

**Pharmaceutical Society NI**

**Annual Meeting**

**Thursday 15 October 2015**

**Pharmacy Forum NI Chairperson's Address**

**Dr Kate McClelland**

**Vice President of the Society, Ladies and Gentlemen as chair of the Pharmacy Forum it is my privilege to present this report on the work for the Forum for 2014/15.**

I was elected chair of the Pharmacy Forum NI in 2013, it has been a great honour to be Chair for the last two years sadly for you all I stood down as Chair in May this year but you will be delighted to know that Roberta Tasker has been elected Chair in my place. Roberta needs very little introduction and it will be her pleasure to deliver this speech, obviously not this exact speech!...next year. Roberta is, like myself, a former President of the Society and was recognised for her service to the profession in 2014 when she was conferred a Fellowship of the Pharmaceutical Society – congratulations again Roberta. I will still sit on the Pharmacy Forum Board so you can't get rid of me that easily!

But back to the speech, I want to start by thanking my fellow board members for their support and dedication in their volunteer roles, stepping up to the mark to provide leadership for the profession. I would also like to thank Julie and her team for all the hard work they have done to support our efforts.

As always the Annual Report, Website and Newsletters cover the breadth and depth of the work of the Forum this year. In my report though, I want to focus on some of the key actions we have delivered whilst also looking at the future opportunities for the Pharmacy Forum.

At our core the Pharmacy Forum is about helping all pharmacists make patient safety their number one priority.

We continue to play an active role in the Rebalancing Medicines Legislation and Pharmacy Regulation Programme Board. We have ensured that the views of local pharmacist have been reflected at a UK level through our continual communications to our members on the latest development as they occur.

We are nearing the finishing post on delivery of one of the key objectives of the Programme Board - that is to redress the current punitive criminal sanctions for inadvertent dispensing errors. This will bring pharmacists, working in registered pharmacies, more in line with other healthcare professionals. The required changes in legislation could come into force early next year, parliamentary timeframes permitting!

We have always been clear, throughout this process that proposals to provide a similar defence for hospital colleagues must progress at pace. We are pleased to say that this work is now nearing completion and the proposals should be consulted on in the coming months.

The overarching reason for removing the criminal sanction is to create a 'just culture' in pharmacy. All pharmacists and members of the pharmacy team have a professional duty to support a patient safety culture and a culture of learning and improvement by being open and honest when things go wrong and reporting actual and potential errors as a natural part of their work.

We will be working with key stakeholders in Northern Ireland and across the UK in the coming months to ensure that this commitment to create a learning and improving culture is embedded and supported at all levels of pharmacy.

One of the next phases of the Programme Board's work will be to look at to look at the important area of supervision where we will inform proposals to free up pharmacist into more clinical roles by deployment of modern technologies and making more effective use of the whole pharmacy team.

I was delighted to see the Donaldson Report published highlighting a greater role for pharmacists. In our response we reinforced our role as the medicines expert.

This message is also being taken forward with other pharmacy stakeholders in implementing the 'Making it better through Pharmacy' strategy. We welcome the opportunity to work with other pharmacy organisations in a joint working group to implement the strategy.

The Pharmacy Forum has continued to support the profession to meet their regulatory obligations to submit a CPD portfolio. We delivered a regional programme with 100 % of the participants rating it good or excellent however the support we offer is evolving; at the start it was about making sure every pharmacist had access to CPD support as we transitioned to mandatory submission. Now all pharmacists have access support, but we have also developed more one to one sessions and focused on those who need more support.

Supporting the profession and encouraging emerging leaders is core to our work that is why we held the 'Preparation of Pharmacists for Public Appointments' events these sessions were oversubscribed, to me this shows the hunger from the profession to develop into leadership roles.

Some of the other highlights were 'Community Pharmacist in the Management of Parkinson's' event co-hosted with Parkinson's UK, 'Pre- Registrations Calculations Training' to help students with calculations training to prepare for their final registration exams and our work with the Network of Pharmacists with a special interest in Older people.

In November last year we held a successful rewarding excellence event in Belfast City Hall where we conferred two fellowships on Roberta Tasker and Anne Friel, as well as celebrating the success of two young pharmacists starting their careers by awarding the two gold medals being the top students in Queens University Belfast and Ulster University Coleraine respectively.

At the event Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Dr Mark Timoney made our keynote speech in which he talked about exploring the future of regulations and

professional leadership. This review has given the Pharmacy Forum an opportunity to hold a mirror to ourselves whilst also crystallising what we see as good professional leadership for all pharmacists in Northern Ireland.

We are about to go out to the wider profession to share our views and we will be communicating our case for Local Professional Leadership.

In a devolved Healthcare environment ....Strong focused local professional leadership is needed to ensure we can continue to provide critical services to our community and deliver on new evidence based services in a variety of practice settings. Whilst the regulator sets the standard to protect the public the leadership body must lead on and push the boundaries of best practice for pharmacists to aspire to.

Not only do we need a strong local presence but we must also have inputs into National discussions and European and Worldwide pharmacy developments.

We must be

Locally active, nationally minded and internationally benchmarked

Thank you