

For immediate release
22 September 2014

Take part in the draft fees consultation

The Pharmaceutical Society NI has today launched a 3 month consultation on the level of the Annual retention and other associated fees for registrants for the years commencing 1st June 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Registrant fees were last increased in 2009. A modest increase to the annual fee is proposed from £372 to £395 in 2015 rising to £415 in 2017/18. Ultimately the proposed increases in the first year, after basic rate tax relief, are equivalent to an extra £1.50 per month and in the subsequent years 75 pence per month.

Trevor Patterson, Chief Executive explained:

“For the first time in recent years, the organisation has reported an operational deficit in the 2013/2014 registration year and going forward, without action, this deficit is likely to increase. We have made provision in reserves to allow us to operate throughout the period during which the increases take effect.”

“Registrant fees have remained static from 2009, during which time governance, fitness to practice and other regulatory costs have increased. These have largely been due to legislative changes in 2012, essential to enable the organisation to meet its statutory obligation to protect the public. Due to the wider range of fitness to practise sanctions available and the increasing complexity of cases being advanced, over the last three years the cost associated with Fitness to Practise has gone up by approximately 150%.”

“Despite successes in reducing operational costs, efficiency savings and generating revenue our projections show that we are not currently receiving enough income to cover the increased costs of delivering our statutory duties in protecting the public. The increase in fees will ensure we have sufficient funds to do this.”

“We have been able to maintain registration fees at £372 since 2009. If fees had risen in line with inflation the estimated fee by 2018 would be £457. The proposed fee for 2018 is £415. We believe our proposals to increase fees strikes the right balance between a modest increase in fees and ensuring we continue to fulfill our statutory duty to protect the public, using our reserves generated by operational efficiencies to bridge the gap. Based on our projections of future activity this modest increase in fees allied to the prudent reduction in reserves will bring the organisation back, within three years, to a break even position whilst maintaining sufficient reserves.”

The consultation is open until 22 December 2014. Further details about this proposal and how to respond to the consultation can be found [here](#).

Trevor Patterson concluded: “Before a final decision is made on fee levels, Council would like to hear from all those affected by, or who have an interest, in this proposal. We would encourage all pharmacists to read this consultation document and respond with their views. We would also encourage feedback from patients and the public; employers, professional and representative bodies, and other stakeholders with an interest.”

ENDS

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Notes to editors

1. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is the regulatory body for pharmacists in Northern Ireland. Our primary purpose is to protect the public by ensuring practicing pharmacists in Northern Ireland are fit to practise, keep their skills and knowledge up to date and deliver high quality safe care to patients.
2. The consultation document and details on how to respond to the consultation is available on the Pharmaceutical Society NI website www.psn.org.uk/publicaitons/consultations
3. The consultation will run for 12 weeks from 22 September 2014 to 22 December 2014.
4. The annual retention and registration fee is a mandatory payment for all registrants.
5. The Pharmaceutical Society NI's activities are largely funded by statutory fees paid by pharmacists to maintain their professional registration.