

Appendix B

Equality Screening

Knowledge of English

Phase 1 – Pre-Consultation

May 2023

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Section A Details about the policy/decision to be Screened

Brief description of policy/decision to be screened:

(Record whether this is a new policy or revision of existing policy)

The Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 ('the 1976 Order') is the main legislation governing the regulation of pharmacists in Northern Ireland. This legislation was amended by the Health Care and Associated Professions (Knowledge of English) Order 2015 (the '2015 Order') to ensure that pharmacists in Northern Ireland have adequate knowledge of English to perform their roles safely and effectively. The 2015 Order is UK-wide legislation and applies to a range of healthcare professionals including pharmacists, nurses and dentists. Similar legislation has also been introduced in respect of doctors. This policy will bring the regulation of Pharmacists in Northern Ireland in line with the Regulation of Pharmacists in Great Britain and with the regulation of other healthcare professionals across the UK.

As a result of these amendments, the 1976 Order now provides that a person is not entitled to be registered as a pharmacist in Northern Ireland unless they satisfy any conditions as to their knowledge of English which are prescribed by the Society in regulations. The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society has powers to make regulations in relation to language conditions and must make regulations requiring persons who wish to be registered with the Society to satisfy the registrar that they have the necessary knowledge of English. The Society must also consult on and publish guidance in relation to the evidence, information or documents to be provided for the purpose of satisfying the registrar.

The draft Guidance on Evidence of English Language skills is required by the amended 1976 Order and is a new policy which aims to provide guidance to registrants and applicants for registration in Northern Ireland on what evidence, information or documents are necessary to satisfy the registrar that they have the necessary knowledge of English. In the view of the Society, this Guidance will (alongside the Knowledge of English Regulations – see Consultation on Regulations) introduce fair and proportionate language controls for pharmacists in Northern Ireland. All applicants and registrants will be required to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, irrespective of their nationality or country of qualification.

Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened.

The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.

Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist.

Main Stakeholders Affected

Public

Pharmacists

Trainees, Foundation Training Year

Others – please specify

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (General) (Fitness to Practise and Disqualification) and (Continuing Professional Development) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023

Section B Available Evidence

Data Sources (Please list)

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information																								
Age	Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=850)																								
	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>under 25</td> <td>5.53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 - 34</td> <td>33.29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35 - 44</td> <td>31.53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45 - 54</td> <td>19.29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55 - 64</td> <td>8.24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65 - 74</td> <td>1.88%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>over 75</td> <td>0.24%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	under 25	5.53%	25 - 34	33.29%	35 - 44	31.53%	45 - 54	19.29%	55 - 64	8.24%	65 - 74	1.88%	over 75	0.24%										
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Source: Northern Ireland Census 2021 (combined groups).																									

Dependents

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=849)

Personal Responsibility for the care of dependents

A child (or children)	49.59%
A person with a disability	3.42%
A dependent older person	4.24%
None of the above	47.59%

Northern Ireland Population Statistics

The May 2022 Census information release from the 2021 Census, comments that the children's dependency ratio has fallen from 46 children per 100 people of working age (1926) to 30 children per 100 people of working age (2021).

Conversely, the number of people aged 65 and over for every 100 people of working age has risen from 13 (1926) to 27 (2021).

On Census Day 2011, 214,000 people were providing some form of unpaid care, equating to approximately one-in-eight residents in Northern Ireland (12%).

Source: Northern Ireland Census 2011. Census data for 2021 currently not available.

Disability

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=850)

Disability	2.24%
No Disability	97.76%

21.7% of respondents aged 16-64 in Northern Ireland (Apr-Jun 2017) reported a long-term illness and a disability. In the UK overall the figure was 17.4%.

Source: NISRA National Wellbeing Measures.

Marital Status

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=849)

Single	34.39%
Married	60.78%
Civil Partnership	0.71%
Separated	1.3%
Divorced	2.47%
Widowed	0.35%

Northern Ireland Population Statistics

Single	38.07%
Married	45.59%
Civil Partnership	0.18%
Separated	3.78%
Divorced	6.02%
Widowed	6.36%

Source: Northern Ireland Census 2021

Men and Women generally

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=847)

Female	73.08%
Male	26.92%
Transgender	0.00%
Nonbinary	0.00%

Northern Ireland Population Statistics

Female	50.81%
Male	49.19%

Source: Northern Ireland Census 2021

A NISRA 2021 report commented that less than 0.1% of respondents reported that they were transgender.

NISRA - Research on Measuring Gender Identity Feb. 2021

Political Opinion

No comparable data is available for Pharmacists in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Statistics

The May 2022 Northern Ireland Assembly election had the following breakdown of first preference votes based on a turnout of 63%.

First preference vote share after 18 of 18 constituencies declared.

Party

SF	29%
DUP	21.3%
AP	13.5%
UUP	11.2%
SDLP	9.1%
OTHERS	15.8%

Source: Northern Ireland Electoral Office.

Race

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=823)

White	96.82%
Irish Traveller	0.12%
Pakistani	0.12%
Black Caribbean	0.00%
Black Other	0.00%
Chinese	1.29%
Indian	0.94%
Bangladeshi	0.00%
Black African	0.24%
Other (please specify)	0.47%

Northern Ireland Population Statistics

White	96.55%
Black	0.6%
Indian	0.5%
Chinese	0.5%
Filipino	0.3%
Irish Traveller	0.1%
Arab	0.1%
Pakistani	0.1%

Roma	0.1%
Mixed Ethnicities	08.%
Other Asian	0.3%
Other Ethnicities	0.2%

Source: Northern Ireland Census 2021

Religious belief

Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=848)

Christian Protestant	32.67%
Christian Roman Catholic	52.71%
Christian Other	2.59%
Buddhist	0.12%
Hindu	0.24%
Jewish	0.12%
Muslim	0.12%
Sikh	0.00%
No religion	10.61%
Other	0.83%

NI Census 2021 Main Statistics on Religion

Catholic	42.31%
Presbyterian	16.61%
C.o.I.	11.55%
Methodist	2.35%
Other Christian	6.85%
Other religions	1.34%
No religion	17.39%
Religion not stated	1.60%

Sexual Orientation

The Registrant's Equality Survey 2021-2022 (n=846) found that 4.73% of respondents identified as identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

NI Census 2021 Main Statistics on Sexual Orientation

Straight or heterosexual	90.04%
Gay or lesbian	1.17%
Bisexual	0.75%
Other sexual orientation	0.17%
Prefer not to say	4.58%
Not stated	3.30%

Section C Assessment

Question: Will the proposed policy or decision impose inappropriate barriers or otherwise disadvantage people with protected characteristics?

Section 75 Category	Analysis	Level of impact: Yes -Minor/Yes - Major/No
Age	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their age, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required or the Guidance in general places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's age.</p>	None
Dependents	<p>Upon the making of the necessary Regulations, it will be a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to</p>	

	<p>all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of whether they have dependents, their nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required or the Guidance in general places any inappropriate barrier related to whether an applicant has dependents or not.</p>	
Disability	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of whether they have a disability or not, their nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p>	None

	<p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. Whilst evidence such as ensuring an ILETS test with no score less than 7 in each of the four areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking at one sitting of the test, may pose barriers for people with certain disabilities, these are considered appropriate as they will be in line with the policy objectives and legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English to provide safe and effective care to patients.</p>	
<p>Marital Status</p>	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their marital status, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the</p>	

	Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's marital status.	
Men and Women generally	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their gender, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's gender.</p>	None
Political Opinion	It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their political opinion, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or	None

	<p>information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's political opinion.</p>	
<p>Race</p>	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their Race, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to</p>	<p>None</p>

	<p>demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. Which country an applicant originates from or ethnicity, has no bearing on their requirement to provide evidence. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's Race.</p>	
Religious belief	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their religious belief, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's religious belief.</p>	None
Sexual Orientation	<p>It is a legal requirement for persons to have the necessary knowledge of English for safe and effective practice as a condition of registration as a pharmacist with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. This requirement enhances public protection by permitting the</p>	None

	<p>Society to introduce fair and proportionate language controls which apply to all registrants and applicants for registration as a pharmacist, irrespective of their sexual orientation, nationality, or country of qualification, and gives the Registrar powers to request evidence or information about knowledge of English in certain circumstances.</p> <p>The draft Guidance aims to provide clarity to registrants and applicants as to the criteria which will be used to assess evidence and information in relation to knowledge of English, the types of evidence which will be acceptable to the Society and when that evidence should be provided.</p> <p>Although all applicants and registrants must be able to show that they have sufficient knowledge of English for safe and effective practice, the evidence which can be used to demonstrate their language competence may vary depending on where the person qualified or has worked as a pharmacist. It is not considered that the evidence required, or the Guidance in general, places any inappropriate barrier related to an applicant's sexual orientation.</p>	
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Section D Record of Screening Decision

Record of Screening Decision

Title of policy / decision to be screened

Complaints about the Pharmaceutical Society NI

On the basis of the answers to the screening question, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full Equality Assessment

Screened Out – No Equality Assessment necessary (no impacts)

N/A

Screened Out – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)

Screening assessment completed by:

Name: Peter Hutchinson	Policy Writer
Job title: Senior Policy Lead	
Signature:	
Date: 23/06/2023	

Screening decision approved by:

Name: Mark Neale	Senior Manager
Job title: Director of Public Affairs	
Signature:	
Date: 27/06/2023	