

Pre-registration training in 2020: joint statement from the GPhC and PSNI

“Yesterday (25 March) we brought together representatives from student and trainee representative bodies, universities, employers, education and training bodies and others from across the UK to discuss the key issues in relation to pre-registration training during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Everyone recognised the significant pressures that pre-registration trainees are currently working under and the major impact this is having on their ability to prepare for the registration assessment for trainees in Great Britain and the PSNI Exam for trainees in Northern Ireland. We also recognised that more pharmacists will be needed to help respond to the pandemic and deliver care to patients and the public in the coming months, and that pre-registration trainees are expecting to be able to register and work as pharmacists from August. We heard feedback from trainees through the good work that BPSA have done to gather views.

“We discussed the potential options in relation to the registration assessment and the PSNI Exam in 2020. We have now made the decision to postpone the registration assessment in June and September, and the PSNI Exam in June and October, after taking account of the views expressed by participants. We will look to reschedule these assessments for a later date(s), either towards the end of this year or early in 2021, once the situation is clearer.

“The GPhC and PSNI are now working as quickly as possible to develop plans for the period between now and the rescheduled assessments, including the possibility of a form of provisional registration for current pre-registration trainees. We are carefully considering what options will be in the best interests of pre-registration trainees, pharmacy services and the general public, whilst protecting patient safety.

“We understand that pre-registration trainees, tutors, employers and members of the public will have many questions about the potential options, how they would work in practice and what support would be in place for trainees. We would ask them to wait until we have had the opportunity to work with our partners on the approach we will take before asking us these questions; we understand the importance of getting answers to everyone as soon as we can.

“We would like to thank everyone involved in yesterday’s meeting; it is clear that everyone is absolutely committed to working closely together to find the best way forward in this very difficult situation. We would also like to thank pre-registration trainees for their patience and professionalism at this time.”

Duncan Rudkin, GPhC Chief Executive

Trevor Patterson, PSNI Chief Executive