Working with Virtual Pharmacist

Pharmacist Handbook

Version One July 2022

Pharmacists in General Practice, Virtually

Virtual Pharmacist

Hello and Welcome to Virtual Pharmacist

We are so glad to have you joining our team!

Here at Virtual Pharmacist, we are striving to provide excellent clinical pharmacist services to the practices we work with. As a member of our team, I hope you will excel and enjoy being part of VP!

Our ethos is great care and quality which I am sure you understand is vital in our roles as clinical pharmacists and technicians.

Please do integrate into the team and use the services we provide for you, including, training, senior support, Webex chat rooms and support/CPD sessions. Here at head office, we are here to support you in your role. An up-to-date staff list is available in the learning centre along with their roles so you know who can support you best!

Please remember that you are working on behalf of Virtual Pharmacist and not the practice. Therefore, if you are having any issues at all, and/or need support, please contact VP first so we can direct and support you.

I look forward to working with you!

Virtual Pharmacist

Over time this information may go out of date, an up-to-date version of this document is available on the panel

You are a representative of Virtual Pharmacist, if you are asked to do anything out of the agreed scope, please make sure that you inform us of this straight away.

No additional or change in work flow should be undertaken without permission from VP. We should be included in all communications between you and the practice(s), CC support@virtualpharmacist.co.uk

Contents

Work Station

First thing to decide upon is your workstation.

You may have an office or spare bedroom which can be used. It is important to maintain a good work life balance so we advise working in a space you can separate the two. The expectation is in an environment where there is very little background noise in order to avoid distraction and maintain a high level of professionalism and a good Wi-Fi signal. Occasionally you will need to meet with practices and your workstation will be on show, therefore it should reflect the professionalism we expect from you all.

All our clinicians work from home, for safety and quality it is important you are at your home location. If this is not the case it is mandatory that you inform us of your intended place of work or any changes. Occasionally you may be unable to work from your home, you must ensure you are in an environment where patient confidentiality can be adhered to at all times, both visually and verbally.

Example: It is not appropriate to work in a public place, or a busy area of the home such as a kitchen when conversations may be overheard or abroad.

As a self-employed professional it is important you take responsibility for your own health and safety in your workplace. Please do feel free to use your own external Keyboard, mouse or monitor if this help you.

You can find a health and safety guide on the panel and further advice for this can be found of the government website.

Here is a useful YouTube Video
https://youtu.be/7YDeeb5SGkc

Meeting the Practice

Whilst working for VP you may be asked to meet the practice, VP should be present at all meetings with the practice, so we can guide the workflow, support you and ensure the smooth running of the service. There meetings are a great time to meet the practice you are working with and to build relationships.

If you are invited and there is no VP representative invited please inform head office and forward the link to **support@virtualpharmacist.co.uk**. If the meeting is the same day, please call the office. Practice meetings are very important as they give the practice a visual representation of you and VP.

Please ensure:
- **Log in to the meeting 5 minutes before it is due to start**
- **Camera is turned on and your microphone is working**
- **You are in a private and quite location with no background noise of distractions**
  - **No Children**
  - **TV in the background**
  - **Public places**
- **You are dressed appropriately for work. (for example no pyjamas, inappropriate language or pictures on clothing)**

During the meeting you should interact with the practice. They may ask how the workflow is going, if you have any questions or if you need any support. It is great to build up a rapport with the practice you are working at, and it can make it easier for you to build relationships.

A common issue we find is that pharmacists try to be every helpful and offer additional services, or if they are having issues they are brought up in these meeting. This is where practice and pharmacist mismatch can happen leading to frustration on both side. VP have experience of what is and is not viable in practice and the expectation and contractual agreements. Always express any of your concerned or ideas before the meeting, so we can support and implement any changes that need to be made to ensure you are working in a positive environment. Please do not do this on your own.

Laptop

VP provide you with a laptop to be used for VP services. We should receive this before your start date with us and we ask prior to your start date, you log onto the laptop, VPN connection, Webex and into the panel. This will give us time to resolve any issues that you might come across before your first day.

You should always be using your laptop plugged into the mains for it to function optimally.

> **Your laptop password can be found on your ONBOARDING TICKET**

The laptop is your responsibility and it is on loan to you whilst you are working for Virtual Pharmacist. The laptop is used to access confidential data and the security of this laptop is **VERY** important.

Please **DO NOT** use the laptop for non-work-related things or personal use as this can introduce spyware or virus. You should only use the VP laptop during your working hours for VP and it should **not** be used for any other organisations or personally. You must keep all software up to date and have the VP app active.

The laptop **MUST NOT** be left unsecured and **MUST NOT** be used outside of the United Kingdom. If the laptop is lost or stolen the pharmacist is responsible for any data breaches or losses and for the replacement cost of the laptop.

We ask that where there is a card reader built in the laptop, that you use this. We have provided you with an additional external card reader but this is for **back up** purposes only. Please leave it in the box/packet unless instructed by the head office team. Plugging in the external reader has been found to cause errors with the identity agent.

Any issues with your IT contact head office on 01138 715065 or if it is not directly affecting work, please raise a ticket.

On the laptop there is an application called "anydesk". This will allow us to remote log onto your computer to help you with any issues you may have. Please ensure you know where this is on your laptop and how to find your AnyDesk number.
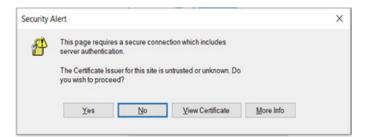
VPN Connection

To connect to SystmOne/EMIS you will need to connect to the VPN first. The VPN is the secure connection between the internet and the clinical systems. On your desktop, you will see a "FortiClient VPN" icon and this is your VPN connection. The icon will look like the one here, double click on it.

YOUR SMART CARD/CLINICAL SYSTEM WILL NOT WORK UNLESS YOU CONNECT TO THE VPN.

The box on the left will be the box that pops up. Type in your **username** and **password** (see the bottom of this page for this information) and click connect.

Once you have clicked connect, there will be the next pop-up box and you need to click **"yes"**. Once you have done this, you will be fully connected to the VPN. This should be the first thing that you do when you turn on your laptop.

Before you try to connect to the VPN, you need to ensure that you are connected to the internet with a good signal, or this will not work.
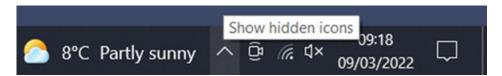
Username
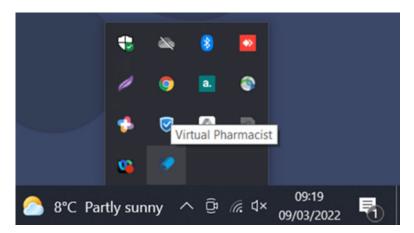
_____

Password

_____

Getting Started and IT

VP/Security PC Application

This application helps us diagnose issues with your laptop but also allows you to have quick access to the panel. Please see below on how to use:
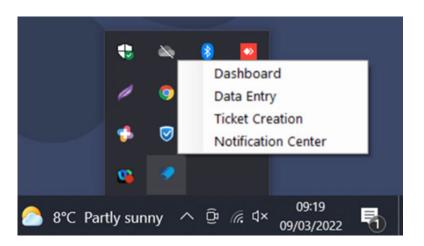
1. **Click on the little upwards arrow on the bottom right-hand side of your laptop**

2. **Once you see this, right click on the Virtual Pharmacist logo**

3. **It will show you these options – use them as you need for quick access**

Webex

Webex is the call recording and communication tool that we use and it **MUST** be used for all calls to patients, the office, other team members and absolutely anything Virtual Pharmacist related.

This application will already be downloaded onto your laptop and if you have any issues logging in, please raise a support ticket ASAP as this is vital that it is working in order for you to be able to communicate. We would recommend you making a test call or two before your first day, and texting the head office team.

Once you have opened up Webex it will prompt you to enter your username and password. You will receive this information in your onboarding ticket on the panel.

Username

Password

Not using the available software to safeguard you may affect you should a claim be made on your insurance. It would also result in VP being unable to support you against complaints. If you choose not to use Webex this is classed as misconduct.

If you are unsure how to use Webex there is a video in the learning articles.

Some team members choose to use Webex on their personal mobiles (which is fine), please see the correct icon to download if you wish to do this below. We also advise using the out of office if you do use Webex on your mobile so you are not disturbed on your non-working days. The App should always be open.

Webex
Cisco Systems, Inc. • Business
⊳ Installed

There are multiple options for Webex when looking on the app/play store but you need the Webex option only. Not Webex Meetings/Webex Calls etc.

Getting Started and IT

Emis

When Logging into Emis for the first time you will need:

1. **Password**
2. **Username**
3. **Emis organisation code**
4. **Smart Card**

Please ensure you have received these a week before you start at the practice or PCN. You may have more than one log in if you are working across multiple sites. You can see this on your schedule.

EMIS will not log in using your smart card the first time you use it. It must be Synced – follow the steps below

To log in first time

1. **Change the organisation code to that of your surgery. There is a video on how to do this in the EMIS folder of the learning centre.**
2. **A Window will open asking you to complete security information. You will need to complete this to self reset your password in the future**
3. **Once you are logged in a yellow banner will ask you to sync your smart card. Click on the highlighted blue text.**
4. **You will need to enter your Smart Card pin number.**
5. **EMIS will then close.**
6. **It should reopen automatically, after 2 minutes if it has not then double click the Emis logo.**

You must retain your manual logins, for eventualities such as loss or blocking of your smart card.

Logging in after the first time.

You should always log in to EMIS using your Smart card.

This is to ensures the patients you access are linked to the Spine and their summary care records are kept up to date should the patient access a care provider other than the practice.

Should you block you NHS card you may need to use manual login for a short period of time

SystemOne

When Logging into SystemOne for the first time you will need your Smart card.

There is no need to manually log in to system one for the first time. The Practice details should have been added to your NHS smart card.

Ensure you have received these a week before you start at the practice or PCN. You may have more than one access in if you are working across multiple sites. You can see this on your schedule.

Name mis match

Sometime practice have different names on their system one profile to that of the practice. For example, it may be called The health centre but on the systemone profile and NHS card may be called Doctor A Practice. If you have any query regarding this, or you feel it is the wrong practice please raise a ticket with the team.

Settings

Once you have logged into systemone for the first time. You may not have all the expected functions depending on how the practice are set up you may need to have rights added to your NHS card. If you are an independent prescriber please try to sign a prescription on your first day to check this functions works.

If you feel anything is missing or you see pop ups relating to this please take a screen shot and send the query in to support@virtualpharmacist.co.uk

Keeping in Touch

Chat Groups

Webex has a brilliant function that allows you to communicate with the rest of the Virtual Pharmacist team. We use the chat group to segregate the chatter so you can ask questions and get prompt replies. The chat groups are for **NON-URGENT** matters only as the response times may vary. Please consider that the query will be going to the whole team so personal questions should not be raised here.

General Discussion

This chat if for non-clinical issues, general chatter and to say "Happy Friday". If you are unsure where to put your question you can use this chat (we are a very friendly bunch).

Clinical Queries

This chat group is for anything clinical you may come across where you need support. This group is supervised by the senior pharmacists, but we strongly encourage everyone to take part in this group (questions and answers) as this is all part of your learning and development as a clinical pharmacist. **There are never any "stupid or silly" questions!** Do not sit and worry/be unsure of something that your colleagues can help you with. The team has a wide range of experience.
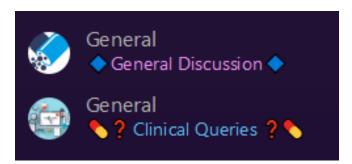
Team Groups

Some practices and PCNs have separate group chats as well. This is to discuss anything that is mainly practice related. The head office team will make sure you are added to all relevant groups.

CPPE Pathway Group

When you join the pathway, you will be added to this group. Please use it to help yourself and team members throughout your course.

If you log into Webex and cannot see the groups, please let us know and we will add you into them. We may delay doing this for the first month of working at VP as the groups can be busy

Support Tickets

Support Tickets

Open New Ticket

Support tickets are a keyway of communicating with the head office team. **Please use the support tickets for any non-urgent queries.** Tickets are monitored during our opening hours and works on an email system.

You can access support tickets through the VP panel and the icons look as they do above. You can also use the VP application on your laptop as shown previously in this handbook.

You can also directly email support at support@virtualpharmacist.co.uk and this will create a ticket for you. You can also reply to a ticket from your email and it will update it to us.

Tickets should be used if you are having any non-urgent issues. If your issue is urgent (directly affecting work), please call the office on 01138 715065 so we can get the issues resolved for you.
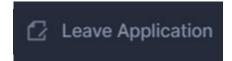
We aim to respond to tickets as soon as possible so if you have a general query, it should be answered the same working day, if not, the next working day.

Please do not use tickets to report sickness or absences – please always call head office on 01138 715065.
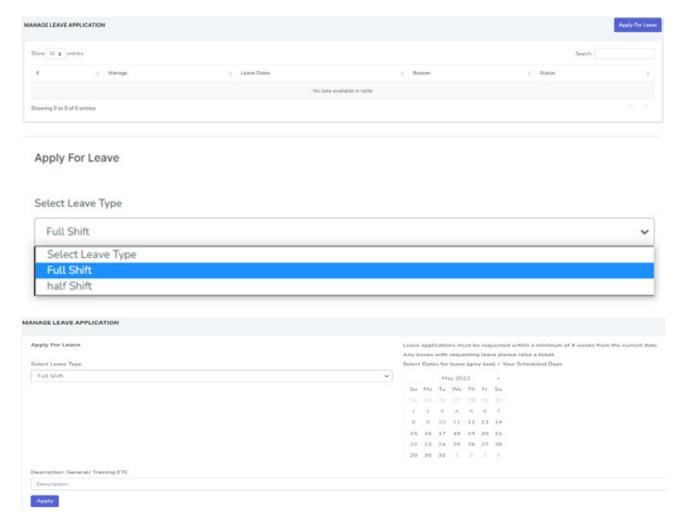
Leave Requests

All leave requests can to be made on the "Leave Application" page which is on the VP panel. We require **FOUR WEEKS NOTICE** for all leave, this includes any study leave you may have or need. The panel allows you to select the days that you would like to request and it will ask you to enter a reason for the leave. It is important for us to know if you are taking study leave for the CPPE pathway so we can account for this with the practice RE the amount of leave taken. You will also have the option of a full shift or half shift. For the half shift it will be AM up to 1300 or PM from 1300. If you need time off that fall between these options you will be required to take the **full day off.**

We understand unforeseen circumstances may result in the need for "last minute leave" requests. Virtual Pharmacist will endeavour to accommodate such requests where capacity allows. We cannot promise that such cover can be made at short notice. Unapproved leave may leave the practice unstaffed which may impact on patient care, therefore this is not acceptable or professional.
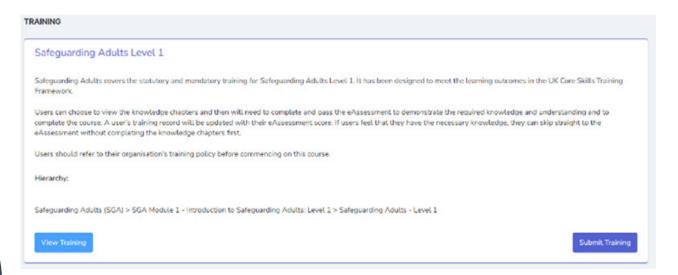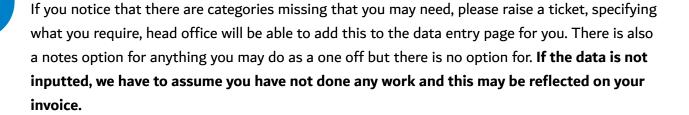
Daily Data Entry/Training

Mandatory Training

You will notice when you log onto the panel (top bar) if you have outstanding mandatory training. If you have done any of these in the last 12 months, please upload a certificate and you can change the dates to match the certificate. We require this training to be done and updated every 12 months.

Daily Data Entry

It is a requirement within your role that you input your data into the panel on a daily basis. This accounts for your time worked and demonstrates your impact on the practice. There is a video on the learning articles tab of the panel on how to input your data. As you input your data it will auto-save.

If you notice that there are categories missing that you may need, please raise a ticket, specifying what you require, head office will be able to add this to the data entry page for you. There is also a notes option for anything you may do as a one off but there is no option for. **If the data is not inputted, we have to assume you have not done any work and this may be reflected on your invoice.**

Workload

Please ensure that you communicate any issues with managing your workload, be that too much or too little and if/where appropriate we can arrange a meeting with the practice to sort this out.
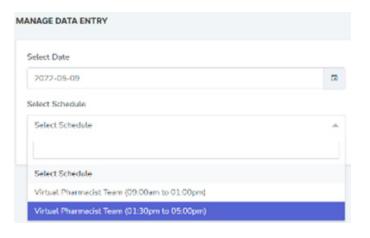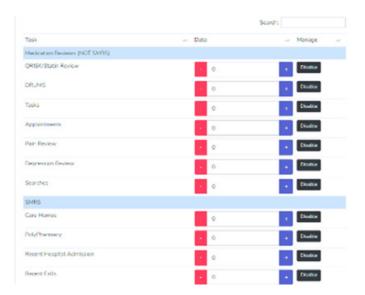
How to input Daily Data Entry

Once you click on the data entry page you will be met with today's date and the option to select schedule. If you are working at multiple practices, you will have multiple schedules to select. As you can see, it gives the date, times working and which practice.
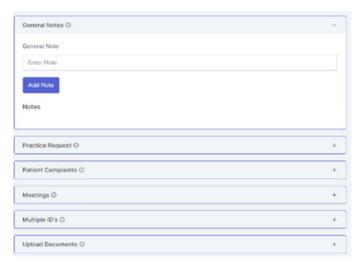
Below this will then be the different tasks. They may not all apply to you. If you do not need a particular task (this may not be something you do on the contract that you are working on) then you can disable it to make the list shorter and more tailored to you.

Once you have pressed disable, they will go to the bottom of the list and will give you the option to enable. If your workload changes you have the option to reenable them.

All data that is inputted will auto-save. Some of the team have reported that they find it easier to have this tab open while they are working and input as they go throughout their working day. Please remember if you are working at multiple practices in one day you need to change the schedule at the top.

We ask that you also input the following:

General Notes: Anything that is non data input related or other aspects of data entry page, but is still good for VP to know.

Practice Request:

If the practice asks you to complete a task that is not set on your workflow or has not been instructed by VP.

Patient Complaint:

If a patient it potentially going to make a complaint (about you or other aspects of the practice), has made a complaint or you have been informed that a complaint has been made or an SEA has been raised you must inform us. This can be done here or via tickets. **YOU MUST INFORM US!** Knowing about issues allows us to investigate, report and mitigate any issues that could arise.
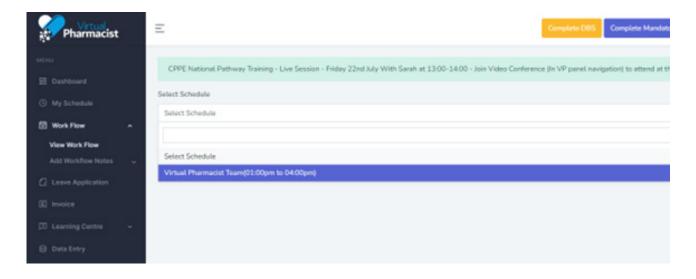
Meetings:

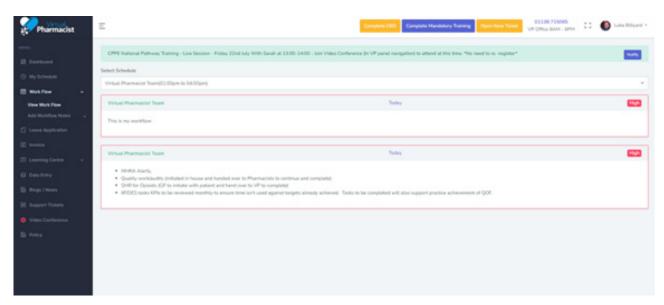If you attend any meetings (GP, Practice Manager, VP Office, ETC) during this time please document here.

Upload Document:

If you have any data entry document for the selected day upload these here.

Data Entry Text Inputs

On your workflow page you will see all the allocated work flow (the work that is to be completed at the practice) If the practice ever request anything that is not on this page (or another page given to you by VP) you must contact us or ask the practice to contact us.

You will see on the top right that each work flow is marked High, Medium, Low this is the priority levels of this work, High being the highest priority and Low being the lowest.
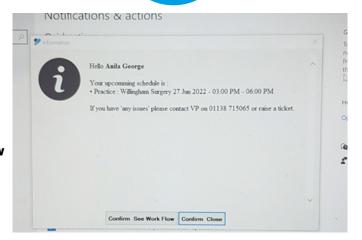
Example: High is med reviews (once all of these are done you got to medium) and do on.

You will also receive a pop up each time you start a new practice with confirmation:
- **The practice you are working**
- **The time**
- **If your work flow has changed (you will see the date the last time your work flow was updated so please check this).**

If there is no work in your Work Flow please raise a ticket with VP.
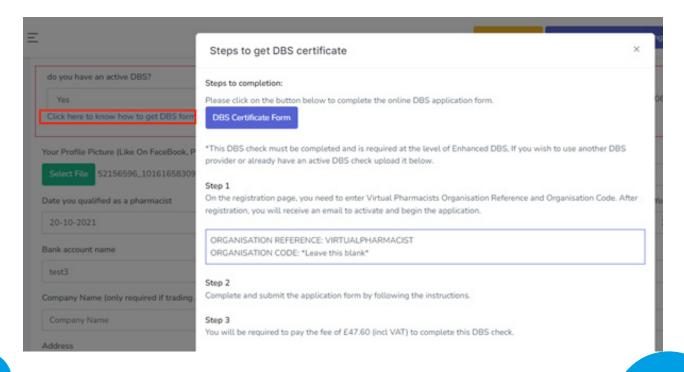

DBS

If you have not already uploaded a DBS please do this within the first 30 days of you working with VP. This can be done by clicking Complete DBS at the top of the panel, then select:
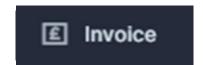
Click here to know how to get a DBS form:

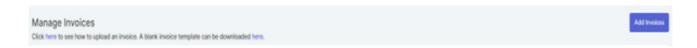You will then just need to flow the instructions on this screen.

Invoices

All invoices are to be uploaded onto the panel at the end of each month and each invoice will be paid on the last working day (up to 1700hrs) of the following month. E.g. If you start working for us in January, you will be paid on the last working day of February. February hours will be paid at the end of March.

We have a blank invoice uploaded on the panel, just search blank invoice in the search bar in the learning part of the panel. Alternatively on the Invoice page if you click on the word **here** it will take you to it.

Once you click add invoice you will be required to upload the invoice and fill in all areas, if incomplete, it will not allow you to proceed. See below:
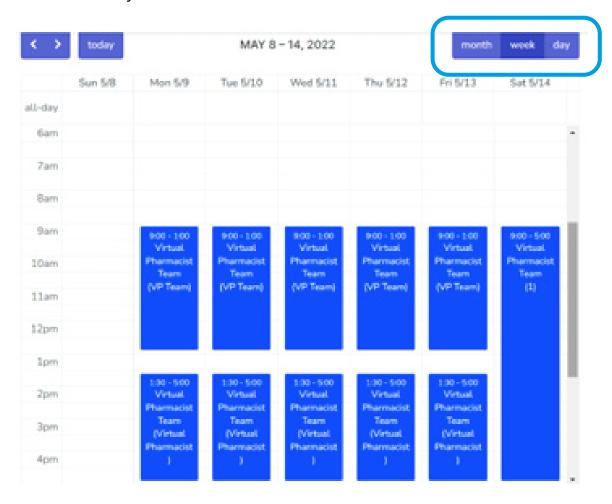
Once you have uploaded your invoice, it will be shown as pending. Invoices should be submitted in the first two weeks of each month. This allows time for invoices to be reviewed and approved. If an issue is found with your invoice it will be rejected with a reason. Please action this as soon as possible. Rejection does not normally result in late payment; it is simply a query. If your invoice is submitted in the last week of the month due, we cannot guarantee payment on that pay cycle.

Your Schedule

When you sign into the panel you will see that your schedule is on the dashboard. If you are working at multiple practices, use the week view to see your split schedules. Once you click on the week view it will show your schedule like the one below:
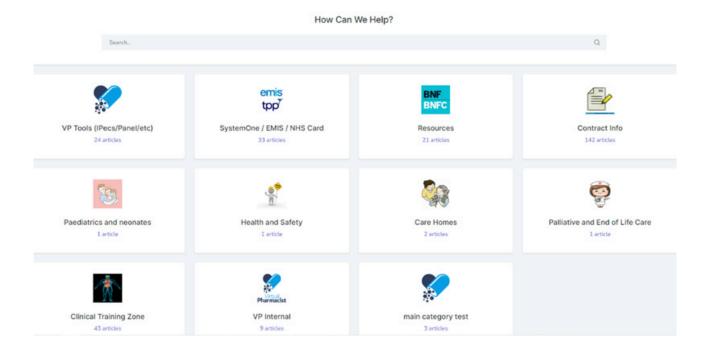
It is important that you follow your schedule and stick to those hours, these hours are the agreed times with the practices and the only time we can pay you for. You will only be able to invoice for hours scheduled, therefore working beyond these hours is at your own expense.

A common query we have is pharmacists starting at different times etc. The hours on the schedule are set and should be adhered to, they are **not** flexi. You need to log in and out on time. If you need set times for breaks these can be arranged and added to your schedule, for example collecting children from school at 3pm or any prayer times.

Overtime is not chargeable unless this is agreed with head office and will not be paid at a higher rate.

Learning Centre

The Learning Centre is continuously in development, here you can find videos on how to use Emis and system one, how to process a discharge letter and lots of links to other resources.

The Learning Centre was created to help pharmacist and technicians do they role more efficiently.

SOP's and Policies

We have guidance and SOP's and Policies that you would need to follow when working for Virtual Pharmacist. These can be found under Resources

Please see an example of the SOP's you will find on the learning centre.

- **Medicines Reconciliation**
- **Medication Monitoring**
- **Repeat Prescribing**
- **Electronic Repeat Dispensing**
- **Clinical guides**

There are many more so please ensure you familiarise yourself as these are the standards we work to and can help with common queries which may make your role easier.

Your practice may have also have policies you should be aware of, these will be under contract information.

If you feel there is something missing, please raise a ticket (support@virtualpharmacist.co.uk) and we will endeavour to fill that gap. Equally should you have a document that would be of use to your colleagues please send it in and we will add it to the learning centre.

Senior Pharmacist

Virtual Pharmacist is please to offer support and training to all of our team.

We offer **fortnightly Senior Pharmacist support sessions** which are open to everyone. The session run at Lunch time on a Wednesday or Friday and are advertise in the panel and in Webex.

Further to this the **Senior team support the clinical queries chats**. There maybe times in practice when you need support. From your previous role you may feel that you should pass the query to the GP or ask the GP's advice. What we ask is that you ask us first. Within the VP team we have a vast knowledge base and will be able to advise you on how to deal with the question or scenario, where to find the information or alternatively who and how you should ask for GP advise.

A common problem in practices when pharmacists start is the increase in GP workload rather than reduce it due to increase in tasks and queries. Therefore, we try to tackle this by dealing with those queries in house. You learn the outcome and you get a timely response.

CPPE Pathway

Some of our roles are linked to ARRs funding and as such you may be asked to enroll onto the CPPE national Pathway.

Its very important you do not apply for the CPPE pathway without approval from VP. VP will provide you with a Senior Clinical Pharmacist, and if you are a technician this pharmacist will also be your Clinical Supervisor.

We will guide you through the process. When you have your initial meeting with your Education Supervisor VP should be invited. We will not stay for the whole meeting just the first 10-15 minutes to ensure the ES has all the information they need.

Virtual Pharmacist cannot accommodate pathway bookings or meeting less than 4 weeks in advance. CPPE are aware of this, and should you be asked to attend something sooner you will be asked to rearrange. This is so patient care is not affected.

If you are already enrolled with your previous employer please let us know if we need to complete a change of employer form. **Further guidance can be found on the panel under CPPE.**

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I am sick?

If you are sick and unable to work, you need to call the office number (01138 715065) the moment that you know you will be unable to work. A text message, Webex message or a ticket is not an acceptable method of notification. **DO NOT INFORM THE PRACTICE THAT YOU ARE SICK, WE DO THIS FOR YOU.**

Can I take work elsewhere with me?

If you are going on holiday [OVERSEAS] you **cannot** work for Virtual Pharmacist. However, if you for any reason you need to work from another location you can as long as you are in the United Kingdom and **able to maintain confidentiality**. You must be in an environment where there is little background noise to avoid distraction and be able to maintain a HIGH level of professionalism. VP would expect you to work from your home location. If this is not going to be the case, you must raise a ticket.

What do I do if I have a general query?

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Unable to work (Major IT Issues/WebEx/Sickness) **Practice Questions** (Quick answers needed) **Call: 0113 871 5065**	**General IT Issues** (Non Immediate Work Affecting) **Practice Questions** (Non Immediate Work Affecting) **Panel Related Queries** Raise A Ticket / Email: **Call: 0113 871 5065**	**Anything and everything else** (Non Immediate Work Affecting) Raise A Ticket / Email: **Support@VirtualPharmacist.co.uk**

Contacting individual office team members is ok for ongoing issues, if they don't reply in a timely manner, raise a ticket or call the office.

*This system is so we don't miss things and can provide you and the practice support.

How many times do I need to the call the patient?

If the patient does not answer your first call, try an alternative number and if you still get no answer, we suggest trying a few more patients and returning to this appointment. We would expect you to try the patient three times with at least a 30-minute gap. If they do not answer (each call you make) it needs recording in the patients record as a failed encounter, this should be coded and not be free text. Record in consultation e.g. "EE voicemail, message left for patient". If you a placed in a practice with a high call failure rate, information like this adds confidence that you made the call!

Where do I say I am calling from?

When you are calling patients, you need to say you are calling from the doctors practice and name the practice. If the patient happens to question the number that you are calling from, just explain that you are working remotely. Do not say you are calling from Virtual Pharmacist. This can confuse patients unnecessarily. E.G. "Hello, this is Laura the pharmacist and I am calling from (insert name of practice here).

What insurance do I need? - You are responsible for ensuring your insurance covers the activities you are carrying out

You need to be covered for three main points. £5m cover, IP Status (if applicable) and GP Practice/ PCN work. There are a few companies that do insurance such as NPA, PIA, PDA etc. We do have some information from the NPA which can be found in the learning centre.

If you are having issues or need help with this. Please raise a ticket/call us.

What do I do if I am struggling with the clinical system?

If you are needing help and support with the system, raise a ticket and one of the head office team will help and guide you through it. If you are unable to work due to this, please call head office on 01138 715065.

What do I do if I am approached to work by a practice?

This would be a breach of the practice/PCN contract and a breach of your terms if you go ahead and discuss this. **If you are approached you need to contact the head office immediately.** Please record who you spoke to and when. Virtual Pharmacist can facilitate recruitment but it **must** go through the head office team.