

DISPEX LIVE

Event Highlights

Dispex Live brought together dispensing practice teams for a day of learning, expert insight and valuable networking.

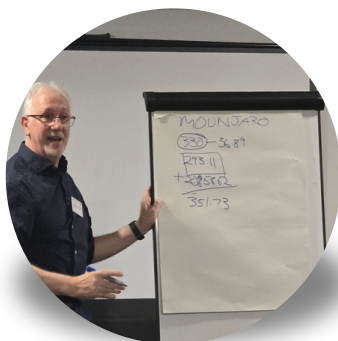
The event received outstanding feedback from both delegates and exhibitors, with an excellent atmosphere throughout the day. Attendees particularly valued the practical nature of the sessions, the real-life examples and the opportunity to see how relatively small changes can have a measurable impact within their own practices.

Feedback reflected the success of the event, with an overall rating of 4.80 out of 5, relevance to practice rated 4.85 out of 5, and speakers also rated 4.85 out of 5. Delegates also shared suggestions for future events including: more AI, controlled drug management, strategies for training and retaining a great dispenser. Many also emphasised the importance of regular updates to help practices stay ahead of legislative and operational changes.

If you were unable to join us last month, the following provides a flavour of the day and some of the key themes discussed. We hope it offers a glimpse of what made Dispex Live 2026 such a valuable event.

Understanding “Attracts an Administration Fee (AAF)” and VAT

To help simplify this complex area, Philip explained that we have replaced the term **PAs** with **AAFs - Attracts an Administration Fee**. The live worked examples that Philip presented on the notice board enabled delegates to calculate the percentages alongside him in real time, reinforcing both their understanding and confidence in the process.



Understanding the PCSE Online Drug Statement

Philip guided delegates through the Statement, explaining how practices can confidently interpret the information available to them and use it to better understand reimbursement. Practical worked examples and supporting handouts enabled delegates to follow the process step by step, helping to simplify what can often appear to be a challenging task.



Enhancing income was a big topic

One of the day's most popular sessions focused on identifying opportunities to maximise dispensary income while avoiding common reimbursement pitfalls. Topics included:

- **Serious Shortages Protocol (SSP)**
- **Part XV Nutritional Supplements**
- **Broken Bulk**
- **Out Of Pocket Expenses**
- **Understanding the differences between discount schemes**

Philip used examples throughout the session to help delegates navigate these areas with confidence, avoid common pitfalls and minimise potential loss of income.

Buying Better – Enhancing Profitability.

Delegates explored purchasing strategies to improve profitability while maintaining compliance. Philip demonstrated how using the e-CASS cascade ordering platform enables practices to compare supplier prices, with clawback calculations displayed, giving dispensers a clear picture of the true cost of each item, allowing teams to make more informed purchasing decisions.

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Bespoke Dispensary Friendly Formularies

Philip demonstrated the benefits of bespoke dispensary-friendly formularies, showing how they can create win-win opportunities by reducing costs for the NHS while enhancing dispensary profitability.

Real Life ePACT Data Deep Dive

Another popular session on the day was a live review of anonymised real-world ePACT data, kindly provided by one of the attending practices. Although the practice was already performing well and making effective use of Dispex tools, Philip identified further opportunities to optimise performance. Seeing genuine practice data analysed live provided delegates with practical insights that could readily be applied within their own dispensaries.

The volunteer later commented on how rewarding it was to see "my data" brought to life to help others learn.

Category H – A New Threat?

Philip provided an overview of the categories, explaining where the new Category H fits within the framework and its potential impact on dispensary margins. He also shared strategies for maximising margins under the new arrangements.

Philip's Key Takeaways

Throughout the day, Philip returned to several recurring themes:

- Understand unavoidable losses and minimise avoidable ones.
- Buy smarter rather than relying solely on standard wholesaler pricing.
- Make full use of available reimbursement opportunities.



What's New?

This session reviewed the latest developments affecting dispensing practices, including changes in reimbursement, emerging challenges, and useful guidance on responding effectively. It also explored the growing issue of loss-making products and the impact of de-branding, helping delegates understand how to identify these risks and implement strategies to manage them effectively.

Hub & Spoke

Philip discussed the opportunities, challenges and operational implications of Hub and Spoke dispensing models. He also shared that Dispex is developing a comprehensive guide to support practices through the application process. This should be available in September. In the mean-time, **email** the office for details.

- Review purchasing decisions regularly.
- Use prescribing data proactively to improve profitability.
- Make full use of the tools and resources available through Dispex.

USE THE DISPEX WEBSITE

A final reminder that the **Dispex website** provides tools, resources and support to help practices continue improving dispensary performance.

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Using AI & Technology to Assist Your Practice

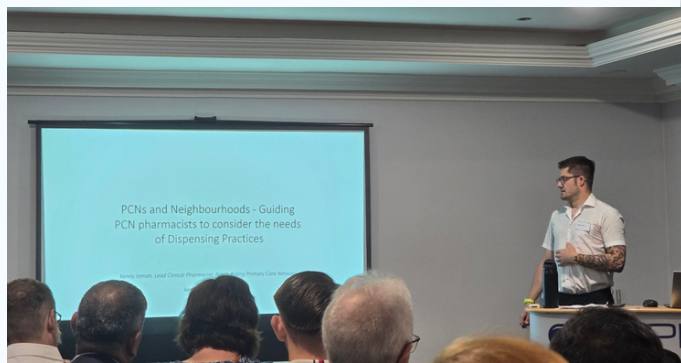
Dr Ankit Kant

Rather than focusing on the hype, Ankit's session provided a balanced perspective on AI, exploring both its enormous potential and its very real risks. Through engaging demonstrations and relatable examples, delegates saw how AI can streamline administrative tasks, reduce repetitive workloads and save valuable time, while recognising the importance of maintaining human oversight and professional judgement.

A central theme of the session was that AI should be viewed as a practical assistant rather than a replacement for expertise. Ankit demonstrated how practices can begin adopting AI safely and responsibly, improving efficiency without compromising governance, accuracy or patient safety.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway was that AI isn't a future technology for practices- it's already here, and many teams are using it whether practices realise it or not. The question is no longer whether to engage with AI, but how to do so confidently and safely.

The session finished with practical ideas that left many delegates rethinking some of the most time-consuming jobs in the dispensary and how technology could help transform them.



PCNs & Neighbourhoods - Guiding PCN pharmacists to consider the needs of Dispensing Practices

Kenny Inman

Kenny shared valuable insights and expertise from the perspective of a PCN Pharmacist. He provided an engaging introduction to the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS), offering useful context for attendees who were less familiar with the initiative. While acknowledging the significant opportunities ARRS has created, he also spoke candidly about the practical challenges and "teething problems" experienced during its implementation.

Kenny outlined his vision for how PCN pharmacists can make the greatest impact by focusing on their core clinical skills. He explained how embedding pharmacists more effectively within dispensing practices it can not only improve job satisfaction and professional fulfilment, but also release valuable capacity for both prescribing and dispensing teams.

He highlighted the important role PCN pharmacists play in medicines optimisation, including conducting medication reviews, supporting high-risk medicines monitoring, reviewing high-cost prescribing, processing hospital discharge medication changes and correspondence, and managing repeat prescribing. By taking on these responsibilities, practices can improve patient safety, enhance prescribing quality and help reduce workload pressures across general practice.

Thank you to everyone who joined us

A huge thank you to everyone who attended, presented and sponsored Dispex Live 2026. The real value of the event came from the opportunity to meet with our members face to face, providing a full day of learning, discussion and networking. If you were unable to join us last month, we hope this article has given you a taste of what the day had to offer. We look forward to welcoming you to the next Dispex Live.