

Pharmaceutical Society NI

Annual General Meeting

06 October 2016

Chair of Pharmacy Forum address

President of the Society, Ladies and Gentlemen as Chair of the Pharmacy Forum it is my privilege to present this report on the work of the Forum in 2015/16.

This is my first AGM and my last as Chair of the Pharmacy Forum NI. It is my pleasure to welcome Sheelin McKeagney as the new Chair of the Pharmacy Forum NI, Sheelin has brought an exciting energy to our Board as Vice Chair and I am sure that he will be a salient voice on the importance of professional leadership in Northern Ireland.

The Forum section of the Annual Report shows the breath of work we have been involved in. This year we published the *Exploring Effective Professional Leadership in Northern Ireland* discussion paper. The paper has been well received by our members as well as key stakeholders. We look forward to continuing to work with the Department of Health as they work on *Regulation of Pharmacy Profession in Northern Ireland* which includes the possibility of splitting the regulatory and professional leadership functions. We also want to work with the Pharmaceutical Society NI to ensure that any future arrangements, not only protect the public, but are also in the best interests of the profession.

Whilst *Exploring Effective Professional Leadership in Northern Ireland* has been a major focus for us this year, it has not been our only one. We continue to be actively involved on the Rebalancing Medicines Legislation and Pharmacy Regulation Programme Board. We are still waiting for the introduction of legislation to Parliament on Premises Standards and dispensing error proposals for pharmacy professionals working in the community sector.

Locally we have been involved in a number of leadership roles that affect our profession, including the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Strategic Leadership Group. This group will work to provide strategic oversight of the implementation of departmental policy and will provide high level governance, leadership and direction in the areas of medicines optimisation, medicines regulation and deployment of the pharmacy workforce. The Forum are a key member of the Making it Better through Pharmacy in the Community Strategy implementation team. We have hosted a leadership event for pharmacists and Chaired the working group responsible for ensuring the strategy is fulfilled.

This year the Forum have produced two sets of guidance, the first was the *Guide to Support Medicines Review for Older People*, which was developed by the Forum's Network of Pharmacists with a Special Interest in Older People. This guidance couldn't have come at a better time, with approximately 1 in ten people in Northern Ireland aged 70, or older, and 33,000 over 85. Our *Clinical Check Guidance* is for all pharmacists who undertake clinical checks as part of their pharmacy practice, as we all know Pharmacists have a key role in patient safety by ensuring that medicines are prescribed and administered safely. The clinical check of prescribed medicines prior to dispensing is a crucial 'safety net' in preventing patient harm.

Supporting our profession's educational development is a core component of our work, and this year we continued to support our members not only to meet the regulatory requirement but to excel at CPD, via our well received program of facilitation events, these have taken the form of workshops, one to one sessions, one to one and an updated online resource and video presentation.

Some of the other educational highlights were the Dementia Awareness event with Professor Peter Passmore, our Pre-Registrations Calculations Training to help students with calculations training to prepare for their final registration exam and our Newly Qualified Pharmacist Opportunities where a number of pharmacists joined our Board and committees as novitiate members.

I think I have covered most of the annual review now! Over the next 12 months I see the work of the Forum increasing, Bengoa and the Minister of Health's vision for health sets out a clear direction for our Health Service yet the role of pharmacists still needs to be brought to the fore and we, as a Forum, must be a leadership body that not only supports pharmacists in their role but a body that advocates for our members and the public.

Next month we will be holding our Rewarding Excellence event in the wonderful surroundings of the Belfast Harbour Commission Building, where we will be celebrating exceptional contributions within the profession, from the top students to members who have been practicing for 50 years as well as inferring new fellowships to outstanding members of our profession.

I look forward to us building on our work this year, taking our message to our members and the public, producing more guidance that meets the needs of our members and support any member that needs help.

It will be our role in the next 12 months to engage with our members and other stakeholders to help us build a leadership body that is 'fit for future' to help Pharmacists fulfil their own development needs and that of the profession in the interests of our patients and the public.

As my last duty as Chair, I would like to thank my fellow board members for their support and dedication. I would also like to thank Julie and her team for their hard work in supporting our efforts.