as to whether they FY will need additional supervision, and this may be dependant on local issues and the service.

Educational resources?

LiFT Modules

We provide a pharmacology e-learning package through TURAS LEARN called Lift modules. (Learning in Foundation training). There are 13 modules related to safe and effective prescribing as we strongly advise FYs preparing for PSA to undertake these modules. They are highly recommended for PSA preparation and should be completed before the PSA examination.

The LiFT modules are titled

[Acute analgesia and antiemesis](#)

[Adverse drug reactions : basic principles of adverse drug reactions \[1/2\]](#)

[Adverse drug reactions : pharmacovigilance \[2/2\]](#)

[Anticoagulant therapies \[1/3\]](#)

[Anticoagulant therapies \[2/3\]](#)

[Anticoagulant therapies \[3/3\]](#)

[Calculations](#)

[The elderly \[1/2\]](#)

[The elderly \[2/2\]](#)

[General prescribing \[1/4\]](#)

[General prescribing \[2/4\]](#)

[General prescribing \[3/4\]](#)

[General prescribing \[4/4\]](#)

[IV administration](#)

[P450 interactions \[1/2\]](#)

[P450 interactions \[2/2\]](#)

E-LfH modules- SPB 01 Safe prescribing

All Foundation doctors are given usernames and have been granted access to E-LfH modules. The folder containing these modules is SPB 01 Safe prescribing

E-LfH has 12 modules on safe prescribing and includes high risk prescribing such as insulin, antibiotics, prescribing in renal impairment and guidance on how to use the BNF.

Practice papers

Prior to sitting the PSA the FY should be encouraged to attempt the 3 practice papers that are available on line.

Managing the FD who has failed the PSA

The UKFPO informs the Foundation school of the FYs who have failed the PSA during the F1 year. The Foundation school will inform the FPD who must contact the FY at the earliest opportunity to provide support.

Suggested support?

- Ensure LiFT / E-LfH modules are completed
- Contact the regional APGD
- Referral to the TDWS ([Trainee Development and Wellbeing Service](#))
- Dyslexia screen- FYs can arrange their own dyslexia screen
- Contact ES / CS to inform service
- Suggest pharmacist input if possible

Checklist for incoming FYs?

- Early meeting with FPD
- Signpost to LiFT/ E-LfH modules
- Liaise with ES/CS/ pharmacist
- Encourage practice papers

Checklist for FYs who fail PSA?

- Early meeting with FPD
- Check LiFT/E-LfH module progress
- Liaise with ES/CS to inform service
- Refer to TWDS for possible dyslexia screen