

Application tips for the FMLM CFS recruitment process

This document provides a comprehensive guide with application tips for both the National Medical Director's (NMD) Fellowship and the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's (CPhO) Fellowship, incorporating insights from past applicants.



Faculty of
**Medical Leadership
and Management**

General application advice

- **Early preparation is key:** Begin the application process early. This allows ample time for reflection, gathering evidence, and refining your responses.
- **Understand medical leadership:** Familiarise yourself with the FMLM website, resources, and the leadership and management standards. Reflect on your understanding of medical leadership and how it translates to your personal experiences.
- **Map your skills and experience:** Identify areas in your practice that demonstrate leadership qualities. Reflect on what you learned, what worked well, and areas for improvement. Connect your experiences to specific skills, drawing from your entire career, including your university years.
- **Champion your interests:** Highlight your passions within healthcare and explain how the fellowship will support your goals. Connect your interests to broader healthcare challenges like digital health, antimicrobial resistance, or women's health.
- **Stay informed:** Be aware of current healthcare trends, NHS long-term plans, and relevant local and international policies (e.g., WHO). Demonstrate your understanding of the current healthcare landscape.
- **Seek feedback:** Request feedback from medical and non-medical colleagues to gain diverse perspectives on your application's content and clarity.
- **Tailor your application:** While this guide provides a framework, remember to tailor your application to your unique experiences and aspirations.

NMD Fellowship-specific tips

- **Target the person specification:** Use the NMD Fellowship Person Specification and FMLM standards as your guide. Structure your application to directly address the criteria outlined in these documents.
- **Showcase leadership, not just academia:** Highlight leadership skills, project management experience, and any coaching or mentorship roles. This fellowship prioritises leadership qualities over purely academic achievements. Small roles are just as impactful and are considered!
- **Quantify your impact:** When describing experiences, provide specific examples and quantify your impact using data and statistics whenever possible.
- **Reflect on your experiences:** Demonstrate self-awareness by reflecting on your experiences. Discuss challenges, lessons learned, and how you've grown as a leader.
- **Prepare for common interview themes:** Be ready to discuss your passions for medical leadership, your understanding of current NHS challenges (e.g., Long Term Workforce Plan, technology's role, Ockenden review), and how the fellowship aligns with your future aspirations.
- **Secure OOPE early:** Speak to your Training Programme Director (TPD) early about obtaining an Out of Programme Experience (OOPE) for the fellowship. Be prepared to advocate for yourself and escalate to the Head of School if needed.

CPhO Fellowship-specific tips

- **Document your achievements:** Maintain a log of publications, contributions to policies (local or national), and other relevant achievements. This helps demonstrate your impact and provides concrete examples for your application.
- **Understand host organisations:** Research the traditional host organisations for the CPhO fellowship and understand their objectives. Align your application with their goals and highlight how the fellowship will benefit your current role and future career.
- **Communicate with your employer:** If you are currently employed, inform your manager about your intention to apply. This allows for planning and support, especially if the fellowship requires a secondment.

Remember...



Securing a fellowship is a competitive process. Don't be discouraged if you are not successful on your first attempt. Use it as a learning experience, gain further experience, and refine your application for future rounds.

Interview tips

General interview preparation

- **Start early, plan ahead:** Begin preparing well in advance. Familiarise yourself with your application and map your experiences to the person specification. Practising your answers is crucial for a confident and articulate delivery.
- **Diverse practice makes perfect:** Practice with individuals from diverse backgrounds (medical, non-medical, experienced, inexperienced, etc.). This exposes you to different perspectives and enhances your adaptability.
- **Leverage technology:** Use tools like Chat GPT to refine your answers, improve conciseness, and develop key phrases. However, avoid sounding scripted - aim for authenticity.
- **Master the STAR Framework:** Structure your answers using the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) framework to showcase your skills and experiences effectively.
- **Stay current:** Be aware of current healthcare affairs, recent publications, and relevant political developments. Demonstrate your understanding and ability to analyse complex information.
- **Record and review:** Record yourself answering practice questions. Analyse your body language, tone, and clarity. Identify any nervous habits and areas for improvement.
- **Time management is key:** Practice answering questions within an allocated time limit for conciseness (usually 5 minutes). For presentation tasks, adhere strictly to the given timeframe.
- **Technical readiness:** Ensure your internet connection, microphone, and chosen interview platform are functioning correctly. Test everything in advance and address any issues promptly.
- **Research your interviewers:** If possible, discreetly research your interviewers beforehand (you can see who they are whilst you are waiting in the waiting room in the interview itself). Understanding their backgrounds and organisations can help tailor your responses.
- **Rank realistically:** Only rank organisations where you are genuinely willing to work, considering factors like location, work-life balance, and career aspirations. Don't let full time positions put you off if you want to go less than full time, most organisations are flexible.
- **Connect with past fellows:** Reach out to previous fellows for insights into the interview process, expectations, and what interviewers look for. Their experience is invaluable.
- **Pace yourself and avoid burnout:** Interview preparation can be intense. Schedule regular breaks, maintain a healthy lifestyle, and approach the process with a positive mindset.

NMD Fellowship-specific tips

- **Anticipate common questions:** Prepare for questions about your motivation for leadership, your understanding of NHS challenges, and how the fellowship aligns with your career goals.
- **Showcase system-level thinking:** Demonstrate your ability to think strategically and approach challenges from a system-level perspective, moving beyond the viewpoint of a junior doctor.
- **Familiarise yourself with key documents:** Have easy access to key documents during the interview, such as the person specification, leadership commitment document, and relevant FMLM materials.
- **Project confidence and likeability:** Maintain a professional appearance, positive body language, and clear communication. Convey enthusiasm and a genuine interest in the fellowship.

CPhO Fellowship-specific tips

- **Attend the insight evening:** Make the most of the insight evening to network with prospective hosts, previous fellows, and learn more about the fellowship experience.
- **Understand host organisation variations:** Research the different host organisations and their projects. Be prepared to discuss how your skills and interests align with their specific needs.
- **Honesty and integrity are paramount:** Be truthful in your responses. If you don't know an answer, acknowledge it and express your willingness to learn.
- **Articulate your fellowship vision:** Clearly communicate your motivations for applying, how the fellowship will enhance your professional practice, and your contributions to the pharmacy profession.



Remember...

The interview is an opportunity to showcase your skills, passion, and potential. By preparing thoroughly, projecting confidence, and demonstrating your commitment to medical leadership, you can significantly increase your chances of success.



Resources

National Medical Directors Fellowship

- BMJ Leader X account - lots of articles/tweets from X book club
- FMLM Trainee Steering Group how to guides
- Podcasts on Spotify (A playlist put together by a fellow):
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/OeOkWtw7S1Ja3A45Nhhmrp?si=81vtK91rRTysteOyra5l6A&pi=-P7lJLIDRF67>
- Public speaking podcasts
- Medical interviews books

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Fellowship

- Pharmaceutical Journal (previous articles about fellowship available)
- RPS - chief pharmacist frame/guidance
- Reading various literature on leadership (various books etc)
- NHSE resources around inclusive pharmacy practice
- Uptodate on latest CQC, GPhC , RPS and SPS guidances published that impact on practice

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