Prescribing Safety Assessment

Guidance for Foundation Doctors sitting PSA

This guidance has been created for you as a resource to support your preparation for the PSA. You should contact your FPD and Educational supervisor for advice and support if you require further support. If you consider yourself to have a disability such as dyslexia, then please inform the Foundation school when registering to sit the paper. Please read this guidance carefully well in advance of sitting the test.

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.

What educational support is available?
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. **If you are unaware of your login you can reset it on the e-lfh website.**

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 FYs should be encouraged to attempt the 3 practice papers that are available online. These are available at https://prescribingsafetyassessment.ac.uk/
Other resources are available online if you search for PSA however this is the official PSA webpage and the validity of the other sites is unknown.

What happens if I fail the PSA?
During F1 there are three sittings of the PSA paper. You must pass this assessment in order to fulfil the GMC requirements for completion of F1 and progression to F2. If you fail the first sitting it is likely that you will be invited to receive support from the Scotland Deanery TDWS (trainee development and wellbeing service). The TDWS may suggest support options for you which may include a dyslexia screen. Your FPD will make a referral to the TDWS. If you do not pass the PSA by the ARCP in F1 you cannot progress to F2. In this situation the ARCP panel will consider an extension to F1 to allow you to complete the assessment successfully. Provided you have satisfied the ARCP requirements other than the PSA it is likely that you will progress to F2 on successful completion of the PSA. Details of the ARCP requirements are available on the Foundation school pages and the UKFPO website.