

Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23

For the year ended 31 May 2023

Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

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For the year ended 31 May 2023

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under Articles 4C and 4D of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 by the Department of Health on 5th October 2023

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1. President and Chief Executive Foreword

2022/2023 was a transitional year for the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and it was also my inaugural year as President of the Society and Michaela McAleer's inaugural year as Chief Executive. Throughout this period we began to reflect on the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic for us as a regulator, recognising the pressures of waiting lists, delayed diagnoses and treatment which placed and continues to place an unprecedented burden on pharmacists and pharmacy teams.

There were also key changes in the Governance of the organisation. In October 2023, the eight-year tenure of Dr Jim Livingstone came to an end as Council President.

During Jim's tenure, the Pharmaceutical Society NI experienced many changes and challenges not least navigating the Covid-19 global pandemic. Jim oversaw and spearheaded changes in the strategic direction of the organisation and in the workings of Council. His commitment to both the public and registrant pharmacists never faltered and this was rightly recognised when he received the Northern Ireland Healthcare Lifetime Achievement Award in April 2023 reflecting his long service in healthcare.

In January 2023, the organisation also saw the retirement of Trevor Patterson with Michaela McAleer replacing him as Chief Executive.

Trevor was appointed Chief Executive in early 2008 and, over his 15 year tenure, he successfully led the organisation through many changes and challenges, the most significant of which were the structural and legislative changes following the legislative reform of the organisation in 2012. The move from an elected, all-pharmacist Council to an appointed Council comprising lay and registrant members was the most profound change in the organisation since its creation in 1925.

In March 2023, the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) published our annual Performance Review. It was extremely pleasing that, as a small regulator, required to meet the same standards as all other UK wide regulators, we were successful in meeting all 18 Standards of Good Regulation. This success was, in no small measure, due to the dedication and hard work of our staff and we look forward to building on this in the coming year.

2022/23 saw the first UK-wide Common Registration Assessment (CRA) run jointly by the General Pharmaceutical Council ("GPhC") and the Pharmaceutical Society NI. The achievement of the CRA and the timely transfer of Pre-Registration Trainees to the full Register were notable successes in 2022.

As reported last year, NICPLD is now the provider of the Foundation Training Year Programme and 2022 saw the completion of the first full year of NICPLD's delivery of the programme.

In 2022, Minister Swann announced his commitment to the registration and regulation of Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland. Our Chief Executive co-chairs the Pharmacy Technician Regulatory Steering Group with the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and we are currently working with colleagues from the

pharmacy sector and the Department of Health NI (“DoH”) to bring this project to a successful conclusion.

Looking forward, 2023/24 we are consulting on new regulations in relation to the Knowledge of English which will be a requirement to join the Register. We will also consult on the outcome of the review of the Code.

We will be driving forward a programme of work to reviewing and refresh our standards focusing initially on our Guidance on Internet Pharmacies and on Independent Prescribing.

Allied to this, we will continue to work with colleagues and stakeholders on progressing the necessary changes to fully enable the completion of the Integrated Pharmacy Education and Training programme of work, leading to pharmacists joining the Register as Independent Prescribers (“IPs”) on completion of their Foundation Training Year from 2026.

Council plans to develop and publish a new Corporate Strategy for 2024-2028 building on the progress that has been made and seeking to set challenging and ambitious goals for the future.

The theme of this strategy will be transformation and modernisation looking ahead to the future for healthcare regulation as proposed through the ongoing work to bring about full-scale reform of the regulatory frameworks of all the healthcare professional regulators.

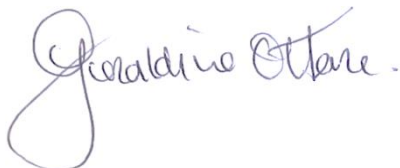
The current UK model of regulation for healthcare professionals is considered to be rigid, complex and needs to change to better protect patients, support our health services and to help the workforce meet future challenges.

One of the key elements of the reform programme will be the introduction of a modern, fit for purpose regulatory system. The reforms span the 4 key areas of regulation:

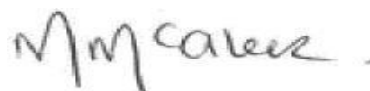
- Governance and operating framework;
- Education and training;
- Registration; and
- Fitness to Practise

In particular, the aim is to provide each regulator with greater autonomy to set out the details of their regulatory procedures in legislation that they publish themselves, called rules.

We would like to thank Council members and staff at the Pharmaceutical Society NI for all their hard work and dedication through the year and our thanks also goes to Sandra Cooke, who ended her eight-year tenure as a Council member in September 2022. We look forward to recruiting new Council members in the year ahead. Finally, we would thank all the registrants and stakeholders who have worked with us and have helped us in delivering on our corporate objectives throughout the past year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Geraldine O'Hare". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Dr Geraldine O'Hare, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michaela McAleer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Michaela McAleer, Chief Executive

2. Who we are

We are the statutory regulatory body for pharmacists and pharmacies in Northern Ireland, located in Belfast, and we have a small regulatory staff team of 14 people. Our role, powers and responsibilities are set out in The Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976. We are a fully devolved regulator and are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly. We are almost exclusively funded by registration and retention fees, paid by pre-registration trainees, pharmacists and premises owners. We are not funded by the public purse.

Pharmacists provide a range of pharmacy services to patients and the public in an increasing variety of contexts from community pharmacies, hospitals and GP surgeries to industry, education and research. It is our job to ensure that pharmacists and the services they deliver are safe and protect the wellbeing of those who use them. We do this through a system of personal and premises registration. Through our work, we aim to protect the public and patients and maintain public confidence in the pharmacy profession. Our work touches the lives of pharmacists from the day they start their training until the day they retire or leave the Register.

We have a governing Council which is independently appointed by the Department of Health (DOH) in line with the Code of Practice issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. The DoH approves Council Regulations before they are laid with the Northern Ireland Assembly for negative resolution. Council comprises seven members of the public (lay members) and seven pharmacy professionals (registrant members) and is led by a President. The Chief Executive of the organisation is accountable to the Council for organisational performance which, in turn, sets the strategic direction of the organisation.

3. What we do

We work with pharmacists from the day they start their training and throughout their career, to protect the public by ensuring that pharmacists are fit to practise and keep their skills and knowledge up to date. Our key areas of focus are:

Education and Training

- setting standards, accrediting courses and approving qualifications for undergraduates and pharmacists including those for specialisms;
- assuring the quality of the year-long pre-registration training (Foundation Training Year) that pharmacist trainees must undertake;
- in conjunction with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), setting and running the final assessment (CRA) that pharmacist trainees must pass before they can be registered as a pharmacist; and
- ensuring that pharmacists complete the annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme which is designed to ensure that they keep their skills and knowledge up to date and provide evidence of compliance at least annually.

Registering competent professionals

Pharmacists must be registered with us to practise in Northern Ireland. Before registration, we check that they are appropriately qualified to join the Register.

Setting and monitoring compliance with Professional Standards

Pharmacists and pharmacy premises must meet the relevant Standards to remain on the Registers. We provide a suite of Guidance documents to assist pharmacists and pharmacy owners in this regard.

Acting when our Standards are not met

Actions can include suspending someone from working as a pharmacist for a set period, placing conditions on their practice or removing their right to practise pharmacy by removing them from the Professional Register. In 2016, legislation was passed to allow us to act when our new Premises Standards are not met. However, these powers have not yet been brought into operation.

Investigating complaints about pharmacists and pharmacy premises

We work with the DoH to ensure that any complaint made in relation to the Fitness to Practise of a pharmacist is appropriately investigated and that pharmacy premises meet our Standards.

Oversight of our work

Our work is subject to oversight by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA). Each year, the PSA assesses our performance against its Standards of Good Regulation. The PSA presents a report on all the regulators of healthcare professionals in the UK to the UK Parliament and lays the report before the Northern Ireland Assembly¹.

The PSA also reviews all final adjudication decisions in Fitness to Practise cases. The PSA has the discretion to refer to the High Court any final Statutory Committee decision if it considers that the decision is insufficient for public protection - including protection of the health, safety and wellbeing of the public; maintaining public confidence in the pharmacy profession; and maintaining proper professional standards and conduct for pharmacists.

The PSA can also, at an early stage, audit a sample of Fitness to Practise cases that we closed before they reached a full Fitness to Practise hearing.

¹ <http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-with-regulators/read-performance-reviews>

4. About our Register

The number of pharmacists on the Professional Register varies each year due to new pharmacists entering onto the Register, voluntary withdrawals from the Register and decisions made by the regulator.²

Figure 1
Registration Snapshot
Registered Pharmacists and Premises at end of financial year (31 May)

Registered Pharmacists		
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
2824	2810	2893

Registered Premises		
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
552	551	550

Figure 2
Registered Pharmacists leaving the Register by 01 June annually

Reason for Removal	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Voluntarily withdrawn	113	147	73
Removed for CPD non-compliance	18	26	9
Removed for non-payment of fees	5	14	15
Struck off (Fitness to Practise)	-	-	-
Other	3	-	-
Total	139	187	97

Response to Covid-19

As noted in last year's Annual Report, to ensure that the Health and Social Care Service had an adequate number of pharmacists to tackle the Covid-19 Pandemic and following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020, on 03 April 2020, we opened the Temporary Register initially registering 260 individuals with a further five individuals registered in a second phase.

On 22 September, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced his decision to extend and, as result, the Temporary Register has remained in place for those already on this register. It does not, however, remain open to new applications.

Composition of the Register

² Registrants can be removed from the Register by the Regulator for non-payment of fees, non-compliance with CPD requirements or as the outcome of a Fitness to Practise hearing.

The Pharmaceutical Society NI is not a public authority and has no statutory duty under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. We are, however, committed to maintaining high standards in the application of equality and diversity in our functions and the integration of equality and diversity values into our work. As part of this commitment, we carry out a voluntary, annual Equality and Diversity Survey of pharmacists on our Register, by Section 75 categories. The headline findings of this survey, by year, can be found on our website³. This information is used for the purposes of ensuring that the regulatory policies and standards we develop do not create inappropriate barriers or otherwise disadvantage people with protected characteristics. Equality Impact Assessments, which are completed as part of our public consultations and by using the data from our annual surveys, can be found on the Consultations page of our website⁴.

In 2023/24, we will be seeking to raise our response rate in relation to our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (“EDI”) survey. Following on from this, we will develop a workstream in relation to EDI which will seek to not only strengthen policies and procedures but also seek to identify any areas or concerns where progress may be required.

5. Activity and Performance in 2022/23

This Annual Report reflects the work of the Pharmaceutical Society NI in the year 01 June 2022 to 31 May 2023. In July 2017, the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI (“Council”) approved a five-year Corporate Strategy which set out what the organisation aimed to achieve in the period 2017-22.

In 2021, Council agreed to extend the period covered by the Corporate Strategy.

In 2023, Council had intended to introduce a new Corporate Strategy but this has been rescheduled until 2024 to allow time for greater reflection and analysis and external stakeholder feedback.

This activity report reflects the amended Corporate Strategy as adopted in 2021 and covers the period 01 June 2022 until 31 May 2023. Within this plan, we describe our Vision:

‘The Pharmaceutical Society NI will be recognised and trusted as a leader of modern and effective healthcare regulation with a key role in ensuring pharmacy services are safe and meet high standards’.

This Vision is underpinned by six high-level Strategic Objectives and related Goals which set the course of the five-year planning cycle from 2017 to 2022:

- 1. To deliver high quality pharmacy regulation that is proportionate and cost-effective;**
- 2. To set pharmacy standards that are evidence-based, output-focused, achievable and necessary for patient and public safety;**
- 3. To conduct Fitness to Practise processes that are robust, timely and fair;**

³ <https://www.psni.org.uk/registration/register-edi-breakdown/>

⁴ <https://www.psni.org.uk/publications/consultations/>

4. **To ensure that pharmacy education and professional development is fit for purpose;**
5. **To be an accountable organisation with effective governance and operations; and**
6. **To communicate effectively, be accessible and responsive.**

The full addendum to the Corporate Strategy can be found on our website⁵.

Objective 1

To deliver high quality pharmacy regulation that is proportionate and cost-effective

Delivering high quality pharmacy regulation, which protects the public and maintains public confidence in the pharmacy profession, requires us to be focused on our core functions whilst also evolving our policies, practices and legislation to meet new challenges in healthcare and developments in regulatory thinking and practice. We must be flexible and agile to address emerging issues, working with all our partners and stakeholders.

Emerging from the Global Pandemic

With the immediate impacts of the Global Pandemic receding in 2022/23, the organisation has progressively returned to a more normal pattern of work and activity. From September 2022, staff gradually and increasingly returned to working in the office with a hybrid working policy being adopted.

The organisation and its staff remain flexible and agile in our approach and positive benefits have been identified in our new working arrangements. Other activities such as in-person Fitness to Practise hearings, in-person consultation events and in-person Council meetings have all recommenced with remote access being retained for use where it is expedient and proportionate.

Business Continuity – Remote Working

The Business Continuity Plan remained largely suitable and fit for purpose. Plans are now in place to further develop this plan building upon learnings from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Governance arrangements

In November 2022, Council meetings returned to in-person meetings, with an option for Council members and others to attend remotely, if required. This approach enabled the maintenance of high standards of good governance and oversight with the flexibility of enabling the likes of the PSA and, should they wish, members of the public to attend our meetings remotely.

Goal 1. a.

⁵ [Corporate Strategy - Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland \(psni.org.uk\)](https://www.psn.org.uk)

We will meet all performance standards in annual PSA appraisals in at least 4 of the next 5 years

Performance Review

The PSA published its Performance Review of our regulatory activities in 2021-22⁶. In 2021-22, we met 18 out of the 18 Standards of Good Regulation. The PSA noted the work we had done in the areas of Fitness to Practise investigations and our work on Equality and Diversity following the previous year's report and made some further recommendations which we are actively addressing. We have met all performance standards of the annual PSA appraisals in four of the previous six years.

Goal 1. b.

We will secure policy agreement with DoH to make legislative and non-legislative changes required to modernise pharmacy regulation and, following policy agreement, develop an implementation plan for delivery, including delivery of actions specified, by May 2023.

Reforming our primary legislation and regulations

We continue to work collaboratively with the DoH on reform acknowledging the impact of a lack of a functioning Northern Ireland Executive and a Health Minister. During 2022-23, we have been able to progress work with the DoH to finalise draft legislation in relation to Knowledge of English, with the aim of consulting on the new regulations in December 23.

Regulating healthcare professionals, protecting the public

In 2022-23, through a series of meetings and written submissions, we continued to work closely with the Department of Health & Social Care ("DHSC"), the DoH, other regulators and the PSA to develop policy proposals on UK-wide reform into draft legislation.

We currently await the outcome of the DHSC consultation on regulations to regulate Physician Associates and Anaesthetist Associates. This legislation is seen as the template for the future reform for all Healthcare Regulators.

Goal 1. c

We will secure policy agreement with DoH for the statutory regulation and registration of technicians and, following approval, consult upon entry routes to the Register.

In June 2022, the Minister of Health, Robin Swann approved the commencement of work on the processes to register and regulate Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland. The proposed Regulator for this work is the Pharmaceutical Society of NI.⁷ Following the announcement and in discussion with the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, a Steering Group was established to progress this proposal, co-chaired by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and this organisation's Chief Executive. Working

⁶ https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/publications/performance-reviews/monitoring-report-psni-2021-22.pdf?sfvrsn=c29f4a20_5

⁷ On 29 June 2022, the Health Minister Robin Swann announced he has approved work to begin to bring Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland under statutory regulation by the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.

closely with Departmental Officials, we are working on three key strands - Education, Legislation Regulation & Consultation and Workforce Development. This work will progress in 2023/24.

Goal 1. d.

We will employ a financial strategy (to be reviewed annually) to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness and will report against targets therein bi-annually.

Council approved a three-year Financial Strategy in 2018-19 (extended to May 2023) to ensure financial viability and to support development through the effective operation of Pharmaceutical Society NI finances. The Strategy is supporting and leading activities designed to improve effectiveness, reduce costs.

Targets associated with the Financial Strategy were reviewed by the Finance & Performance Committee of Council in January 2023.

Goal 1. e.

We will collaborate with other relevant Regulators and PSA to effect change designed to maximise use of shared principles and practices.

We have continued to collaborate and work closely with regulators in Northern Ireland and the UK to share best practice and to engage with the Governments on proposals for broader regulatory reforms. This work is led by the Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies (CEORB) group, for the 13 regulators for health and social care professionals. This group met regularly in 2022-23.

We are also a member of the NI Joint Regulators Forum which provides a platform for regulators to share information, new approaches and ideas about improving the impact and effectiveness of regulation in Northern Ireland.

Goal 1. f.

We will deliver reforms developed as a consequence of Rebalancing Medicines Legislation and Pharmacy Regulation including the issue of criminal prosecution for dispensing errors.

The Rebalancing Medicines Legislation and Pharmacy Regulation Programme Board⁸ (Rebalancing Programme Board) was tasked by the DHSC (London) to review relevant pharmacy legislation and regulation in the UK to ensure that it provides safety for users of pharmacy services, reduces, wherever possible, inflexible legislation and affords regulators the agility to enable innovation and development of safe pharmacy practice.

Following consultation on two draft Orders, these were laid before Parliament in April 2022 and came into force in December 2022.⁹

The new legislative Orders give the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland powers to outline in regulations the essential roles and responsibilities of

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/pharmacy-regulation-programme-board>

⁹ [Pharmacy \(Preparation and Dispensing Errors – Hospital and Other Pharmacy Services\) Order 2022](#); and [Pharmacy \(Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists etc.\) Order 2022](#)

Responsible Pharmacists and to set professional standards for Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists and Chief Pharmacists. As an organisation, we published Guidance updating the profession on the changes that took place with immediate effect as of 01 December 2022. We will continue to actively collaborate with our partners in the GPhC, with the pharmacy profession and the public to develop new standards for Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists and Chief Pharmacists. We will make further announcements about this work and will keep pharmacists informed throughout this project. Any new standards coming into effect will be subject to public consultation and will have a lead in time to allow pharmacists to prepare for any changes.

The reforms also included a power for the DoH to appoint a Deputy Registrar of the Pharmaceutical Society NI.

Objective 2

To set pharmacy standards that are evidence-based, output focused, achievable and necessary for patient and public safety

We set professional Standards for pharmacists in Northern Ireland to ensure that pharmacists' conduct, ethics and performance is such that it protects the public and maintains public confidence in the profession. Pharmacists must adhere to our Standards to remain on the Professional Register.

We also set Premises Standards for Registered Pharmacies which await Ministerial approval for the enabling of legislation before coming into operation. In the interim, we have non-legislative Standards which are used by the profession as guidance and by the Inspectorate to aid inspection.

Goal 2. a.

We will review and, where appropriate, enhance the current set of pharmacy standards. We will complete a full review of the Code by May 2023 followed in the next Corporate Strategy by a phased review of Standards related to the Code.

Review of Standards and Guidance

In June 2022, we published our response to the consultation on “the changes to requirements for training as a pharmacist independent prescriber and being annotated as an independent prescriber on the Register of Pharmaceutical Chemists”. Council endorsed the findings of the consultation and the [full analysis report](#) is available on our website.

In October 2022, we launched an eight-week consultation on Safe Staffing Levels guidance in anticipation of the implementation of our Premises Standards. This guidance seeks to set out safe staffing levels for pharmacies and qualifications for non-registered staff. Council noted the outcome of the consultation and their interdependence on the publication of the Premises Standards which require legislative commencement. .

Also in October 2022, a call for evidence on the review of the Code 2016 was issued. Following the receipt of this evidence, an Advisory Group was established, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders from all areas of pharmacy practice and

members of the public. Following advice and discussion, a revised Code has been prepared and will be published for consultation imminently.

Goal 2. b.

We will test the on-going efficacy of pharmacy standards in context of the newly emerging HSC reform programme as part of Goal 2.a.

With the current pressures on the healthcare system and the lack of a Northern Ireland Executive, progress in relation to the broad Health & Social Care (HSC) reform programme has been limited and this has had a knock-on effect on our ability to test the ongoing efficacy of pharmacy standards in this context. We will continue to monitor developments in the HSC reform programme and take account of them in our standards work.

Goal 2. c.

We will test and report on the feasibility of developing and applying new standards over and above Minimum Standards designed to encourage improved service quality to ensure that they remain fit for current and future practice. Subject to review at the new Corporate Strategy review.

To date, progress against this Goal has been challenging. The extent to which the efficacy of Pharmacy Standards can be tested, and the feasibility of developing and applying new Standards over and above Minimum Standards, will depend on how broad HSC reform¹⁰ progresses.

Objective 3

To conduct Fitness to Practise processes that are robust, timely and fair

The Pharmaceutical Society NI has jurisdiction or power to investigate and, if appropriate, take action in relation to the following matters:

- concerns relating to pharmacists or pharmacies registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland;
- Fitness to Practise matters within paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 to the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976; and
- Disqualification matters.

The Registrar reviews all concerns to check that it falls within our jurisdiction to investigate. If a concern falls within our jurisdiction an investigation will be commenced, upon conclusion of any investigation the Registrar will apply the Threshold Criteria to decide if the concern raises fitness to practice allegations which should be referred to a fitness to practise committee (the Scrutiny Committee or Statutory Committee).

Figure 3 – Sources of Complaints

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
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¹⁰ [health-and-wellbeing-2026-delivering-together \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-2026-delivering-together)

Source	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Anonymous	2	5.4%	2	4.8%	9	7.03%
DoH	3	8.1%	1	2.4%	3	2.34%
Employer	1	2.7%	4	9.5%	4	3.13%
SPPG*	-	0%	-	0.0%	0	0.00%
Other regulator	-	0%	-	0.0%	5	3.91%
Pharmacy	-	0%	1	2.4%	2	1.56%
Public	24	64.9%	26	61.9%	28	21.88%
Police Service	-	0%	-	0.0%	0	0.00%
Registrar	-	0%	1	2.4%	2	1.56%
Self-referral	7	18.9%	7	16.6%	75**	58.59%
Total	37	100%	42	100%	128	100.00%

*SPPG is the Strategic Performance and Planning Group of the Department of Health NI** We received a significant increase in self-referrals in 2022/23, during the annual retention process 58 registrants selected to submit a self-declaration in error, we have addressed this issue with our IT providers to minimise any future occurrence.

Figure 4 – Stages of investigation for cases closed in 2022/23

Closed Cases	Registrar	Scrutiny Committee	Statutory Committee	Total
Lack of jurisdiction	80	-	-	80
No Further Action	11	-	-	11
Advice	-	-	-	0
Warning		2	3	5
Undertakings		-	-	0
Conditions			3	3
Suspension			7	7
Removal			-	0
Total	91	2	13	106

Of the 106 cases closed by the Registrar in 2022/23, 80 were closed (or not opened) for lack of jurisdiction, of the 80, 6 did not meet the jurisdiction test due to lack of consent provided by the person raising the concern to proceed to investigation. 73 did not relate to fitness to practise matters within paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 to the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 or disqualifying matters and, 1 did not relate to a pharmacist or pharmacy registered with the Pharmaceutical Society NI. 11 (which met the jurisdictional test) were closed for failure to meet the Threshold Criteria for referral to a Fitness to Practise Committee.

The Scrutiny Committee considered 2 cases in 2022-23; both registrants were issued with a warning.

The Statutory Committee carried out 13 review hearings; 3 registrants were issued with a warning, 3 registrants had conditions placed on their practice and 7 suspension orders were issued.

Outcomes and the full determinations of all public Statutory Committee hearings can be found on our website¹¹.

Interim Orders

A case will be referred directly to a Statutory Committee by the Registrar based on the evidence available and where it is high risk to public safety and the Registrar considers that the Statutory Committee should consider the necessity to make an Interim Order. The Statutory Committee will then hold an Interim Order hearing to receive evidence and make decisions based on the *prima facie* case presented.

The Statutory Committee can determine to take no action, place conditions on a pharmacist's practice or suspend a pharmacist for up to 18 months, reviewing the order every 6 months. After 18 months, an extension to the Interim Order can be granted only upon application to the High Court. An Interim Order is designed to address risk to the public, pending the completion of full Fitness to Practise proceedings.

In 2022/23, there were 3 new Interim Order applications and 13 Interim Order reviews, relating to 7 registrants. There were 3 applications made to the High Court for an extension to an existing Interim Order.

Goal 3. a.

We will improve timeliness, efficiency and cost of Fitness to Practise processes and report on progress made

Key Performance Indicators – Closed Cases

- 73 out of 80 cases closed by the Registrar were closed in less than 26 weeks. All cases that did not meet the 26-week indicator involved more complex investigations and were reliant upon the receipt of third-party information to progress the case.
- 3 cases were closed by the Statutory Committee in less than 43 weeks. A further 5 cases were closed within 100 weeks, as follows:
 - 5 were closed in the following timeframes – 66, 75, 85, 88 and 96 weeks; and
 - a further 5 were closed in more than 100 weeks.

These were more complex cases which were reliant upon third party investigations. In these reported cases, our Parallel Investigations Policy was applied. This involves a decision, taken by the Registrar, to suspend an investigation to allow another investigation by an external party to proceed.

In all cases, we apply our Communications Policy, ensuring that the person raising the concern and the registrant will be informed of any significant developments in the case and will be communicated with every 3 months regarding the progress of the investigation.

¹¹ <https://www.psni.org.uk/psni/fitness-to-practise/determinations-of-statutory-committee/> (Accessed 07 September 2023)

In line with our Communications Policy, we seek monthly updates from third party investigations to ensure that all relevant persons are updated and that momentum in case progression is maintained.

The [full list](#) of members of the Statutory and Scrutiny Committees can be found on our website.¹²

Goal 3. b.

We will ensure regular reports on learning from Fitness to Practise cases are effectively disseminated to pharmacists and other interested parties.

Ensuring that pharmacists can learn from Fitness to Practise cases is important to maintaining public safety and the upholding of standards. All determinations of Statutory Committee hearings are published on our website where the regulations allow. Any additional learnings produced by the Statutory Committee in relation to closed Fitness to Practise cases are circulated to pharmacists in Northern Ireland through our Regulatory Newsletter. In addition, the Scrutiny Committee produces an annual report which identifies trends and learnings and is available on our website.¹³

Goal 3. c.

We will develop Fitness to Practise processes for Pharmacy Technicians.

Following the consultation on proposals by the DoH to bring Pharmacy Technicians into regulation, Minister Swann, on 29 June 2022, announced his approval for work to commence to bring this policy proposal into legislation.

The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and the Chief Executive of the Pharmaceutical Society NI established and jointly chair the Oversight Board for the Regulation and Development of Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland. Within this project, staff from the Pharmaceutical Society NI jointly chair the Education and the Regulation, Legislation and Communications subgroups.

Objective 4

To ensure that pharmacy education and professional development is fit for purpose

Progress against Corporate Strategy Objectives

¹² <https://www.psni.org.uk/psni/fitness-to-practise/fitness-practise-committees/>

¹³ <https://www.psni.org.uk/psni/fitness-to-practise/fitness-to-practise-statistics/>

- a. **We will review the Pre-Registration Framework and implement necessary improvements including developing a plan for, and commencing, transition to a Foundation Training Year.**

In 2021/22, the transition of the Foundation Training Year (FTY) from the Pharmaceutical Society NI to the Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning & Development (NICPLD) was finalised.

NICPLD is now responsible for the management, operation and provision of support to trainees and tutors during the Foundation Training Year.

The Pharmaceutical Society NI provides regulatory oversight and quality assurance to the FTY. We introduced a new quality assurance system to provide appropriate assurances to Council about the delivery and effectiveness of the new programme operated by NICPLD.

The year 2022/23 is the second year in which NICPLD has taken responsibility for the programme and they are implementing changes to maximise meaningful interaction with students such as changes to the delivery of the Business Management module to facilitate more impactful face-to-face teaching. This change was approved by Council in March 2023.

In summer 2022, 114 students entered onto the Student Register to complete their Foundation Year Training in Northern Ireland.

- b. **We will review and improve undergraduate and accreditation standards with our partners. We will work with our partners on the delivery of the implementation plan for undergraduates and accreditation standards.**

In 2022/23, the Pharmaceutical Society NI continued to work closely with the GPhC on a programme of rolling accreditations of universities in line with our Memorandum of Understanding. This work ensures that the standard of MPharm Degree and IP courses delivered across the United Kingdom continues to meet our joint Education & Training Standards.

This year, both the Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast underwent Part 1 of the accreditation programme in line with the new UK-wide Education and Training Standards which were adopted by Council in January 2020. A representative from the Pharmaceutical Society NI was in attendance at both accreditation events. The outcomes of these accreditations will be approved by the Registrar of the GPhC and ratified by the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.

Unlike previous years, the universities will undergo Part 2 of the accreditation programme next year when the accreditation team will review elements of the courses which have yet to be implemented such as the experiential learning elements.

- c. **We will explore the feasibility of developing a joint education strategy with both NI Universities and GPhC. We will lead on the development of the new IET Standards and their implementation.**

The Pharmaceutical Society NI developed the new IETP standards in partnership with GPhC and these were adopted by Council in 2020.

Throughout 2023, we continued to work with the GPhC and NI stakeholders to introduce significant reform to the initial education and training of pharmacists to develop more clinically-focused pharmacists entering the workforce following their four-year MPharm degree course and their Foundation Training Year. We also worked with local stakeholders on the Education Reform and Implementation Group (ERIG) which focussed on the training of student pharmacists in alignment with the new Standards. We also continued to contribute to the IETP Advisory Group, a UK-wide group where progress against, issues arising from and implementation of the respective regulators' standards are discussed.

Goal 4.d.

We will review CPD processes and develop a strategy for the establishment of a Continuing Fitness to Practise regime.

CPD Report 2021/22

All pharmacists in Northern Ireland are legally required to complete CPD to remain on the Professional Register. The purpose of CPD is to help pharmacists maintain and further develop their competency and performance thereby enhancing patient safety and public confidence in the pharmacy profession.

In CPD Year 2021/22, pharmacists continued to work well with the new Framework and CPD portfolios were submitted successfully on the Regulator OnLine ("ROL") portal. The CPD assessor team worked alongside the Pharmaceutical Society NI Team to ensure that all selected portfolios were assessed on the ROL portal against the new Framework whilst maintaining the high assessment standards of previous years.

Under certain extenuating circumstances, the Registrar has the power to permit registrants to forego the submission of a CPD portfolio in that CPD year. In 2021/22, (See Figure 5 – CPD Statistics), the Registrar received 249 applications for extenuating circumstances, granting 248 of those applications¹⁴.

In CPD year 2021/22, 2890 pharmacists submitted CPD portfolios and 25 registrants failed to submit a CPD portfolio and were subsequently removed from the Register – a compliance rate of 99.13%.

A total of 10% of CPD submissions were selected for assessment by a combination of random selection and focused selection. Of this number, 98.92% met the required standard at first assessment and 100% met the standard after going through a remediation process.

Figure 5 - CPD Statistics

¹⁴ The procedure relating to extenuating circumstances is outlined in the [CPD Framework 2014](#).

CPD STATISTICS - CPD YEARS 2019/20 – 2021/22		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
CPD Submissions				
CPD submissions	Records submitted	2,506	2594	2890
Extenuating Circumstances				
EC applications	Applications submitted	181	166	249
	Applications granted	179	165	248

Non-compliance actions				
Notices Issued	Notice of intention to remove	29	27	34
	Notice of removal	19	26	27
Removals	Removals for non-compliance	19	26	25
Remedial Measures	No entering remedial measures	25	28	52
Removals	Removals after remedial measures	0	0	0
Compliance				
	Overall compliance with CPD process	99.24%	98.99%	99.13%

Continuing Fitness to Practise (CFtP) plans

We maintain an active involvement on the Post-Registration Assurance Advisory Group. Plans for pharmacists' CFtP in Northern Ireland will be subject to public consultation and Council approval. Current plans for CFtP are being built on the platform of the revised version of the CPD Framework 2021 and the evidence gained from operations over the last 6 years, with the potential for the addition of a peer review and additional practice-specific assessments.

Goal 4.e.

Post Registration Education and Training. Develop a Pharmaceutical Society NI policy position and implementation strategy for Post Registration Education and Training arrangements for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, when registered, operating within Northern Ireland (Added 10/1/22).

Pharmacy education and practice are going through a period of positive and extensive change and we recognise that it is important to have an appropriate focus on post-registration education and training to ensure that the public are protected and to enable professional development and improving standards.

As such, a Post-Registration Assurance Advisory Group was implemented in September 2022 to progress this agenda. This group was established in partnership

with the GPhC. Representation on the Advisory Group covers the four countries of the UK and the five principal levers of assurance: statutory regulation, professional frameworks, commissioning of services, employment and education and training. The group continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis in line with its Terms of Reference and membership includes this organisation's Registrar and two Council members.

The continued implementation of the 2021 IETP Reform Standards has helped inform the vision and agenda for the Post-Registration Assurance Advisory Group, with its primary purpose of ensuring that Council receives well-rounded advice on the different assurance mechanisms and potential gaps or opportunities to strengthen assurance.

Objective 5

To be an accountable organisation with effective governance and operations

The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI is the governing body of the organisation and is responsible for ensuring that its statutory duties are met. It sets strategic objectives for the organisation and monitors the performance of the Chief Executive in line with its statutory purpose. It holds the Chief Executive to account for organisational performance as well as ensuring that the financial affairs of the organisation are conducted properly.

Council members are appointed by the DoH in accordance with the principles of the Public Appointments process and based on the competence of the applicants. The Council has 14 appointed members with an equal number of lay and registrant members and is led by a President.

Response to Covid-19

Council has continued with its agreed processes for approving e-papers remotely, outside of the normal schedule of Council meetings, to facilitate efficient and effective decision-making and oversight during this fast-moving period.

During 2022-23, Council made four decisions by e-paper. All decisions taken by e-paper were subsequently reviewed and ratified at scheduled Council meetings.

In November 2022, Council resumed in-person meetings with an option for Council members, guests and the public to attend either in person or remotely via an online secure platform.

Council Members 2022 – 2023

In September 2022, Dr Jim Livingstone retired from Council, ending his eight-year tenure as President. In addition, Sandra Cooke retired from Council, ending her eight-year tenure as a registrant Council member.

In November 2022, Dr Geraldine O'Hare commenced her role as Council President.

Goal 5.e.

We will review and improve organisational governance.

In 2021-22, Council updated its Corporate Strategy with a one-year addendum. In 2022-23, Council commenced preparatory work for a new Corporate Strategy for 2024-27.

The non-statutory Committees of Council are:

- Audit and Risk (A&R) Committee;
- Finance & Performance (F&P) Committee; and
- Remuneration Committee

During the year, the Society paid attendance fees to Council members totalling £46,521 (2022: £32,456). The Society paid £296 expenses (2022: £nil) during the year. The increase was due to a return to in-person meetings and a number of Council Task & Finish Groups (See Figure 7: Council Attendance).

Figure 6
Council Members 2022 – 2023

Members	Membership type	Committee Membership
Dr Jim Livingstone – President – Council tenure ended September 2022	Lay Member	Remuneration Committee - Chair
Dr Geraldine O’Hare – President – Council tenure started November 2022	Lay Member	Remuneration Committee - Chair
Mr Jonathan Patton – Vice President	Lay Member	Remuneration Committee - Member
Mr Mark McCrudden	Registrant Member	Remuneration Committee – Member Finance & Performance Committee - Member
Mrs Carol Moore	Lay Member	Remuneration Committee – Member Audit & Risk Committee - Member
Mr Philip Knox	Lay Member	Audit & Risk Committee - Chair
Ms Colleen Duffy	Registrant Member	Audit & Risk Committee - Member
Mr Barry Mimmagh	Registrant Member	Audit & Risk Committee - Member
Mrs Alison Ragg	Registrant Member	Audit & Risk Committee - Member
Mr Brendan Garland	Lay Member	Audit & Risk Committee - Member
Mr Gary McMurray	Lay Member	Finance & Performance Committee - Chair
Professor Patrick Murphy	Lay Member	Finance & Performance Committee - Member
Ms Chanel Jones	Registrant Member	Finance & Performance Committee - Member
Mr Scott Gill	Registrant Member	Finance & Performance Committee - Member
Ms Sandra Cooke – Council tenure ended September 2022	Registrant Member	Finance & Performance Committee - Member

Council met on six occasions between June 2022 and May 2023.

Figure 7 - Council Attendance 2022 – 2023

Council Member Name	Membership Type	Gross Pay (£)	Council meetings attended	Committee Membership & Attendance	Additional meetings attended
Dr Jim Livingstone	Lay Member - President Council tenure ended Sept 2022	£4,200.00	2 of 2	Remuneration Committee – Chair	1 of 1 Remuneration 8 external meetings
Dr Geraldine O’Hare	Lay Member – President Council tenure started Nov 2022	£11,562.00	4 of 4	Remuneration Committee – Chair	2 of 2 Remuneration 9 external meetings
Jonathan Patton	Lay Member -Vice President	£5,574.60	6 of 6	Remuneration Committee – Member	3 of 3 Remuneration 2 Task & Finish Group 7 external meetings
Mark McCrudden	Registrant Member	£1,827.00	3 of 6	Remuneration Committee – Member Finance & Performance Committee - Member	1 of 3 Remuneration 2 of 4 Finance & Performance 3 Task & Finish Group
Carol Moore	Lay Member	£3,579.43	6 of 6	Remuneration Committee – Member Audit & Risk Committee – Member	3 of 3 Remuneration 3 of 4 Audit & Risk 4 Task & Finish Group
Philip Knox	Lay Member	£3,372.93	6 of 6	Audit & Risk Committee – Chair	4 of 4 Audit & Risk 4 Task & Finish Group 1 external meeting
Colleen Duffy	Registrant Member	£472.00	4 of 6	Audit & Risk Committee – Member	1 of 4 Audit & Risk
Barry Mimmagh	Registrant Member	£1,989.74	5 of 6	Audit & Risk Committee – Member	3 of 4 Audit & Risk 2 Task & Finish Group 2 external meetings
Alison Ragg	Registrant Member	£2,548.20	5 of 6	Audit & Risk Committee – Member	4 of 4 Audit & Risk 1 Task & Finish Group 3 external meeting
Brendan Garland	Lay Member	£3,521.00	6 of 6	Audit & Risk Committee – Member	4 of 4 Audit & Risk 4 Task & Finish Group
Gary McMurray	Lay Member	£2,557.90	5 of 6	Finance & Performance Committee – Chair	3 of 4 Finance & Performance 1 Task & Finish Group
Patrick Murphy	Lay Member	£1,456.00	5 of 6	Finance & Performance Committee – Member	3 of 4 Finance & Performance
Sandra Cooke	Registrant Member Council tenure ended Sept 2022	£326.00	1 of 2	Finance & Performance Committee – Member	0 of 4 Finance & Performance
Chanel Jones	Registrant Member	£1,098.44	3 of 6	Finance & Performance Committee – Member	4 of 4 Finance & Performance
Scott Gill	Registrant Member	£2,436.10	5 of 6	Finance & Performance Committee – Member	4 of 4 Finance & Performance 3 Task & Finish Group

*Additional days spent in supporting the Public Appointments Unit with Council recruitment, attending external meetings and attending internal meetings with the Chief Executive and other staff.

**Additional days spent at other meetings e.g., Council Task & Finish Groups and/or representing Council at external meetings and events.

Goal 5. c.

We will annually review audit schedules, risk management processes and performance measurement organisationally and implement necessary changes for improvement.

Internal Control

Council is responsible for ensuring that the organisation operates an appropriate system of risk management and for ensuring appropriate operational effectiveness. Under its governance structure, two Committees of Council contribute to providing appropriate internal control mechanisms and continue to work to improve the annual audit schedules, risk management processes and performance measurement organisationally. They are the Audit & Risk Committee and the Finance & Performance Committee.

Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for providing assurance to Council on the integrity and robustness of the systems and processes for managing risk; ensuring effective corporate governance and on the related dependencies and outworkings.

Risk Management

- reviewing the policies and processes for identifying and assessing business risks and the management of those risks by the organisation and making recommendations for any necessary changes to the Chief Executive Officer, CEO and Council; and
- assuring the effectiveness of the management of policies and processes for risk, control and governance including regular review of the Risk Register and escalating any issues to the CEO and Council in a timely manner.

Governance

- ensuring the regular review (at a minimum every 3 years) and ongoing maintenance of the Corporate Governance Handbook, assuring adherence to same and making recommendations to Council and the CEO for any necessary improvements in line with best practice.

External Audit

- overseeing the tender and procurement process for the appointment of an external auditor and making recommendations to Council on the related contractual appointment; and
- overseeing the external audit process including assurance regarding the implementation of recommendations made.

Internal Audit

- overseeing the tender and procurement process for appointing a suitably qualified internal auditor; delegated authority and making recommendations to Council on the related contractual appointment;
- overseeing the internal audit process;
- reviewing and agreeing the internal audit strategy and programme and, where appropriate, requesting that the internal auditor undertakes specific work;
- satisfying itself that the internal audit function is adequately resourced, independent and objective and has appropriate standing within the organisation; and
- oversight, assurance and support regarding the annual audit report including providing an accountability and challenge function to management's response to any internal audit recommendations.

Third Party Audits (e.g. PSA)

- considering reports; and
- oversight, assurance and support including providing an accountability and challenge function to management's response to any recommendations.

Raising Concerns – Making a Public Interest Disclosure

- annually reviewing the effectiveness of the Pharmaceutical Society NI's and Council's arrangements for anyone, internal or external to the organisation, to make a Public Interest Disclosure, in confidence, about danger, illegality or wrongdoing that may affect others including, but not limited to, possible improprieties in financial matters, abuse of position, conflicts of interest, or other health and safety matters;
- ensuring that any arrangements allow proportionate and independent investigation of such matters and appropriate follow up action; and
- providing a challenge function in relation to management information about concerns raised.

In January 2023, the Audit & Risk Committee commissioned the following 2022-23 internal audits:

- Corporate Governance – Relationship between the Pharmaceutical Society NI and the Pharmacy Forum
- Fitness to Practise

Throughout 2022-23, the Audit & Risk Committee reviewed the Risk Register.

Internal Audits Completed 2022/23

At the time of finalising the Annual Report, the internal auditors have provided a draft internal audit report to which the Executive has responded prior its finalisation. The final report will be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee in late August 2023 prior to being presented to Council at its September 2023 meeting.

Finance & Performance Committee

The Finance & Performance Committee is responsible for:

Budgeting & Financial Performance

- scrutinising the annual budget and operational plan prepared by the Executive Team and advising Council on their adoption;
- reviewing management accounts and monitoring performance against the financial and resource objectives approved in the operational plan and budget;
- reviewing financial forecasts, annual or interim financial statements and monitor operational financial performance against the operational plan;
- satisfying itself that appropriate arrangements exist to identify and mitigate significant financial and performance related risks; and
- satisfying itself that appropriate arrangements exist to identify and mitigate significant financial risks associated with the Pharmacy Forum.

Delegated authority

- authorising unbudgeted spending in accordance with the limitations below:
 - a maximum of £5,000 per event against any budget head for operational reasons; and
 - a maximum authority of £15,000 cumulative in any given financial year;
- approving changes to individual budgetary heads within the overall agreed budget.

Financial Strategy

- providing advice to Council on a suitable/appropriate financial strategy for approval, reviewing and monitoring compliance with same and escalating any significant issues to Council; and
- advising Council on and reviewing the investment policy, including risk appetite, investment parameters and ethical policy and advising Council on the adoption of any proposed changes.

Financial Reporting

- providing an Annual Report, and Accounts to the Audit & Risk Committee; and
- providing Council with a report on budget, cash flow and forecasts at intervals determined by Council.

Performance

- providing advice to Council on suitable strategic KPIs for approval;
- reviewing and monitoring performance against KPIs and escalating any significant issues to Council;
- providing advice to Council on appropriate HR and ICT policies for approval;
- monitoring performance against approved policies and escalating any significant issues to Council; and
- reviewing the effectiveness of policies and procedures for measuring Council's and Council members' performance and providing advice to Council on improvements.

Goal 5. a.

We will establish effective deputising arrangements for the Registrar

On 01 December 2022, The Pharmacy (Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists etc) Order 2020 came into effect. Amongst other provisions, Part 3 Article 10 allows for an amendment to the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 enabling the appointment of a Deputy Registrar by the DoH.

Goal 5. b.

We will secure policy agreement with DOH on resolving the current Pharmacy Professional Leadership linkage with the Regulatory function. We will agree a plan to deal with the link between the Leadership and Regulatory functions.

We have continued to work collaboratively with the DoH and have progressed discussions in relation to resolving the current legislative and organisational linkage between our pharmacy professional leadership and regulatory roles. However, no specific plan has been agreed. We will continue to work on the broader reform programme being led by the DHSC and will continue to work with the DoH on this issue in 2023-24.

Goal 5. d.

We will develop a new ICT Strategy and deliver against relevant goals, reporting to the Finance & Performance Committee at least twice per year.

Council approved a revised three-year ICT Strategy in 2021.

Targets associated with the ICT Strategy were reviewed by the Finance & Performance Committee of Council in January 2023.

Goal 5. f.

We will formulate and implement a new HR strategy to improve organisational resilience, efficiency and effectiveness and deliver against relevant goals, reporting to the Finance & Performance Committee at least twice per year.

Council approved a revised Human Resources Strategy in 2019 with a view to improving organisational resilience, efficiency and effectiveness.

Targets associated with the HR Strategy were reviewed by the Finance & Performance Committee of Council in January 2023

Goal 5. g.

We will work with government and other relevant agencies to ensure robust arrangements are in place to manage the effects upon pharmacy regulation in NI resulting from the UK's exit from the EU, including the provision of suitable transition arrangements.

We have continued to liaise closely with the DHSC London, the DoH, the Department of Business and Trade and the other healthcare regulators, participating in various relevant committees. In 2022-23, we continued to engage with the GPhC and Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland ("PSI") for discussions on future recognition regimes. We have signed an initial data sharing agreement with the PSI and will continue to closely review our approach and engagement as Government policy continues to evolve in this area.

Objective 6

To communicate effectively, be accessible and responsive

To deliver high quality pharmacy regulation, communicating effectively, whilst being accessible and responsive is crucial to delivering against our Corporate Strategy and regulatory responsibilities.

Goal 6. a.

We will improve and report on communications effectiveness.

&

Goal 6. b.

We will develop a new strategy designed to enhance the public, pharmacy, media and political profile of the organisation. We will implement our Communications Strategy and report on its effectiveness, including the response to and effectiveness of our Reach Out programme.

In line with the Communications Strategy, we have communicated with our key stakeholders by means of direct email and via our website. In addition, we have sought the views of stakeholders through our consultations and, more recently, via the Advisory Group set up to assist with the development of the new Code.

This Advisory Group comprises approximately 12 members drawn from all areas of pharmacy practice, representative and patient organisations. In 2023, it is intended to expand the remit of this group, possibly designating the group as a standing advisory committee and to seek further participation particularly of patient representatives and other representative pharmacists.

Over the last year, we have issued four newsletters in July, October and December 2022 and March 2023, each being read by approximately 700 recipients. The Newsletters were sent to all Registrants, Superintendents, Pharmacy Owners and Foundation Training Year trainees.

In addition, we have issued 36 press releases during the period. Each of these has been placed on our website and, where appropriate, have been notified to registrants directly. The press releases plus other topical issues have also been highlighted on our two social media platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn, the latter being a new initiative in 2023 with 113 followers currently and Facebook continuing to grow with over 800 followers.

In total over the period, we have issued 141 mailshots comprising over 140,000 emails. It is pleasing to report that the opening rate of these emails has risen this year by over 3% to 62.02%.

In the coming year, Council intends to revamp and renew its Reach Out Programme. Prior to the Pandemic, Council sought to take at least one Council meeting annually outside Belfast and Society House. In 2023/24, it is intended to resume this practice and to seek other ways in which we, as a regulator, can engage with a wider audience.

Throughout the year, the communications team has continued to respond to press requests, explaining the role of the Pharmaceutical Society NI as a regulator and detailing our powers and activities.

In 2022/23, we responded to only one significant consultation, being the DHSC Consultation on Regulating Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates. This consultation is important in that it is designed to set the template for all future Healthcare Regulators' legislative reform. We and the other regulators are awaiting the Government's response.

In 2023/24, we intend to enhance our engagement activities particularly as Council seeks to develop its new Corporate Strategy. In addition, we will seek other opportunities to widen our engagement with students, Foundation Training Year trainees, registrant pharmacists and the public.

6. Pharmacy Forum NI

Introduction from Vice-chair

I am delighted to introduce the 2022/23 Annual Report of the Pharmacy Forum NI. First of all, I would like to thank the immediate past Chair, Eamon O'Donnell, who has served so ably as Chair of the Forum Board over the previous two years.

Eamon has been a dedicated and supportive Chair throughout the latter half of the pandemic, and he will be missed both as a Chair, and fellow Board member.

It has been a year of transition for the Forum, as we launched our new three-year Corporate Plan in March 2023, giving us strategic direction up until 2026, and is underpinned by five key work strands: leadership, support, excellence, innovation, and development.

This has been an election year for the Board, and I would like to congratulate our three returning members – Anne McAlister, Sheelin McKeagney and Glynis McMurtry – as well as our newly elected member, Judith Gray.

In the staff team we said goodbye to Policy and Communications Officer, Roisin Hughes, and welcomed her replacement, Niall Bakewell.

In July 2023 our Forum and PASS Coordinator, Sharon Bell, will be moving to work as Post Registration Assurance Facilitator with the Pharmaceutical Society NI. Sharon has been an outstanding member of the Forum staff team and will be greatly missed.

Over the past 12 months we have seen the welcome return of in-person Board meetings, now enhanced by advances in video conference technology.

We were also delighted to host the first Rewarding Excellence Event since the pandemic, which allowed the Forum to confer Fellowship on three deserving pharmacists, recognising their outstanding contributions to pharmacy in Northern Ireland, as well as the exceptional achievements of those at the beginning of their careers.

Our Pharmacy Futures NI campaign began the launch of its third phase, with the recruitment and training of a new cohort of Pharmacy NI Champions, who advocate and promote careers in pharmacy. We also commissioned new materials to support outreach to the next generation of pharmacists and pharmacy team members.

We remain dedicated to being a locally active, nationally minded organisation that advocates for the profession and champions improved patient outcomes.

We have represented Northern Ireland pharmacy and pharmacists in various policymaking and consultation forums over the past year, ensuring that the voices and interests of our members continue to be heard at the heart of Northern Ireland and UK-wide decision-making.

Notably we have focused on addressing the pressing issue of supervision in community pharmacy, as a member of the Community Pharmacy Supervision

Practice Group to develop recommendations for future legislative and regulatory reform.

We were also steering the UK-wide Commission on Pharmacy Professional Leadership, and in collaboration with other Professional Leadership Bodies and Special Pharmacy Groups will continue to represent Northern Ireland pharmacy and pharmacists as work on this progresses in the year ahead.

The Forum is particularly proud of the "Insulin Safety in Community Pharmacy" webinar series, which received overwhelmingly positive feedback and engagement. These webinars offered valuable learning opportunities for pharmacists, ensuring the highest standards of patient care and safety in the management of diabetes.

Regarding our charitable trusts, the merger of the Ronnie McMullan Charitable Trust Fund into the C.W. Young Scholarship Fund was completed this year. This merger will allow us to reduce the costs of managing the two funds, whilst maintaining their distinct original purposes, and to continue to honour the memory of Ronnie McMullan.

As always, the Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service (PASS) has been there to help our members and their dependents in times of difficulty and need. In particular during the current cost-of-living crisis and continuing workforce pressures we are delighted that members are reaching out to PASS for help and support. I would like to express the Forum's heartfelt gratitude to all our members, partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support.

Special thanks to my fellow Board and committee members, and to the Forum staff who have worked tirelessly over the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "O. Kavanagh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'O' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

Dr Oisín Kavanagh, Vice-chair of the Pharmacy Forum NI Board 29 July 2023

Pharmacy Forum NI

About us

Pharmacy Forum NI is the professional leadership body for all pharmacists in Northern Ireland, representing all areas of pharmacy practice, including hospital, GP practice and community settings. The Forum represents just over 2,900 registered pharmacists and engages with almost 150 pharmacy Foundation Year Trainees. We operate as an arm's-length body under the legislative remit of the Pharmaceutical Society NI. Our role is to lead, promote and support the pharmacy profession to deliver improved outcomes for patients. Forum members are pharmacists registered to practise by the Pharmaceutical Society NI. The Pharmacy Forum NI Board consists of elected members, representatives from other pharmacy organisations and those co-opted for their skills and expertise. The Board met five times this year.

Figure 1 – Pharmacy Forum Board

Member Name	Membership Type	Additional information
Eamon O'Donnell (immediate past Chair)	Elected	Retired as Chair and Board member May 2023
Dr Oisín Kavanagh	Elected	Vice-chair
Philip Boyle	Elected	
Andrew Cheung	Elected	
Neill Elliott	Elected	
Judith Gray	Elected	Newly elected May 23
Anne McAlister	Elected	Re-elected May 23
Sheelin McKeagney	Elected	Re-elected May 23
Glynis McMurtry	Elected	Re-elected May 23
Suzanne Cassells	Representative	Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists
David McCrea	Representative	UCA-NI LTD
Una O'Farrell	Representative	Pharmacists' Defence Association (PDA)
Paul Kelly	Representative	Community Pharmacy NI
Prof Paul McCarron	Co-opted	
Prof Mike Mawhinney	Co-opted	
Keady Smith	Early Careers Pharmacist – nonvoting member	Retired December 2022

Figure 2 – Education and Training Committee

Member name	Board/Non-Board
Prof Paul McCarron	Board
Neill Elliott	Board
Emma Boyle	Non-board
Maura Corry	Non-board
Lesley Edgar	Non-board
Dr Glenda Fleming	Non-board
Dr Mary-Carmel Kearney	Non-board
Hilary McKee	Non-board
Prof Roisin O'Hare	Non-board
Roberta Tasker	Non-board
Ryan McNally (Early Career Pharmacist – non-voting member)	Non-board

Figure 3 – Policy and Practice Committee

Member name	Board/Non-Board
Dr Oisín Kavanagh (Chair)	Board
Andrew Cheung	Board
Eamon O'Donnell (retired May 2023)	Board
Catherine Devlin	Non-board
Anna Fay	Non-board
Anne McAlister	Board
Sheelin McKeagney	Board
Una O'Farrell	Board
Dr Carole Parsons	Non-board
Elisha Dunwoody (Early Career Pharmacist – non-voting member)	Non-board

As a matter of policy the PASS Committee's names are not published.

The Pharmacy Forum NI operates a number of interest groups and short-life working groups which are project-specific and focus on a range of issues.

Pharmacy Forum activity report

The Forum champions pharmacy and its fundamental role in delivering high quality, safe and effective patient-centred care. We have continued to deliver on this over the past year in what has been a challenging political and healthcare environment.

As a responsive and engaged leadership body we are committed to canvass and represent the views of our members and articulate the interests of pharmacists at the very highest levels of decision-making, ensuring that pharmacy is recognised as an essential, innovative profession which maintains and enhances its reputation for delivering the very highest standards of patient care.

We began the 2022/23 year delivering against the **strategic objectives** of our extended 2017-22 Corporate Plan:

- Improving pharmacy best practice and medicine optimisation
- Ensuring accessibility to high quality, patient centred care

- Promoting the role of pharmacists and assisting them to maximise their career potential
- Ensuring their voices are heard
- Supporting pharmacists and their families in times of need, through the Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service (PASS)

Activity was prioritised under **five key work strands**, which were revised as we worked on and launched the 2023-26 Corporate Plan (*see below*):

1. **Leadership:** locally active, nationally minded, and internationally benchmarked; an influential voice and trusted source of information as well as an effective advocate for pharmacists, pharmacy practice and improved patient outcomes.
2. **Support:** promoting wellness through effective collaborations and providing help in times of need, through the Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service (PASS), for pharmacists (including those who have left the register), Foundation Year Trainees, and their dependents.
3. **Excellence:** recognising and sharing excellence within the profession; highlighting best practice for our stakeholders and the public.
4. **Innovation** (formerly **Technology**): promoting and supporting innovative practices to improve and protect the quality of health outcomes.
5. **Development:** lead the development of pharmacists in their practice, empowering individuals to reach their full potential as healthcare professionals.

Leadership

Forum Board Chair and Vice-Chair re-elected

Eamon O'Donnell was re-elected as the Chair of Pharmacy Forum NI at the Forum Board's meeting in November 2022 – his second year of being Chair during his four years of Board membership. He did not stand as a candidate at the recent election and retired in May 2023.

Dr Oisín Kavanagh was also re-elected as Vice-Chair and continues to chair the Policy and Practice Committee.

Board Elections 2023

Following the election from March to May 2023, four newly elected Board members will be formally constituted at the June 2023 Board meeting:

- Judith Gray;
- Anne McAlister (re-election);
- Sheelin McKeagney (re-election); and
- Glynis McMurtry (re-election).

This was a competitive election, with seven candidates standing for four available places. 349 members voted, a turnout of 12%.

The elected members of the Board are trustees of the three charitable trust funds:

- Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service (PASS);
- C.W. Young Scholarship Fund; and
- Ronnie McMullan Charitable Trust Fund.

The charitable trust funds have independently examined trustee reports and charity accounts registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) on an annual basis. Below are the most recent annual reports and accounts.

- **PASS**
 - Trustee Annual Report and Independent Examiners Report: <https://bit.ly/PASSar22-23>
 - Charity Accounts: <https://bit.ly/PASSacc22-23>
- **Ronnie McMullan Charitable Trust Fund**
 - Trustee Annual Report and Independent Examiners Report: <https://bit.ly/RMcMar22-23>
 - Charity Accounts: <https://bit.ly/RMcMacc22-23>
- **C.W. Young Scholarship Fund**
 - Trustee Annual Report and Independent Examiners Report: <https://bit.ly/CWYar22-23>
 - Charity Accounts: <https://bit.ly/CWYacc22-23>

In the 2021-22 reporting period trustees unanimously resolved to merge the Ronnie McMullan Charitable Trust Fund into the C.W. Young Scholarship Fund as the charitable objectives and purpose were broadly similar. This only completed in May 2023 due to extensive delays by the bank in setting up the new bank account. The money transferred will be ringfenced within the C.W. Young Fund and will continue to be used in memoriam to Mr Ronnie McMullan.

PFNI 2023-26 strategy published

Our revised 3-year Corporate Plan was launched in March 2023, taking an outcomes-based approach focused on how our work will make a difference to pharmacy, pharmacists, patients and other stakeholders.

The Corporate Plan will be supported by a work plan which will detail activity under each of the key work strands and supporting strategies. Progress continues to be monitored by the Forum Board and activity is communicated to members through the Forum website, newsletters and annual report.

The Corporate Plan is available at: <https://bit.ly/PFNIcp23-26>

Influencing decision-makers through policy development and advocating on behalf of the profession

Policymaking and consultation are at the heart of the Forum's leadership function, and this happens at both a Northern Ireland and UK-wide level.

Collaborating with others to promote patient safety and workforce development - We have continued our working relationship with the Department of Health (Northern Ireland) and other stakeholders across NI and GB including Department of Health and Social Care (England), Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), Department of Health Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) and the Pharmaceutical Society NI.

Among the main areas of focus for 2022/23 were the following:

- UK Commission on Pharmacy Professional Leadership (see below);
- All Pharmacy Advisory Group (APAG led by Chief Pharmaceutical Officer NI);
- Pharmacy Workforce Review Implementation Steering Group;
- Pharmacy Futures NI (liaising with all key stakeholders in education and across the pharmacy workforce);
- Pharmacy Technician Regulation & Development Board and Education Committee (oversight group and education sub-committee);
- Community Pharmacy Supervision Practice Group (see below);
- Medication safety and optimisation - work with SPPG on insulin safety (see below);
- Continuing close collaboration with the RPS to produce UK-wide professional standards and guidance;
- Defining and recognising levels of post-graduate practice;
- Post Registration Assurance of Practice Group;
- NICPLD Foundation Year Stakeholder Focus Group;
- NI Centre for Postgraduate Pharmaceutical Education & Training;
- GPhC Initial Education & Training of Pharmacists (IETP) Advisory Group and IETP stakeholder meetings;
- DISCREET Working Group – advocating for Practitioner Health-style service for doctors, dentists and pharmacists in NI; and
- Speakeasy NI Health & Social Care Policy & Public Affairs Officers Stakeholder Group.

The issues dealt with by these groups will have far-reaching implications for the future of the profession and provide the key drivers for radical transformation both now and in the years ahead.

UK-wide Commission on Pharmacy Professional Leadership - Throughout 2022/23 the Forum was actively involved with the steering group and select working groups of the UK-wide Commission on Pharmacy Professional Leadership, set up by the four Chief Pharmaceutical Officers (CPOs) of the UK in May 2022 to ensure all registered practitioners are supported in their practice.

The Commission's report was launched in February 2023, and includes significant asks of the UK's pharmacy Professional Leadership Bodies (PLBs) and Specialist Pharmacy Groups (SPGs).

Since the report's release the Forum has worked with four CPOs, and the other PLBs and SPGs in order to establish the best process for the creation of the transitional Collaborative Pharmacy Leadership Council, which has been recommended in the report.

This is a once-in-a-generation change to the arrangements of professional leadership, and the Forum has been and will continue to represent the interests of Northern Ireland pharmacists as part of this UK-wide work.

Community Pharmacy Supervision Practice Group - Since December 2022 the Forum has been working with a number of UK-wide representative pharmacy organisations, which have included Company Chemists' Association, the Association of Independent Multiple Pharmacies, Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK, RPS, PDA and National Pharmacy Association, in order to co-produce a report and a set of recommendations that will inform the work of the Department of Health and Social Care in the development of future legislation around supervision.

The group is modelling professional practice for the community pharmacy team that will enable individuals to maximise their unique skill set and their professional roles. The group's priority is to ensure that developments in community pharmacy practice, relating to supervision, enhance the ongoing delivery of safe and effective care to patients whilst enabling innovative practice that benefits patients, the career prospects of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, the pharmacy network, and the wider NHS.

The report is due to be published this summer.

Consultation responses – In 2022/23, the Forum undertook a range of policy advocacy work and responded to four consultations, presenting the views of pharmacists on key issues impacting the profession. These consultations were:

- DHSC/DoH, June 2022 – Hub and Spoke Dispensing
- DoH, Sept 2022 – Raising a Concern in the Public Interest (Whistleblowing) HSC Framework & Model Policy
- DoH, Sept 2022 – Violence and Aggression in the Workplace HSC Framework
- Pharmaceutical Society NI, Oct 2022 – Pharmacy Staffing Guidelines

All consultation responses are available at: www.pfni.org.uk/making-a-difference/policy/responses/

The Forum also participated in the Pharmaceutical Society NI's Reference Group for Review of the Pharmaceutical Society NI Code (Professional standards of conduct, ethics and performance for pharmacists in Northern Ireland) 2016.

Pharmacy Futures NI – Funding was allocated for the Forum to produce a suite of new and refreshed materials to support the next phase of the Attract/Recruit/Retain Pharmacy Futures NI campaign.

This included: a new video, "Pharmacy, the Future, and You," aimed at Year 10-12 pupils, as well as those filling in their UCAS forms; a dynamic PowerPoint presentation to support campaign advocates (Pharmacy NI Champions) in their outreach to schools; branded lanyards and business cards for Champions; and new pop-up stands to help brand stalls at events.

A new phase of the Pharmacy NI Champions programme saw the recruitment and training of 25 new advocates for the campaign.

Pharmacy Champion development training was carried out over two evenings at the HSC Leadership Centre in April and May 2023.

The next phase of outreach and public engagement will commence in autumn 2023 to coincide with the start of the school year.

Excellence

Celebrating excellence at every level

The **Rewarding Excellence Event** was held for the first time since COVID-19 in October 2022. The event was held at the Belfast Harbour Commissioner's Office. Three Fellows were conferred at this event:

- Mr Gerard Greene;
- Professor Paul A McCarron; and
- Ms Kathryn Turner.

Also receiving their awards at the 2022 event were:

- the 2021 & 2022 **Undergraduate Gold Medal** winners - students with the overall highest mark in the final year of their MPharm in Northern Ireland's two Schools of Pharmacy; and
- recipients of the 2019, 2020 & 2021 **Ronnie McMullan Award** for the Northern Ireland top mark in the Foundation Year Common Registration Assessment.

Following a call for fellows to the membership, three new fellows will be conferred at the next Rewarding Excellence Event in November 2023.

Setting standards and guidance

The Forum has worked collaboratively across a range of stakeholders this year to produce and participate in the production of guidance and advice for the profession both locally and UK-wide.

This has included:

- participation in the HSCB Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team task and finish groups updating respective chapters of the NI Formulary for eyes, nutrition, endocrine system (including diabetes and thyroid), osteoporosis and HRT;
- MHRA Patient, Public and Stakeholder Engagement - Contraception and Reproductive Health;
- endorsement of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FICM) guidance for the Provision of Intensive Care Services (GPICS version 2); and
- continuation of our close collaboration with RPS to produce guidance and support UK-wide which has included endorsement of the RPS Standards for Hospital Pharmacy and also the current ongoing review of our joint Error Reporting

Professional Standards and the RPS Professional Standards for Virtual Ward Pharmacy Services.

Innovation

The Forum continued to make optimum use of new technologies to communicate and interact with our constituents and stakeholders.

Promoting and advancing pharmacy through trust funds

C.W. Young Charitable Trust: During 2022/23, two successful applications received funding:

- Dr Sharon Haughey and Fiona Hughes were the recipients of £2,500. The project is entitled Exploring Experiential Learning (EL) in an Updated MPharm Programme. This will explore the needs of pharmacy supervisors and trainees during experiential learning; and
- £5,000 was awarded to Dr Aaron Courtenay, Dr Deborah Lowry and Dr Oisin Kavanagh to fund their project entitled MeDeSin Study Part 3: Valuing community pharmacy services in Northern Ireland – remote provision of care. Following the success of two earlier phases of the study funded by C.W. Young Charitable Trust in 2021 and 2022, this final phase of research aims to explore the provision of wrap around pharmaceutical care in the community following the outcomes of the MeDeSin NI Study Part 2 (2022). The project develops educational frameworks for practice sharing and explores telehealth and supports services in community pharmacy.

Communications

The Forum has continued to develop its use of communications technology to ensure maximum possible audience reach and participation.

Forum website - We continued to use the website as our primary method of communicating about our work. 18 news articles were published during 2022/23, and the website was also used as a vehicle for event promotion and management, and the running of our 2023 election.

Email - Mail Chimp continues to be a vital medium through which we can make immediate, engaging contact with our members.

There were 11 editions of the Forum's monthly newsletter throughout the year.

An additional 25 bulletins were sent to our audiences in order to promote events and training; the 2023 Board Election; the Pharmacy NI Champions programme; and the launch of the 2023-26 Corporate Plan.

The newsletter's average open rate has risen from 40% in 2021/22 to 50% in 2022/23.

Social media - Twitter continues to be an important platform for communicating with various audiences, and we have grown our follower base by over 150 in the

past 12 months. Twitter was a vital tool in encouraging participation in the 2023 Board Election.

The Forum has begun the process of expanding our audience reach on LinkedIn by active posting.

Meeting and training - Whilst work has largely returned to normal post-COVID, the Forum has continued to rely on video meeting platforms to conduct its business.

The Board returned to in-person meetings in November 2022, but as members cannot always make it to Belfast, the Forum has adapted to facilitating hybrid meetings, to enable maximum participation.

We will continue to monitor and evaluate participation in meetings, training and events offered by the Forum to ensure that we are providing the best possible mix of online and in-person opportunities for our members.

Development

Supporting pharmacists in their Continuing Professional Development

The Forum plays an important role in supporting pharmacists as they submit their annual Continuing Professional Development portfolios.

This year there was a notable upturn in the number of pharmacists seeking support who did not meet standard in the first submission of their portfolios. Overall we offered facilitation to 20 pharmacists across resubmissions one and two. This is up by nearly three times on the number of sessions in year 2021/22.

100% of respondents to our post-facilitation evaluation rated their initial contact with the service as good or excellent.

90% of these respondents rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent and overall value to them as excellent.

Insulin Safety in Community Pharmacy webinar series

The Forum and the Department of Health SPPG worked together to create a series of three online events around insulin safety in community pharmacy.

The systematic approach explored how preventable harm can be reduced by well understood and designed systems and practices, focusing on the high-risk medicine insulin.

The co-produced series created a fresh perspective and learning opportunity using human factors and tools that can be applied across any area within community practice.

An average of 30 people attended each of the three events between September and November 2022.

The events were recorded and are now available as online webinars and will soon be hosted as a learning hub on the Forum's website.

In post-event evaluation, 100% of respondents agreed that the event delivered on its learning objectives, and that it was useful, interesting and relevant.

Preparing foundation trainee students for exam success

Calculations training was provided in-person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic at Society House in Belfast.

Thirty seven trainees attended one of two events held in May 2023. All attendees were provided with pre-coursework and webinars upon booking, before attending a four hour in-person workshop, hosted by Forum facilitators.

100% of attendees who responded to our post-event evaluation reported that the workshop had met their expectations.

98% of respondents rated the quality of workshop materials as very good or good.

97% of respondents rated the overall value of the workshop to them as very good or good.

Cultivating the next generation of leaders

Pharmacy Forum NI continued with its programme to develop the leaders of tomorrow by recruiting and appointing two apprentice members to each of our committees. The apprentices are early career pharmacists (under five years qualified) who complete a year-long programme commencing in January each year.

Preparation of Pharmacists for Public Appointment

The Forum facilitated a workshop designed to build the confidence and critical competency interview skills and techniques required to ensure success at interviews using a public appointment process, or equivalent.

Our event training partner was Una McSorley, Director of Marcomm – a training and development consultancy who provide consultancy to chief executives, their boards and management teams.

Two workshops were provided and both were fully booked.

Support

PASS

The Pharmacists' Advice and Support Service (PASS) exists to help pharmacists, former pharmacists and foundation trainee pharmacists (and the families – spouse/civil partner, children and dependents – of all of the above) in times of need. The range of services are free and confidential. PASS is a registered charity with the Charities Commission NI and is registered in accordance with the Pharmacy Order 1976 (NI).



During 2022/23 PASS continued its work across a range of functions including providing grants totalling £11,900 and the provision of 49 counselling sessions (telephone, online and in-person). Eight new service users availed of the standard Inspire counselling, and the areas being dealt with included coping with stress and anxiety post-pandemic, general work-related stress and anxiety and support through ongoing regulatory fitness to practice hearings. All eight pharmacists and trainees who received low intensity counselling were able to remain in work.

In addition, PASS proactively helped in the relief of financial distress, with the provision of budgeting and debt advice in parallel, and signposted 11 other service users to other sources of information and advice. All service users this year were pharmacists and the majority of them were aged between 20 and 50.

Inspire Support Hub, April 2023 saw an update to the current provision with the new Hub widening the support available to users as part of the employee assistance programme. It provides help right away, giving the user instant access to a range of information, guidance, screening and intervention tools tailored specifically to help care for the individual's wellbeing needs. Two new service users signed up across the period

PASS continued its outreach activity in March 2023 through participating in the UCA-NI LTD network for Foundation Year Trainee students. PASS also had a visible presence at the calculations training workshops in May 2023 and at other events throughout the year.

During the period, PASS reviewed and updated its Reserves Policy and Risk Register, continuously reviewing and monitoring all risks including the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and potential impacts for the charitable fund. Online basic safeguarding training was this year organised for all trustees and designated Safeguarding Officer/Appointed Person Training was completed by the Pharmacy Forum Manager and PASS Coordinator.

We would like to extend our thanks, on behalf of those who have benefitted from PASS services to everyone who already donates. We thank our corporate donors who have provided useful funding in the period. As a charity, it is vital that we can continue to offer a range of services and the financial support received from pharmacists ensures that we can continue to do so. We urge you to please consider donating. You can do this online at: <https://www.pfni.org.uk/pass/donate>

7. Financial Overview for the year ended 31 May 2023

Chair of Finance & Resources Committee – Foreword

Financial Overview for the year ended 31 May 2023

Foreword by Gary McMurray, Chair of Finance & Performance Committee

Review of Business Activities 2022/23

During 2022-2023, the Pharmaceutical Society NI has recorded an operating deficit though the fee structure has remained as in the prior year. The deficit is partially due to the planned use of financial reserves for specific development projects and an increase in Statutory Committee costs consequential to an increased caseload in this area. Further development projects are planned but are delayed by legislative issues because the majority of our planned projects flow from changes to the legal framework.

Council approved a three-year Financial Strategy in 2018-19 to ensure financial viability and to support development through effective operation of Pharmaceutical Society NI finances. The Financial Strategy supports the development of operational systems to improve the effectiveness of financial management, control costs and allow timely responses to budget variations, thereby minimising the fee burden on registrants. The three-year Financial Strategy has been extended for a further two years and is being revised in the year ending 31 May 2024.

At year-end 31 May 2023, despite the deficit for the year, the Pharmaceutical Society NI has sufficient reserves in line with its Reserves Policy.

Financial Strategy Mission

To support & lead activities which improve effectiveness, reduce costs, and minimise the burden on registrants.

To ensure the provision of timely, accurate and relevant financial information to allow decision making by SMT & Council.

To ensure there are in place systems and processes to monitor legal & FTP pipeline costs and strategies to deal with costs arising.

To have in place processes to ensure the proper management of the investment portfolio.

Gary McMurray
Chair of Finance & Performance

Financial Overview - Joan Duffy, Director of Business Operations

Income 2022/23

In 2022-23, the Pharmaceutical Society NI's total income increased by £48k compared to the previous financial year to £1,383k (2021/22: £1,335).

Our main source of income is derived from the renewal fees of pharmacists and pharmacies. Registration fees from Foundation Training Year students, new registrants from the Foundation Training Year programme, those joining from another register, re-registration and EEA applications.

The Temporary Register was set up in response to the Covid-19 pandemic; there are 248 pharmacists (2022: 262) registered without fees being charged.

Main Sources of Income make up 94% (2022: 95%) of our total income.

Main Sources of Income	2022/23	2021/22
	£'000	£'000
Retention Fees	1,117	1,070
Premises License Fees	89	88
Registration Fees	100	112
Total	1,306	1,270

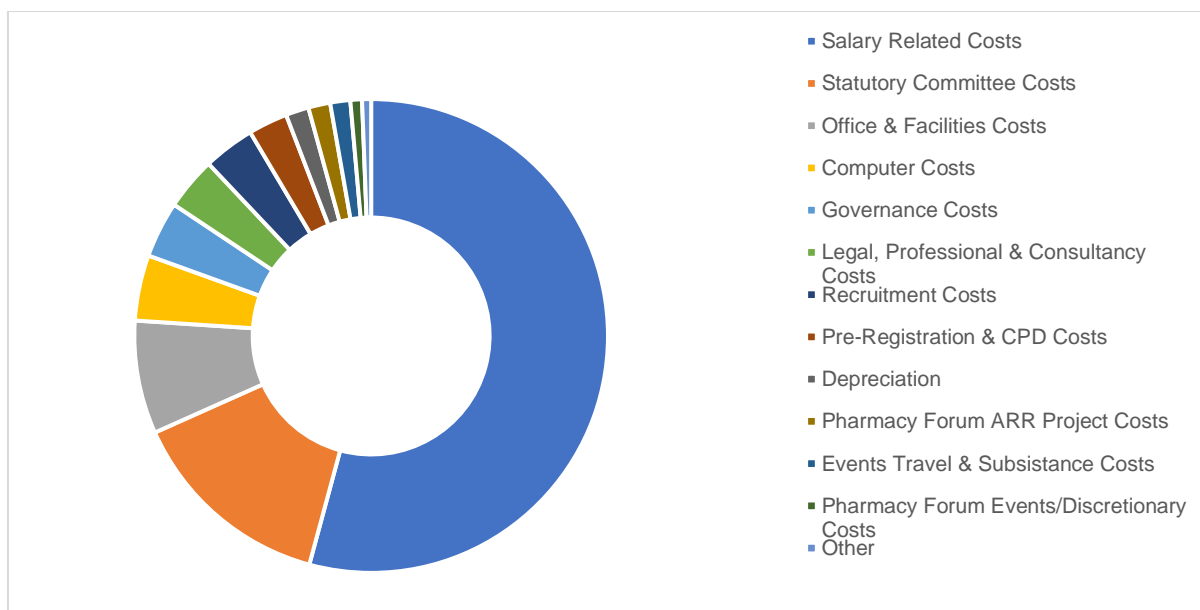
We have seen further growth in the number of pharmacists retained on the Register, with an increase in income of £47k to £1,117k (2022: £1,070k). This is in line with budget expectations. We continue to see a year-on-year increase in this category.

Premises licence fees have remained steady and in line with prior years.

Registration fees have decreased by £12k to £100k (2021/22: £112k). This decrease relates to deferred income in the prior year. Although we have seen a reduction in the number of Foundation Training Year student registrations, we have seen an increase in the number of pharmacists joining from other registers, re-registration and EEA applications.

Expenditure 2022/23

Staff related costs, Statutory Committee, Office & facilities, Computer, Governance, Legal, Professional & Other Consultancy & Recruitment costs together represent 89% of the total operational expenditure at £1,398k in 2022/23; this compares to 88% in 2021/22.



In 2022-23, our total expenditure increased by £192k in comparison to the previous financial year to £1,562k (2021/22: £1,370k).

Whilst there were increases in certain cost categories such as Salary related costs, Recruitment, Statutory Committee, Office & facilities & Governance costs, some of the increases were offset by decreases in Computer & Legal, Professional & Other Consultancy costs and marginal variances over several cost headings.

Salary related costs increased by £64k and, whilst these costs were in line with budget, the variance on prior year was due to less cost incurred on temporary staff to cover maternity and staff absence in 21/22. Coupled in this financial year with the recruitment of a new CEO and their overlap with the retiring CEO, annual staff increments, an administration benchmarking exercise and a one-off cost of living payment, these increases were offset in part by savings due to the delay in the recruitment of new posts.

Statutory Committee costs have increased by £36k to £220k (2021/22: £184k). This increase reflects the increased number of cases brought by the Pharmaceutical Society NI. Whilst we continue to focus on reducing costs and timelines associated with each case, based on our current prediction, caseload costs are expected to increase again in the coming year.

Office & Facilities Costs have increased by £38k to £121k (2021/22: £83k). Whilst this represents an increase compared to the previous year, it is a reflection of the return of staff to the office post-COVID and the additional costs incurred as a direct result of this change in working pattern.

Computer costs decreased by £24k to £70k (2021: £94k). During 2021/22, a strategic investment was made in a CRM system and the introduction of a new online registration database. This system is now in operation and whilst development of the platform continues, the main costs associated with the introduction of the database were incurred during 2021/22.

Governance Costs have increased by £26k to £60k (2021/22: £34k). Council and Committee attendance fees were broadly in line with budget. A proportion of these governance costs is attributable to the development and completion of a new Learning & Development Strategy.

Legal, Professional & Other Consultancy costs have decreased by £24k to £56k (2021/22: £81k). The requirement for these consultancy services is subject to and dependent on specific and/or short-term requirements.

Recruitment Costs have increased by £37k to £55k (2021/22:37k). This is consequential to the recruitment of our new CEO in addition to two new posts and a level of staff turnover that is being experienced by similar bodies in the aftermath of Covid-19.

Council authorised the use of Reserves during the year to fund a number of projects; £55k (2021/22: £107k) spend included in the relevant expense categories.

Expenditure under the Project Cost category in the year ended 31 May 2022 has been reallocated to the relevant expenses categories.

Balance Sheet

Due to the overall deficit in 2022-23, the reserves have fallen by £200k.

There are no significant changes in the Balance Sheet compared to the prior year other than the level of cash held on deposit and in the current account at year-end 2022/23: £1,603k (2021/22 £1,805k).

The investment portfolio valuation at year-end exceeded the actual original cost of the portfolio. The prudent Reserves Policy over the last number of years has meant that the Pharmaceutical Society NI had the appropriate level of reserves and financial resources to cope with the Covid-19 disruption internally. There are other challenges on the horizon such as the impact of the economic turbulence over the past two years and, therefore, the reserves situation is being monitored continually.

Joan Duffy
Director of Business Operations

Council, Executive and Professional Advisors

President	Dr Geraldine O'Hare
Council	Full list of council members referenced on pg 25
Chair of Finance & Performance	Gary McMurray
Chief Executive	Michaela McAleer
Auditors	Moore (N.I.) LLP Donegall House 7 Donegall Square North Belfast BT1 5GB
Principal Bankers	Bank of Ireland 1 Donegall Square South Belfast BT1 5LR
Legal Advisors	Cleaver Fulton Rankin 50 Bedford Street Belfast BT2 7FW

Statement of responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Article 4C of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 requires the Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year in such form as the Department of Health (the 'Department') may determine. The Council has elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the basis of preparation and accounting policies set out in note 1 which it has determined are appropriate to the Society's circumstances having regard to current requirements of accounting standards issued by the UK Financial Reporting Council (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland*. In addition, the Council has reported information in accordance with the Department's determination of 15th May 2020.

In preparing these financial statements, the Council has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue in business.

The Council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Society's transactions.

The Council is also responsible for preparing the Annual Report in accordance with Article 4D of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976.

The Council has general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the Society and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Council is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Society's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions. By Order of the Council.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 May 2023 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the accounts, including a summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 1.

Opinion on Financial Statements

In our opinion:

- give a true and fair view on the state of the society's affairs as at 31 May 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the special purpose basis of preparation and accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and the regulations made under it.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the Society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of matter – special purpose basis of preparation

We draw attention to note 1 to the financial statements, which describes their basis of preparation. As explained in that note, the financial statements are prepared to assist the Society in complying with the financial reporting requirements of Article 4C of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Council's use of going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is not appropriate; or
- the Council have not disclosed in the accounts any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Society's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Council and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Annual Report.

Responsibilities of Council

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Council are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the members determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Council are responsible for assessing the Society's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Council either intend to liquidate the Society or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the Society.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the Society and considered that the most significant are the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) order 1976.
- Enquiry of management, those charged with governance and the entity's solicitors around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- Enquiry of entity staff in compliance functions to identify any instances of any non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the society's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Council
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Society's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Society to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at:

<http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities> This description forms part of our auditor's report.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Society's Council, as a body, in accordance with Article 4C of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) order 1976 and regulations made under that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Society's Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the society and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

R. J. Peters Gallagher

.....
Dr. R I Peters Gallagher OBE FCA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of Moore (N.I.) LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants

Dated: 19 September 2023
Donegall House
7 Donegall Square North
Belfast
BT1 5GB

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 May 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
INCOME			
Retention Fees		1,117,186	1,070,222
Licences		88,908	88,301
Registration Fees		100,443	111,568
Tutors Course & Calculations Fees		1,700	935
Interest		7,177	2,178
Miscellaneous		15,438	1,645
Examinations		25,752	36,975
Dividends		24,078	24,470
Rewarding Excellence		2,500	-
Dept of Health – Attract, Recruit, Retain funding		-	(801)
		1,383,182	1,335,493
EXPENDITURE			
Computer Costs		69,889	94,113
Salaries and National & Medical Insurance	2	815,469	751,640
Pension Costs - Staff	2	31,540	34,415
Adjustment to legacy pension obligation		4,451	3,973
Office Costs		52,971	45,568
Events, Travel & Subsistence		21,393	4,428
Legal, Professional & Other Consultancy Expenses		56,270	80,527
Statutory Committee Costs		220,478	183,735
Pharmacy Forum Events, CPA subs & Discretionary Costs		12,325	14,906
Pharmacy Forum - Attract, Recruit, Retain Costs		23,387	1,707
Subscriptions		16,556	13,908
Facilities Costs		67,727	36,980
Depreciation	4	24,588	16,558
Recruitment		54,928	16,543
Communications		1,357	1,047
CPD Process		19,541	15,055
Pre-registration Process		22,396	32,276
Gain/(loss) on disposal of Fixed and Investment Assets		(12,728)	(11,373)
Governance Costs		59,989	34,038
Project Costs		-	-
		1,562,527	1,370,044
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS		(179,345)	(34,551)
(Loss)/Gain on revaluation of investments	5	(15,380)	(99,920)
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS BEFORE TAX		(194,725)	(134,471)
Taxation	3	(5,416)	16,452
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		(200,141)	(118,019)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		1,030	1,030
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		(199,111)	(116,989)

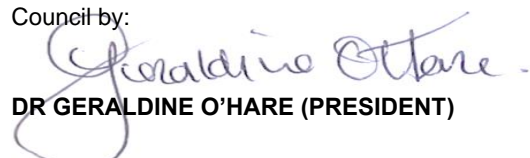
The notes on pages 62-71 form part of these financial statements.


The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Balance Sheet for year ended 31 May 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	4	56,896	48,743
Investments	5	1,076,908	1,049,231
		<u>1,133,804</u>	<u>1,097,974</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	148,697	164,834
Bank deposits		331,033	201,534
Current Account		1,201,326	1,523,238
Evelyn – Deposit Account		70,484	79,886
		<u>1,751,540</u>	<u>1,969,492</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR			
Creditors	7	(1,383,254)	(1,362,639)
		<u>368,286</u>	<u>606,853</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>1,502,090</u>	<u>1,704,827</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
PROVISIONS			
Deferred tax liability	8	(53,799)	(53,034)
Pension obligations	9	(69,371)	(72,732)
		<u>1,378,920</u>	<u>1,579,061</u>
NET ASSETS			
SOURCE OF FUNDS			
Income and expenditure account		1,376,815	1,575,926
Premises renovation grant		2,105	3,135
		<u>1,378,920</u>	<u>1,579,061</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

The financial statements were authorised for issue on **19 September 2023** and signed on behalf of the Council by:


DR GERALDINE O'HARE (PRESIDENT)


**MICHAELA McALEER
(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)**

The notes on pages 61-70 form part of these financial statements.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Cash Flow Statement for year ended 31 May 2023

	<i>Note</i>	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Surplus for the year		(200,141)	(118,019)
<i>Adjustments for:</i>			
Depreciation		24,588	16,558
Interest receivable		(7,177)	(2,178)
Dividends received		(24,078)	(24,470)
Loss/(Gain) on revaluation of investments		15,380	99,920
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		489	-
Taxation		5,416	(16,452)
		(185,523)	(44,640)
Increase in trade and other debtors		16,137	327,181
Increase in trade and other creditors		20,615	65,265
Decrease in provisions		(3,361)	(3,683)
		(152,132)	344,122
Tax paid		(4,651)	(582)
Net cash from operating activities		(156,783)	343,540
Cash flows from investing activities			
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets		(33,230)	(9,527)
Interest received		7,177	2,178
Dividends received		24,078	24,470
Purchase of investments		(153,859)	(61,870)
Proceeds from sale of investments		110,801	28,242
Net cash from investing activities		(45,033)	(16,507)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Cash withdrawn/(placed) from deposit		(129,499)	(31)
Net cash from financing activities		(129,499)	(31)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		(331,315)	327,001
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 June		1,603,124	1,276,123
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 May 2023		1,271,809	1,603,124

The notes on pages 61-70 form part of these financial statements.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland

Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 31 May 2023

	Income and expenditure account	Premises renovation grant	Total funds
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 June 2021	1,692,915	4,165	1,697,080
<i>Total comprehensive income for the year</i>			
Profit or loss	(118,019)	-	(118,018)
Other comprehensive income			
Premises grant amortisation	1,030	(1,030)	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(116,989)	(1,030)	(118,018)
Balance at 31 May 2022	1,575,926	3,135	1,579,062

	Income and expenditure account	Premises renovation grant	Total funds
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 June 2022	1,575,926	3,135	1,579,062
<i>Total comprehensive income for the year</i>			
Profit or loss	(200,141)	-	(200,141)
Other comprehensive income			
Premises grant amortization	1,030	(1,030)	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(199,111)	(1,030)	(200,141)
Balance at 31 May 2023	1,376,815	2,105	1,378,920

The notes on pages 61-70 form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023

1. Principal Accounting Policies

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (the “Society”) is a statutory regulatory body for pharmacists who wish to work in Northern Ireland.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared as required by Article 4C of the Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and in accordance with the accounting policies set out in this note, which have been determined by the Council to be appropriate to the Society’s circumstances having regard to the recognition and measurement criteria of current accounting standards issued by the UK Financial Reporting Council (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Ireland (‘FRS102’), with the exception of:

- Payments to former employees under which the obligation has been estimated in accordance with FRS102.21 Provisions and Contingencies, rather than FRS102.28 Employee Benefits as a defined benefit obligation; and
- The Society has prepared financial statements which present information about the Society only and do not incorporate financial information relating to certain funds (Pharmacists Advice and Support Service, the CW Young Scholarship Fund and the Ronnie McMullan Trust Fund) whose operations are directed by the Society. The Council considers that it is appropriate not to incorporate this information into the Society’s financial statements as required by FRS102 and details of the funds are provided in the unaudited appendices to the financial statements.

The presentation and functional currency of these financial statements is Sterling.

The accounting policies set out below have, unless otherwise stated, been applied consistently to all periods presented in these financial statements.

Management have assessed that there are no estimates or judgments that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities recognised in the financial statements.

Measurement convention

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis except investments which are measured at their fair value.

Going concern

The Pharmaceutical Society’s activities together with factors affecting future development, performance and position are set out in the Annual Report and Foreword by the Chair of the Finance & Performance Committee. The Pharmaceutical Society NI has satisfactory financial resources and is in a strong net asset position. As a consequence, the Council believes that the Pharmaceutical Society NI is well placed to manage its risks successfully. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Financial information relating to funds administrated by the Society.

Certain funds, (Pharmacists Advice and Support Service, the CW Young Scholarship Fund and the Ronnie McMullan Trust Fund) whose operations are directed by the Society, are not incorporated in the financial statements. The financial statements present information about the Society only.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue

Turnover represents the invoice value of service and is recognised on provision of the related service. Retention, licences, and registration fees are recognised on commencement of the relevant annual registration period. Revenue from examinations is recognised in proportion to the stage of completion of the delivery of this service at the reporting dates. The stage of completion is assessed by management. Interest is included in the income and expenditure account on an accrual's basis. Dividend income is recognised when the security is declared ex-dividend.

Basic financial instruments

Trade and other debtors/creditors

Trade and other debtors are recognised initially at transaction price less attributable transaction costs. Trade and other creditors are recognised initially at transaction price plus attributable transaction costs.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash balances and call deposits.

Equity investments

Equity investments are recognised initially at fair value which is normally the transaction price (but excludes any transaction costs, where the investment is subsequently measured at fair value through profit and loss). Subsequently, they are measured at fair value through profit or loss, except for those equity investments that are not publicly traded and whose fair value cannot otherwise be measured reliably, which are recognised at cost less impairment until a reliable measure of fair value becomes available.

If a reliable measure of fair value is no longer available, the equity instrument's fair value on the last date the instrument was reliably measurable is treated as the cost of the instrument.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Where parts of an item of tangible fixed assets have different useful lives, they are accounted for as separate items of tangible fixed assets.

Depreciation is charged to expenditure on a straight-line basis and reducing balance over the estimated useful lives of each part of an item of tangible assets. Leased assets are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and their useful lives. The estimated useful lives are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Property | - 40 years, straight-line |
| • Furniture and office equipment | - 4-7 years, reducing balance |
| • Computer equipment | - 4 years, reducing balance |

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed if there is an indication of a significant change since last annual reporting date in the pattern by which the Society expects to consume an asset's future economic benefits.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

Impairment

Financial assets (including trade and other debtors)

A financial asset not carried at fair value through profit or loss is assessed at each reporting date to determine whether there is objective evidence that it is impaired. A financial asset is impaired if objective evidence indicates that a loss event has occurred after the initial recognition of the asset, and that the loss event had a negative effect on the estimated future cash flows of that asset that can be estimated reliably.

An impairment loss in respect of a financial asset measured at amortised cost is calculated as the difference between its carrying amount and the present value of the estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. For financial instruments measured at cost less impairment, an impairment is calculated as the difference between its carrying amount and the best estimate of the amount that the Society would receive for the asset if it were to be sold at the reporting date. Interest on the impaired asset continues to be recognised through the unwinding of the discount. Impairment losses are recognised in profit or loss. When a subsequent event causes the amount of impairment loss to decrease, the decrease in impairment loss is reversed through profit or loss.

Pension obligations

Defined contribution plans

A defined contribution plan is a post-employment benefit plan under which the Society pays fixed contributions into a separate entity and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further amounts. Obligations for contributions to defined contribution pension plans are recognised as an expense in the income and expenditure account in the periods during which services are rendered by employees.

Payments to former employees

The Society has a commitment to provide annual payments to a former employee. The Society's obligation in respect of this member is calculated by estimating the amounts of future benefit that the member is estimated to receive and is recognised as a liability of the Society.

The liability is measured based on publicly available actuary mortality tables and other relevant assumptions using guidance set out in FRS102.21 Provisions and Contingencies.

Provisions

A provision is recognised in the balance sheet when the entity has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event, that can be reliably measured, and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation. Provisions are recognised at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

Taxation

Tax on the profit or loss for the year comprises current and deferred tax. Tax is recognised in the income and expenditure account except to the extent that it relates to items recognised directly in equity or other comprehensive income, in which case it is recognised directly in equity or other comprehensive income.

Current tax is the expected tax payable or receivable on the taxable income or loss for the year, using tax rates enacted or substantively enacted at the balance sheet date, and any adjustment to tax payable in respect of previous years.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

1. Principal Accounting Policies (continued)

Taxation (continued)

Deferred tax is provided on timing differences which arise from the inclusion of income and expenses in tax assessments in periods different from those in which they are recognised in the financial statements. The following timing differences are not provided for: differences between accumulated depreciation and tax allowances for the cost of a fixed asset if and when all conditions for retaining the tax allowances have been met to the extent that it is not probable that they will reverse in the foreseeable future.

Deferred tax is not recognised on permanent differences arising because certain types of income or expense are non-taxable or are disallowable for tax or because certain tax charges or allowances are greater or smaller than the corresponding income or expense.

Deferred tax is measured at the tax rate that is expected to apply to the reversal of the related difference, using tax rates enacted or substantively enacted at the balance sheet date.

Grants

Premises Renovation Grant

The premises renovation grant was recorded in reserves on receipt and is amortised into the income and expenditure account at 2.5% per annum in line with the depreciation period on the property.

2. Expenses and auditors' remuneration

	2023	2022
	£	£
<i>Operating surplus on operating activities before tax is stated after charging</i>		
Depreciation of tangible assets	24,588	16,558
Auditors Remuneration:		
- Audit of these financial statements	7,800	7,800

Employee Costs excluding Council members were constituted as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and Salaries	725,724	676,710
Employer's National Insurance	74,236	57,630
Pension Costs	31,540	34,415
Staff Health Plan	15,510	17,300
Total non-Council members employment costs	847,010	786,055

Under FRS102, key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly. This includes the Chief Executive, Registrar, and senior managers. Numbers of Key Management Personnel who earned over £60,000 Full Time Equivalent (including Pension and Health Contributions) during the year.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

2. Expenses and auditors' remuneration (continued)

	2023 No.	2022 No.
£60,001 to £70,000	4	4
£70,001 to £80,000	-	-
£80,001 to £90,000	-	-
£90,001 to £100,000 *	1	-
£100,001 to £110,000**	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Number of Key Management	6	5

* Trevor Patterson left the organisation on 20th January 2023

** Michaela McAleer joined the organisation on 5th December 2022

Total compensation (including pension contributions & benefits) of regulator key management personnel in the year amounted to £319,354 (2022: £278,912).

Job Title (Stated in £10k bandings)	Full Time Equivalent Pay Benefits in kind**** (to the nearest £100)	
Former Chief Executive*	£100,001 - £110,000	£3,200
Chief Executive **	£90,001 - £100,000	£nil
Registrar & Director of Regulation	£60,001 - £70,000	£400
Director of Public Affairs	£60,001 - £70,000	£1,200
Director of Business Operations	£60,001 - £70,000	£1,000
Pharmacy Forum NI Manager***	£60,001 - £70,000*	£900

* Trevor Patterson left the organisation on 20th January 2023

** Michaela McAleer joined the organisation on 5th December 2022

*** The Pharmacy Forum NI Manager is contracted to work 22.5 hours per week

**** Benefits in kind include private healthcare.

The current Chief Executive claimed £208.65 during the year. The former Chief Executive did not claim any travel expenses during the year. Three key management personnel claimed £639 in travel expenses (2022: One key management claimed £507) during the year. The use of virtual meetings where possible has reduced the expense amount claimed during this year.

Remuneration of highest paid Key management person as a multiple of median remuneration:

	2023 £	2022 £
Midpoint of band of highest paid current director's total remuneration	95,000	105,000
Median total remuneration	32,750	29,500
Remuneration ratio	1:2.9	1:3.5

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

3. Taxation

Total tax expense recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

	2023	2022
	£	£
<i>Current tax</i>		
Current tax on income for the period	4,651	582
Adjustments on respect of prior periods	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total current tax	4,651	582
<i>Deferred tax</i>		
Origination and reversal of timing differences	765	(17,034)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total deferred tax (note 8)	765	(17,034)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total tax charge/ (credit)	5,416	(16,452)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

4. Tangible Assets

	<i>University Street Property</i>	<i>Furniture and Office Equipment</i>	<i>Computer Equipment</i>	<i>Total</i>
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 June 2022	87,114	128,892	116,691	322,697
Additions	-	10,847	22,383	33,230
Disposals	-	(42,115)	(24,091)	(66,206)
At 31 May 2023	87,114	97,624	114,983	299,721
Depreciation				
At 1 June 2022	82,966	124,067	76,921	283,954
Charge for year	2,709	3,823	18,056	24,588
Eliminated on Disposal	-	(41,917)	(23,800)	(65,717)
At 31 May 2023	85,675	85,973	71,177	242,825
Written Down Value At 31 May 2023	1,439	11,651	43,806	56,896
At 31 May 2022	4,148	4,825	39,770	48,743

5. Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Fair value		
At beginning of year	1,049,231	1,115,523
Additions	153,858	61,870
Disposals	(110,801)	(28,242)
Fair value adjustments	(15,380)	(99,920)
At end of year	1,076,908	1,049,231

Investments comprises listed investments which at 31 May 2023 had a market value of £1,076,908 (2022: £1,049,231).

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

6. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	111,646	125,483
Other Debtors	90	-
Prepayments and accrued income	36,961	39,351
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	148,697	164,834

7. Creditors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade Creditors	106,416	86,815
Accruals	75,036	106,949
Deferred Income	1,182,048	1,145,956
Taxation and Social Security Costs	17,303	22,659
Corporation tax	2,452	260
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,383,254	1,362,639

8. Deferred tax liability

	2023 £	2022 £
Investments	53,799	53,034
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Deferred tax liability	53,799	53,034

The movement during the year comprises a charge of £765 (2022: credit of £17,034) which is recognised in gain or deficit for the year.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

9. Pension obligations

Defined contribution plans.

The Society operates a defined contribution plan. Contributions payable by the Society for the year ended 31 May 2023 amounted to £31,540 (2022: £34,415). No contributions were outstanding at year end (2022: nil).

Payments to former employees

	2023
	£
At beginning of year	72,732
Charge to the income and expenditure account for the year	4,451
Benefits paid	<u>(7,812)</u>
At end of year	<u>69,371</u>

The provision relates to the Pharmaceutical Society's obligation to make annual payments to a former employee and upon his death, 50% of the annual payment to his spouse.

10. Commitments

The Society had no contractual commitments contracted for but not provided in the financial statements (2022: nil)

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 May 2023 (continued)

11. Related party transactions

During the year, none of the Council members or members of the key management staff has undertaken any material transactions with related parties.

Registrant members of the Council are required to pay a Retention Fee to the Pharmaceutical Society of NI on the same basis as other registrant members.

The CW Young Charitable Trust, The Ronnie McMullan Charitable Trust and the PASS Trust are deemed to be related parties by virtue of the fact the trustees are elected members of the Board of the Pharmacy Forum NI which is an arm's length body under the legislative remit of the Pharmaceutical Society NI. During the year, expenses of £12,788 (2022: £11,133) were recharged from the Society to the Funds. The Funds owe £nil (2022: £nil) to the Pharmaceutical Society NI as at 31 May 2023 and the Society owes £nil (2022: £nil) to the funds as at 31 May 2023.