

Welcome to update



Welcome to the first edition of our regulatory update in 2018.

In this edition we reflect on the inquiry into Hyponatraemia and the importance of the professional duty of candour. We examine the Secretary of State for Health's statement on improving the safety of medicines and we report on an updated Memorandum of Understanding between the Pharmaceutical Society NI and the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland. We also let you know about the outcome of our annual performance review by the Professional Standards Authority, as well as giving you important updates on CPD, pre-registration training and Registration and Retention fees.

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Review previous editions

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Inquiry into Hyponatraemia a reminder of the importance of the professional duty of candour

The [Report of the Inquiry into Hyponatraemia related Deaths](#) published in January 2018, delivered some extremely concerning findings. Not least the comments made by the Chair of the Inquiry Sir John O'Hara QC, who concluded that some healthcare professionals, related to the investigation, acted evasively and dishonestly.

The first recommendation the Inquiry made was that a statutory duty of candour should now be enacted in Northern Ireland. Recognising that the enactment of a statutory duty of candour is a matter for the Department of Health, we would remind pharmacists that as per [The Code](#) for professional standards, conduct, ethics and performance, pharmacists already have a professional responsibility to uphold the duty of candour and raise concerns appropriately.

The Pharmaceutical Society NI recognises that there can be barriers to pharmacists demonstrating candour. That is why The Code also requires employers, managers and lead staff to make sure that there is an effective procedure in place that allows staff to raise concerns openly and safely without the fear of reprisals. The culture that employers and managers develop is vitally important; all pharmacists registered in Northern Ireland have a duty to contribute and foster a culture of openness, honesty and learning.

We also strongly welcome the introduction of new legislation to provide a defence in the case of dispensing errors – it has been recognised for many years that fear of prosecution may in some cases have inhibited reporting of errors and consequently reduced the capacity for the profession to learn from such incidents and thus prevent any repetition.

The Pharmaceutical Society NI is tasked with protecting the public, but we are also tasked with upholding the reputation of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland. Whilst it is recognised that public satisfaction levels with pharmacists are high, the maintenance of that public trust is vital. Being open and honest with patients, service users, colleagues and employers when something goes wrong, is not only in the public's interest, but it will help maintain the reputation of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland and the public's trust going forward.

Resources:

- [The Code](#)
- [Joint Statement on the Duty of Candour from the Statutory Regulators of Healthcare Professionals](#)
- [Pharmaceutical Society NI Guidance on Raising Concerns](#)
- [Pharmacy Forum NI: Raising a Concern - Professional Guidance](#)

Pharmacy Regulators update Memorandum of Understanding

The Chief Executives of Ireland's two pharmacy regulators signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 29 January 2018 in Dublin.



Commenting on the arrangement, Chief Executive of the Pharmaceutical Society NI, Trevor Patterson, said:

"The organisations both had duties to support the safe and effective use of medicines and the MOU will provide a platform for sharing best practice and information in the interests of patients and the public.

"There has been much focus on the Irish border following the UK decision to leave the EU, whilst our organisation has no view on that decision there are undoubtedly issues arising from it that will need to be managed in the future, in the context of the final arrangements agreed between the EU and UK. Our close relationship with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland can only assist both regulators in the execution of our vital public safety functions.

"We will be establishing a number of operational protocols to provide the practical support necessary to deliver the aims set out in the MOU".



CE welcomes announcement on improving the safety of medicines

Trevor Patterson, Chief Executive of the Pharmaceutical Society NI said:

"We welcome the recent announcement by Jeremy Hunt in relation to improving the safety of medicines. The issues described are not confined to England and the devolved administrations are also looking at improvements in this area.

"A range of healthcare professionals have a role in promoting and delivering medicines safety – pharmacists have a front line role in assisting patients to take the correct medicine in the correct way every day.

"Our regulatory role is designed to support pharmacists in their practice and to provide assurance to the public around safe and effective medicines usage.

"To that end we very much welcome the introduction of new legislation to provide a defence in the case of dispensing errors – it has been recognised for many years that fear of prosecution may in some cases have inhibited reporting of errors and consequently reduced the capacity for the profession to learn from such incidents and thus prevent any repetition.

"We updated our Code, which sets out the standards of conduct, ethics and performance for pharmacists in Northern Ireland in 2016. Within standard 1 of the new Code we have explicitly described a duty of candour – this is designed to ensure that an environment of openness and honesty exists within which patients and practitioners alike can contribute to a learning culture.

"We will work with the Department of Health in Northern Ireland and other stakeholders to further explore ways of fostering a learning culture which protects patients and promotes professionalism".

An interview Jeremy Hunt discussing his announcement can be found here: www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-43167744/jeremy-hunt-drug-errors-causing-four-to-five-deaths-a-day

President welcomes 2016/17 PSA Performance Review

The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) has published its performance review of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland as part of its annual review of the nine statutory health regulators across the UK. The performance review assesses whether each regulator is meeting the PSA's Standards of Good Regulation. The PSA has now confirmed that the Pharmaceutical Society NI met all 24 Standards of Good Regulation for 2016/17. The standards cover: Guidance & Standards, Education & Training, Fitness to Practise and Registration.

Reflecting on the performance review, Dr Jim Livingstone, President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland said:



"We are delighted with this Performance Review outcome and especially the fact that we have now met all 24 of the PSA's Standards of Good Regulation for two years in a row. Our performance should give the public assurance that we are doing the right things to protect patients from potential harm and to uphold the reputation of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland and we are doing them well. This outcome is testimony to the hard work of everyone in the organisation and I would like to congratulate them.

"However we cannot, be complacent. Recent reports and headlines demonstrate the importance of proactive and effective regulation, working in partnership with healthcare professionals to ensure an open and honest culture in the NHS, which is primarily focused on patient safety. This is vitally important in order to maintain public trust in healthcare professionals and the health and social care service in general. As a Council we will therefore continue to demand high standards of ourselves and assess the performance of the organisation against our Corporate Strategy and the challenging strategic objectives we have set.

Trevor Patterson, Chief Executive of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, commented:

"We are very pleased with this result, however, we recognise that there are areas the PSA has identi-

fied where they expect further progress to be made. We will focus our energies on ensuring we deliver on these and on our Corporate Strategy – always maintaining our primary focus of public safety".



At a glance

Annual review of performance

Regulator reviewed: Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Standards of good regulation

Core functions	Met
Guidance and Standards	4/4
Education and Training	4/4
Registration	6/6
Fitness to Practise	10/10

On publishing its annual performance review report the PSA noted on its website:

"We have assessed the PSNI's performance against our Standards of Good Regulation and are pleased to see that the PSNI has maintained the improvement in its performance that we noted last year - meeting all 24 Standards of Good Regulation".

Pre-registration update

Important Dates

Pre-registration training for 2018 – 2019

Employers and tutors are reminded that the deadline for receipt of completed application forms for next year's training is **31st March 2018**.

Further information including the application form is available using this link: <http://www.psni.org.uk/pre-registration/applying-to-register-as-trainee-of-the-society/>

For 2018 - 2019, pre- registration training can start between **2nd July 2018 and 17th September 2018**

Key information about the 2018 registration examination

Registration examinations will be held on:

- **Tuesday 12 June 2018** - SU Snack Bar, Queen's Students' Union 79-81 University Road, Belfast BT7 1NF
- **Tuesday 02 October 2018** - Society House, 73 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HL.

The [Examination Entry Form](#) must be submitted by the following deadlines:

- 01 May 2018** to sit the June Examination
- 01 September 2018** to sit the October Examination

The examination fee is **£174**, payable by [debit card](#) or by cheque (cheques should be made payable to Pharmaceutical Society NI)

E-portfolio update

The majority of trainees continue to make positive progress with their performance standards e-portfolio and are on target with expected levels of completion at this stage of training. This helps to evidence to the Pharmaceutical Society NI and to the public that trainees are developing the necessary competencies to be a pharmacist. The Pharmaceutical Society NI recognises the commitment demonstrated by the respective tutors in providing appropriate and timely verifications.

Important information: 75 % to 90% completion for 39 week appraisal

Action for trainees:

Trainees have a personal responsibility to submit a sufficient number of cycles to their tutor for verification to achieve the following targets:

Action for tutors:

Tutors have a responsibility to provide appropriate and timely verification of their trainee's learning cycles.

Monitoring

Where trainee progress or tutor verification is not at expected levels, we will contact the trainee and their respective tutors to determine if there is any reasonable explanation as to why progress is behind or if any barriers exist. Where tutors do not engage with the process and do not provide evidence of regular and timely feedback, then their continued participation as a tutor will be reviewed.

Notify us if training arrangements change:

We recognise that life events or unforeseen circumstances can arise, which means the training arrangements between tutors and trainees made at the start of the year must change (for example tutor absence due to sickness, maternity). The [Standards for Pre - Registration Training](#) define the obligation on trainees, tutors and employers in relation to notifying the Pharmaceutical Society NI of any changes in training arrangements.

If changes in training arrangements are unavoidable, make early contact with the Pharmaceutical Society NI to ensure that change is managed and recognised by your regulator.

Further information, along with the change of tutor form, is available on our [website](#) and on page 13 of the [Pre-Registration Manual](#)

Please note:

If tutors or employers do not notify us of changes in training arrangements, all training subsequent to the un-notified change will not be recognised.

Raising concerns

If you have any concerns about your training arrangements you can raise those via the Pharmaceutical Society NI website or with the Pre-Registration Lead directly. All concerns will be taken seriously and objectively investigated.

4 hours protected development time per week

Protected development time is a mandatory part of the pre-registration year and it is a requirement for all tutors to provide trainees with this time during their training.

CPD Update

The CPD year 2017/18 commenced on 1 June 2017 and will finish **31 May 2018**. In this article we outline the key information, dates and resources you need to successfully complete your CPD portfolio.



Support Materials

Numerous resources are available via our website explaining your CPD requirements. These include the:

- [CPD Framework](#),
- [CPD Assessment Guide](#)
- [Guide to Recording CPD](#)

The Pharmacy Forum provides facilitation services should you wish to avail of more focussed support.

The CPD [Frequently Asked Questions](#) in the CPD Information section of the organisation's website provides information on:

- **accessing the new CPD Online system**
- **accessing archived portfolios**
- **your statutory CPD requirements, and**
- **the CPD submission process.**

Key Dates

29 March 2018: portal to online submission opens. You can submit your CPD portfolio anytime from now until 31 May 2018.

31 May 2018: All Registrants must submit a CPD portfolio to the Pharmaceutical Society NI before midnight on 31 May 2018.

1 June 2017—31 May 2018: All CPD activity completed during this period may be included in your CPD.

Extenuating circumstances

Any registrant unable to fully comply with our CPD requirements due to extenuating circumstances (EC) can make an application for either a deferral, exemption or a partial submission. Application criteria apply and details of this process are available on our website at [http://www.psn.org.uk/Extenuating Circumstances Form](http://www.psn.org.uk/Extenuating-Circumstances-Form)

All applications are dealt with on a case by case basis by the Registrar, in accordance with the [CPD -Framework](#) and must be supported with relevant documentary evidence.

Note: an EC application can be made for an exemption, deferral, or a partial submission. Information on the application process is available on our website. Applications should be forwarded as soon as practicable to the Registrar, if possible, before the 30 April 2018.

Registration and Retention fees frozen for 2018/19

The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI, at a meeting on 06 February 2018 made a decision to freeze registration and retention fees for 2018/19. This makes it the second year in a row fees have been frozen and the ninth time in ten years that they have been maintained at the same level as the previous year.

Speaking about Council's decision to freeze registration fees Trevor Patterson, Chief Executive said:

"We are continuously working to be as efficient and effective as possible. Through the use of technology, by working with partners and by constantly improving, we have been able to find efficiencies rather than raising fees. Since 2009 inflation alone would have seen our fees rise next year to an estimated £470 rather than the current £398 – in real terms that amounts to an 18% reduction in potential fee increases, or around 15% lower fees. In the same period there have been significant changes to the duties and responsibilities of the organisation, the costs of which have also been absorbed.

"We are grateful to the profession for their willingness to use our on-line retention, CPD and pre-registration facilities which have contributed to these cost reductions and to our staff who have contributed significantly to our cost saving drive. We are, however, not complacent and will continue to seek opportunities for cost reductions going forward, recognising our responsibility for the use of registrants' funds.