



Friday 30th July 2010

New Guide to Legal Requirements for Pharmacists Launched

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland has today launched its new Guide for Pharmacists on General Legal Requirements. The launch took place at Society House, 73 University Street, Belfast on the occasion of the first 2010/11 pre-registration trainee induction day.

The publication provides a reference to all pharmacists on the relevant legislation applying to the sale or supply of medicinal products, poisons and chemicals.

Speaking at the launch event, Ms Andree McCollum, Chair of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland's Legislation, Standards and Practice Committee said:

"The legislation applying to pharmacy practice is certainly dynamic to say the least. Since our last publication two years ago, a raft of new regulations have now come in to effect, including the Responsible Pharmacist regulations, new rules on the dispensing of EEA prescriptions, the introduction of the Accountable Officer regulations in relation to Controlled Drugs, and important updates to Chemicals and Veterinary Medicines legislation. To ensure compliance and good practice, it is imperative that all pharmacists in Northern Ireland continue to refer to this guide and the relevant legislation when uncertain on any matter, as well as keeping abreast of any updates issued by the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland."

"I want to thank again the many people for their contributions to the review, including members of the Legislation, Standards and Practice Committee, the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate and the Health and Safety Executive."

ENDS

For further information please contact Richard Price, Policy Advisor at the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, on 028 90 326 927 richard.price@psni.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The July 2010 edition of the Guide to Legal Requirement is available on the website of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland here:
<http://www.psni.org.uk/professionals/professional-ethics-and-standards/guide-to-legal-requirements.php>
2. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is the regulatory body for pharmacy in Northern Ireland. It protects public safety in pharmacy by:
 - setting and promoting standards for pharmacists' admission to the register and for remaining on the register;
 - maintaining a publicly accessible register of pharmacists, and pharmacy premises, in Northern Ireland;
 - handling concerns about the Fitness to Practise of registrants, acting as a complaints portal and taking action to protect the public; and
 - ensuring high standards of education and training for pharmacists in Northern Ireland.
3. 3 of the most important updates from the previous guide to Legal Requirements (2008) include:
 1. *The Responsible Pharmacist regulations*

The Responsible Pharmacist regulations came in to effect on 1 October 2009. In short summary, they require all pharmacies to: keep a record of who the responsible pharmacist was at any point of a pharmacy opening (responsible for securing the safe and effective running of the pharmacy); display a notice of who the current Responsible Pharmacist is; and, maintain a set of 9 mandatory pharmacy procedures.

2. *The Accountable Officer regulations*

The Accountable Officer regulations also came in to effect in October 2009 and apply to the management of Controlled Drugs. Designated bodies are required to appoint an Accountable Officer and the Department must be notified of this appointment in writing.

3. *Dispensing EEA prescriptions*

New legislation relating to the dispensing of prescriptions originating from an EEA prescriber came in to effect in November 2008 (updated July 2010). The legislation enables pharmacists in the UK to dispense a prescription issued by a doctor or dentist registered in an EEA country or Switzerland, provided certain minimum standards are met.

Further details on all these changes are included in the July 2010 Guide to Legal Requirements for Pharmacists in Northern Ireland.