

Welcome to Update



Welcome to the third edition of our Regulatory Update in 2022.

In this edition, we report on the appointment of the new Council President Dr. Geraldine O'Hare, as Dr. Jim Livingstone's tenure as President came to an end.

We highlight an important consultation on Pharmacy Staffing Levels and an initial Call for Evidence on the review of the Professional Standards of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for Pharmacists in Northern Ireland (2016).

We report our statement on the issue of temporary closures of community pharmacies.

We highlight the Annual Report and the next Council meeting and how to attend.

Lastly, we report some news you may have missed including a vacancy for Head of Education and Registration.

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Review previous editions

You can read previous editions of our Regulatory Update [here](#)

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The Pharmaceutical Society NI welcomes the appointment of Dr. Geraldine O'Hare as President of the Council

The Health Minister, Robin Swann, has announced the appointment of Dr. Geraldine O'Hare as President of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.

Geraldine is a Chartered and Registered Forensic Psychologist, Associate Fellow and a Chartered Scientist with the British Psychological Society (BPS). She is the Chief Assessor with the BPS, Chair Elect for the British Psychological Society Northern Ireland Branch and recently received the BPS President's Award for Innovation in Practice for her work following a Churchill Fellowship, completed in the USA. Geraldine has worked with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland for over 25 years as Head of Psychological Services and the Director of Rehabilitation. She has extensive experience working with the Health and Justice sector, regulatory bodies and professional boards. Geraldine is an accomplished leader who brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise from the public sector and from her involvement with various health care professional bodies and committees.

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

"I am pleased to welcome Geraldine as the new President of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI. Geraldine has a wealth of leadership and innovation skills and extensive experience in the health and justice sectors. Her experience and skills will be extremely valuable as Council guides the organisation during a period of significant change within pharmacy and within regulation. I look forward to working with her to continue our overarching mission to protect the public."

Geraldine will take up the position of President on 01 November 2022.

Dr. Jim Livingstone's tenure as President comes to an end

Dr. Jim Livingstone's tenure as the President of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI has come to an end, after leading Council for a period of 8 years. He was first appointed by the Minister for Health in October 2014.

In a statement, Vice President of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI, Mr. Jonathan Patton, paid tribute to Dr. Livingstone's leadership, stating:

"Jim has done a tremendous job in leading the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society for 8 years, through a period of significant change and challenge, not least the Covid-19 pandemic. Jim helped shape a new direction for Council, strengthening its governance, bringing strategic thinking front and centre, and developing its skills and training.

"His passion for public protection and the work of Council, having open and healthy debate, and finding the best route forward in any situation, stood to him throughout his 8 years. He leaves the Pharmaceutical Society NI and the Council in a strong position going forward".

"I wish Jim well in his next endeavours and on behalf of Council would like to thank him for his leadership, commitment and excellent company".

The full statement can be read [here](#).

Consultation launched on Pharmacy Staffing Levels

The Council of Pharmaceutical Society NI has launched an 8-week public consultation on proposed Guidance on Pharmacy Staffing Levels within registered premises. The public consultation follows proposals made to the Council in September 2022 based on engagement with stakeholders.

This principle-based Guidance seeks to assist Pharmacy Owners and Superintendents to ensure that each pharmacy has enough appropriately skilled and qualified staff to provide safe and effective pharmacy services to the public. All registered pharmacies will have to meet the standards set out in the [Premises Standards](#), when commenced. The proposed Guidance should also help ensure a working environment that will facilitate pharmacists to meet their professional obligations under the [Professional Standards of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for Pharmacists in Northern Ireland \(2016\)](#).

Whilst other health regulators have primary responsibility for systems regulation outside of regulated premises, we consider that the principles outlined in this Guidance will be helpful for managers working with pharmacy teams in different settings.

The proposed Guidance should be of interest to the public and patient representative bodies in Northern Ireland as it outlines what they may expect in relation to the staffing levels in pharmacies. It should also be of interest to Pharmacy Owners, Superintendents, pharmacists and un-registered pharmacy staff.

All responses to this consultation will be considered by the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI and will assist it in finalising the Guidance for publication in this important area.

We encourage all interested parties to respond.

The Consultation is open from 13 October 2022 to **09 December 2022**.

A copy of the Consultation documents can be found [here](#).

Newsletter Feedback

As always, we welcome your feedback on this Newsletter to make it as effective as possible. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please contact:

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Initial Call for Evidence for the Review of the Code

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland sets the standards of pharmacists' professional practice in the [Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance 2016 \(the Code\)](#), and ensures that practising pharmacists are fit to practise, keep their skills and knowledge up to date and deliver quality and safe care to patients.

The purpose of the Code is to guide and support registrants in their scope of practice, professional development and decision-making. The Code should facilitate innovation and development of pharmacy practice whilst ensuring the consistent delivery of professional standards. It puts patients' interests first and reinforces the concept of patient-centred professionalism and care.

We are now reviewing our 2016 Code by May 2023 to ensure that it is fit for purpose going forward and during a period of significant change within pharmacy and regulation. The review will also consider the implications for the Code for Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland coming under statutory regulation by the Pharmaceutical Society NI.

We are making an initial Call for Evidence to inform the review and any proposals to revise the current Code which will be the subject of a public consultation in early 2023.

We are interested in hearing from members of the public, pharmacists, employers and those who work to provide pharmacy services in Northern Ireland, about how the current Code is working and how it may be improved or revised to ensure high standards and public protection moving forward.

We, therefore, encourage you to consider this Call for Evidence which can be found [here](#).

To participate in this Call for Evidence, please complete the short survey by following this link: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/66G76KR

Annual Report 2021-2022

The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI approved the Annual Report and Accounts for the year 2021-22 on Thursday, 15 September 2022 and the document is now available [here](#) or by contacting Mark Neale, Director of Public Affairs – mark.neale@psni.org.uk

The Annual Report and Accounts was presented at the open Annual General Meeting on 13 October 2022.

Statement on the issue of temporary closures of community pharmacies

We have published a statement (26/10/22) on the issue of temporary closures of community pharmacies.

We recognise that access to pharmacy services is an issue of utmost importance to patients, carers and their families.

Pharmacy closures can be distressing for all involved and potentially may raise concerns for patient safety, particularly if people cannot access the medicines and other pharmacy services many rely on.

We recognise that the rate of pharmacy closures in Northern Ireland is comparatively low and that the causes behind closures can be complex and include labour market and Covid-19 related factors.

[Our statement](#) sets out how the issue of pharmacy closures relates to our role and remit as the independent regulator as well as the wider context of pharmacy service delivery.

Our statement can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Council meeting

The next Public Council meeting will take place on 22 November 2022. This meeting will be held at 73 University Street. This meeting will commence promptly at **09:30 am**.

All our Council meetings are open to the public, except in exceptional circumstances, and are normally held in our offices, at 73 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HL.

Council agenda and key papers are now available before Council Meetings from [here](#).

Should you wish to attend, please contact the Council Secretary, June Alexander (june.alexander@psni.org.uk), at least one working day in advance of the meeting advising of your attendance and stating any particular access requirements you may have.

The latest approved Council minutes from the Council meeting of 28 June 2022 can be found [here](#).

A list of all Council minutes can be found [here](#).

A list of Council members can be found [here](#).

News you may have missed

26/10/22 Vacancy for Head of Education and Registration

The Pharmaceutical Society of NI is seeking to recruit a **Head of Education and Registration** to join their team. The successful applicant will support the Registrar and Senior Management Team in the delivery of our strategic objectives and statutory functions in relation to the Education and Registration of Pharmacists in Northern Ireland.

The successful candidate will join the pharmacy regulator at an exciting time for pharmacy as the profession develops rapidly. Responsible for the day-to-day management of registration and education, the Head of Education and Registration will oversee the running and rapid development of the undergraduate, pre-registration and post-graduate education agenda as well as the related registration activities.

A full job description can be [found here](#) and, should you be interested in the post, please contact Rebecca.Kinder@hays.com for further details.

25/10/22 Pharmaceutical Society NI welcomes new legislation to strengthen pharmacy governance

The Pharmacy (Preparation and Dispensing Errors – Hospital (and Other Pharmacy Services) Order 2022 and the Pharmacy (Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists etc.) Order 2022 have now been published after being approved by the Privy Council. The Orders are both expected to be commenced and come into force in December 2022.

Both Orders enable and enhance the powers we, and the GPhC, have to define the roles and responsibilities of Responsible, Superintendent and Chief Pharmacists, respectively. They also create protections against criminal prosecution for hospital pharmacists where an inadvertent error is made either in dispensing or assembly, in certain defined circumstances, similar to the protections available to colleagues working in community/registered pharmacy settings. Provisions that allow the appointment of a Deputy Registrar for our organisation will also be introduced.

Full details can be found [here](#).

30/9/22 Extension of the Covid-19 Temporary Register

The Minister for Health in Northern Ireland has decided that the Covid-19 Temporary Register for pharmacists in Northern Ireland will continue beyond 30 September 2022 for two years.

Pharmacists who remain on the Covid-19 Temporary Register will be able to continue to practise in Northern Ireland following this extension. See the full announcement [here](#).