

Equality Impact Assessment

A Consultation on Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland (2025)

Phase 1 – Pre-Consultation

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact us at Pharmaceutical Society NI, 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL. Telephone number 028 90326927 or by email to Consultations@psni.org.uk and we will assist you.

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Section A: Details about the policy/decision to be screened

Title of policy / decision to be screened.

Consultation: Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland (2025)

Description of the policy to be screened.

The Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (the Society) wishes to conduct a public consultation about Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland. The outcome of the consultation will be used to strengthen pharmacy governance amongst this subset and their deputies and will have broader implications for wider members of the pharmacy profession and general public as service users.

Whilst based on General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) Standards set in other areas of the United Kingdom, this consultation will enable the Pharmaceutical Society NI to ensure that the Professional Standards which it sets here in Northern Ireland are robust, fit-for-purpose and in line with best practice to support local rollout.

The core aims of the consultation are to elicit the views of key stakeholders, including from within the health and social care system in Northern Ireland, the general public and other representative bodies, on the proposed Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists and to find out if there are any perceived issues, or if there is anything else we should have included, to address specific needs locally and regionally across Northern Ireland.

The consultation will provide respondents with an opportunity to shape the Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland to ensure they support the pharmacy profession now and in the future.

The four key Standards being consulted on are:

Standard 1:	Provide strategic and professional leadership;
Standard 2:	Develop a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience;
Standard 3:	Delegate responsibly and make sure there are clear lines of accountability; and
Standard 4:	Maintain and strengthen governance to ensure safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

The view of the Pharmaceutical Society NI is that these Standards will deliver benefits to pharmacists and service users by strengthening pharmacy governance and will provide added benefits for pharmacists and patients by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services - regardless of Section 75 group. We anticipate the Standards will deliver positive results for all groups.

Main Stakeholders Affected

X	Pharmacist Registrants (including Chief Pharmacists/Deputy Chief Pharmacists and all Registrants) and future Pharmacist Registrants
X	Public / Patients
X	Pharmacy Foundation Training Year Trainees (FTY Trainees)

Other policies with a bearing on this policy.

[The Pharmacy \(Preparation and Dispensing Errors – Hospital and Other Pharmacy Services\) Order 2022](#)

[The Pharmacy \(Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists etc.\) Order 2022](#)

Section B: Available Evidence

Data Sources (Please list)

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence / information																											
Age	<u>General Information</u> The distribution of pharmacists within each age category, who responded to the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey (period up to 25 October 2024) compared to the general population distribution is displayed in Table A below.^{1/2} <u>Table A: Age Range of Pharmacists (2024) Compared to Northern Ireland Population Statistics Census (2021)</u> <table><tr><th>Age Groups</th><th>Pharmacists</th><th>General Population³</th></tr><tr><td>20-24</td><td>2.94%</td><td>5.85%</td></tr><tr><td>25-34</td><td>34.0%</td><td>12.74%</td></tr><tr><td>35-44</td><td>33.77%</td><td>13.11%</td></tr><tr><td>45-54</td><td>17.52%</td><td>13.27%</td></tr><tr><td>55-64</td><td>8.83%</td><td>12.73%</td></tr><tr><td>65-74</td><td>1.17%</td><td>9.30%</td></tr><tr><td>75 and over</td><td>Nil</td><td>7.86%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>1.77%</td><td>n/a</td></tr></table> <i>(Pharmacists who completed the survey: n= 2,141)</i> <i>Total number of pharmacists in October 2024 = 2,960</i> <i>Return rate 72.33%</i> The majority of pharmacists who responded to the 2024-2025 equality questionnaire were aged between 25-54 years.	Age Groups	Pharmacists	General Population ³	20-24	2.94%	5.85%	25-34	34.0%	12.74%	35-44	33.77%	13.11%	45-54	17.52%	13.27%	55-64	8.83%	12.73%	65-74	1.17%	9.30%	75 and over	Nil	7.86%	Prefer not to say	1.77%	n/a
Age Groups	Pharmacists	General Population ³																										
20-24	2.94%	5.85%																										
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65-74	1.17%	9.30%																										
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Prefer not to say	1.77%	n/a																										

¹ Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024-25 (accessed January 2025).

² NISRA (2023) 'Age - five year age bands - all usual residents MS-A02 [UPDATED]' (accessed December 2024).

³ Excluded 0-20 age group so will not equal 100%.

	In 2023-2024 there were 137 trainees, of which 108 were under 25. The Society will monitor any impacts of the Standards in relation to the age of pharmacists and trainees and consider any further evidence provided to us. The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services. We do not anticipate any negative impact of the Standards outlined in relation to any age groups.
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Dependants	<u>General Information</u> The distribution of pharmacists who responded to the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey, with dependants and without dependants, is displayed in Table B. <u>Table B: Registrants Equality Survey 2024-2025</u> <u>Personal Responsibility for the care of dependants^{4/5}</u> <table> <tr> <th>Type of Dependant</th><th>Percentage of Pharmacists</th></tr> <tr> <td>Child (one or more)</td><td>50.44%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Person with a disability</td><td>2.01%</td></tr> <tr> <td>A dependant older person</td><td>4.12%</td></tr> <tr> <td>None of the above</td><td>43.10%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td><td>3.79%</td></tr> </table> (n=2,137)	Type of Dependant	Percentage of Pharmacists	Child (one or more)	50.44%	Person with a disability	2.01%	A dependant older person	4.12%	None of the above	43.10%	Prefer not to say	3.79%
Type of Dependant	Percentage of Pharmacists												
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Person with a disability	2.01%												
A dependant older person	4.12%												
None of the above	43.10%												
Prefer not to say	3.79%												

⁴ Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) [Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024- 25](#) (accessed July 2025).

⁵ Note that one person may have selected more than one category therefore totals exceed 100%.

	Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option to reflect their caring responsibility so total exceeds 100% <u>Northern Ireland Population Statistics</u> The information in the 2021 Census, published in May 2022, shows that the children's dependency ratio has fallen from 46 children per 100 people of working age (in 1926) to 30 children per 100 people of working age (in 2021).⁶ The Census also reports that the number of people aged 65 and over for every 100 people of working age has risen from 13 (in 1926) to 27 (in 2021).⁷ The Census 2021 recorded that one person in eight of the population (or 222,200 people) provided unpaid care to a relative or friend who had a health condition or illness.⁸ The Society will monitor the impact of our Standards in relation to pharmacists and patients with dependants and consider any further evidence provided to us. The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services. We do not anticipate any negative impact of the Standards outlined in relation to anyone with dependants.
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⁶ NISRA (2021) [Census 2021 population and household estimates for Northern Ireland: Statistical bulletin \(May 2021\)](#) (accessed July 2025).

⁷ Ibid (as above)

⁸ 2021 Main Statistics – Phase 2. Census 2021 health & housing statistics released available at [Census 2021 main statistics for Northern Ireland \(phase 2\) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) (accessed July 2025).

Disability	<u>General Information</u> The distribution of pharmacists who reported having a disability in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey, is displayed below in Table C. <u>Table C: The Registrants Interim Equality Survey 2024-2025^{9/10}</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Disability Status</th><th>Percentage of Pharmacists</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disability</td><td>1.78%</td></tr> <tr> <td>No Disability</td><td>95.21%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td><td>3.00%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> (n=2,131) <u>Table D: Foundation Year Trainees</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Disability Status</th><th>Percentage of Trainees</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disability</td><td>3.65 %</td></tr> <tr> <td>No Disability</td><td>96.35%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> (n=137) <u>General population data</u> In Northern Ireland, one person in four (24.3% or 463,000 people) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability, 40% of which were aged 65 or more (185,300 people).¹¹ The Pharmaceutical Society NI will monitor the impact of our Standards in relation to people with disabilities and consider any further evidence provided to us. The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services. We do not anticipate any negative impact of the Standards outlined in relation to anyone with disabilities.	Disability Status	Percentage of Pharmacists	Disability	1.78%	No Disability	95.21%	Prefer not to say	3.00%	Disability Status	Percentage of Trainees	Disability	3.65 %	No Disability	96.35%
Disability Status	Percentage of Pharmacists														
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⁹ Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024- 25 (accessed January 2025).

¹⁰ NICPLD (2023) 'Equality Monitoring Data for Foundation Year Training Students 2022-23 Cohort' (unpublished data).

¹¹ NISRA (2022) 'Census 2021 Main statistics for Northern Ireland - Statistical bulletin - Health' p. 18 (accessed January 2025).

Marital Status

General Information

The distribution of pharmacists who reported their marital status in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society Interim Equality Survey, together with information on the general population, is displayed in Table E.

Table E: Marital Status of Pharmacists Compared to Northern Ireland Population Statistics Census 2021

Marital Status	Pharmacists ¹²	General Population ¹³
Single	31.00%	38.07%
Married	61.94%	45.59%
Civil Partnership	0.51%	0.18%
Separated but legally married	1.03%	3.78%
Divorced	1.64%	6.02%
Widowed	0.37%	6.36%
Separated but legally in a Civil Partnership	0.05%	Not asked
Prefer not to say	3.46%	Not asked

(Pharmacists: n=2,139)

The Pharmaceutical Society NI will monitor the impact of our Standards with regard to marital status and consider any further evidence provided to us.

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

We do not anticipate any negative impact of the Standards outlined in relation to marital status.

¹² Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024- 25 (accessed January 2025).

¹³ NISRA (2024) CT0069 Marital and civil partnership status (accessed December 2024).

Men and Women generally

The reported gender of pharmacists, in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey, is displayed below in Table F and reported gender distribution in the general population in Table G.

Table F: Registrant's Interim Equality Survey 2024-2025⁹

Gender identity	Percentage
Female	69.42%
Male	28.42%
Transgender	0.09%
Prefer not to say	2.06

(n=2,139)

Table G: Northern Ireland Population Statistics 2021¹⁰

Gender Identity	Percentage
Male	49.19%
Female	50.81%

In the gender identity Census question in Northern Ireland only the binary response categories "Female" and "Male" were included.

A NISRA 2021 report commented that less than 0.1% of respondents in Northern Ireland reported that they were transgender.¹¹

The Pharmaceutical Society NI did not find evidence to suggest a negative impact of these Standards in relation to political opinion and will monitor the impact and consider any further evidence provided to us.

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

We do not anticipate any negative impact of the Standards outlined in relation to men/women.

¹⁴ Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (2024) [Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024-2025](#) (accessed July 2025).

¹⁵ NISRA (2023) '[Sex MS-A07](#)' (accessed July 2025).

¹⁶ NISRA (2021) '[Topic report: Research on measuring gender identity](#)' (accessed July 2025).

Political Opinion

There is no data held in relation to the political opinion of pharmacists by the Pharmaceutical Society NI. The May 2022 Northern Ireland Assembly election had the following breakdown of first preference votes based on a turnout of 63%.

Table H: First Preference Votes¹⁷

Political Party	Percentage
SF	29.0%
DUP	21.3%
AP	13.5%
UUP	11.2%
SDLP	9.1%
OTHERS	15.8%

The Pharmaceutical Society NI did not find evidence to suggest a negative impact of these Standards in relation to political opinion and will monitor the impact of our Standards and consider any further evidence provided to us.

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

¹⁷ NI Assembly - <https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2017-2022/2022/2422.pdf>

Race / Ethnicity	The reported race (ethnicity) of pharmacists in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey is shown below in Table I, Foundation Training Year in Table J and information on the general population in Table K. <u>Table I: Registrant's Interim Equality Survey 2024-2025^{18/19}</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Race / Ethnicity</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td><td>93.41%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Irish Traveller</td><td>0.09%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Roma</td><td>0%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Black African</td><td>0.7%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Black Other</td><td>0.05%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Chinese</td><td>1.17%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Indian</td><td>0.42%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td><td>0.47%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Filipino</td><td>0.09%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td><td>3.13%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Other</td><td>0.47%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> (n=2,140) <u>Table J: Number of Foundation Year Trainees by Racial / Ethnic Identity in the 2022-23 Intake²⁰</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Race / Ethnicity</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White (British and Irish)</td><td>83.94%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Asian (all backgrounds)</td><td>10.95%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td><td>1.46%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Black (all backgrounds)</td><td>1.46%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td><td>2.19%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> (n=137)	Race / Ethnicity	Percentage	White	93.41%	Irish Traveller	0.09%	Roma	0%	Black African	0.7%	Black Other	0.05%	Chinese	1.17%	Indian	0.42%	Mixed	0.47%	Filipino	0.09%	Prefer not to say	3.13%	Other	0.47%	Race / Ethnicity	Percentage	White (British and Irish)	83.94%	Asian (all backgrounds)	10.95%	Mixed	1.46%	Black (all backgrounds)	1.46%	Prefer not to say	2.19%
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¹⁸ Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (2024) 'Equality Monitoring Survey 2024-2025' (accessed January 2025).

¹⁹ Note the census 2021 question changed and this was reflected in the new 2024-2025 registrants survey. Pakistani was no longer a separate group although it could be specified.

²⁰ NICPLD (2023) 'Equality Monitoring Data for Foundation year Training Students 2022-23 Cohort' (unpublished data).

**Table K: Northern Ireland Census 2021
ethnic group statistics²¹**

Race / Ethnicity	Percentage
White	96.6%
Irish Traveller	0.1%
Roma	0.1%
Indian	0.5%
Chinese	0.5%
Filipino	0.2%
Pakistani	0.1%
Arab	0.1%
Other Asian	0.3%
Black	0.6%
Mixed	0.8%
Other Ethnicities	0.2%

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

We do not anticipate a negative impact of these Standards in relation to race/ethnicity.

²¹ NISRA (2022) '[Main statistics for Northern Ireland Statistical Bulletin Ethnic group September 2022](#)' (accessed July 2025).

Religious Belief

The reported religious belief of pharmacists in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society Interim Equality Survey is shown below together with information on the general population in Table L.

Table L: Registrant's Interim Equality Survey 2024-2025 and the Northern Ireland Census 2021 population statistics for religion

Religious Belief	Pharmacists ²²	General Population ²³
Christian Protestant	30.15%	43.5% (protestant and other Christian)
Christian Roman Catholic	48.39%	45.7%
Christian Other	2.24%	N/A
Buddhist	0.05%	Other religions 1.5%
Hindu	0.14%	
Jewish	0.09%	
Muslim	0.51%	
Sikh	0.05%	
No religion	10.61%	9.3%
Prefer not to say	7.43%	N/A
Other	0.33%	N/A

(Pharmacists: n=2,139)

We do not anticipate a negative impact of these Standards in relation to religious belief. The Pharmaceutical Society NI will monitor the impact of our Standards in relation to race / ethnicity and consider any further evidence provided to us.

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

²² Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) 'Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024-2025' (accessed January 2025).

²³ NISRA (2022) 'Main statistics for Northern Ireland Statistical Bulletin Religion September 2022' (accessed December 2024).

Sexual Orientation

The reported sexual orientation of pharmacists, in the 2024-2025 Pharmaceutical Society NI Interim Equality Survey, is shown below in Table M, together with information on the general population.

Table M: Registrant’s Interim Equality Survey 2024-2025 and Northern Ireland Census 2021 Statistics

Sexual Orientation	Pharmacists ²⁴	General Population ²⁵
Straight or heterosexual	90.58%	90.00%
Gay or lesbian	2.58%	1.2%
Bisexual	0.94%	0.7%
Other sexual orientation	not asked	0.2%
Prefer not to say	5.9%	7.9%

(Pharmacists: n=2,134)

We do not anticipate a negative impact of these Standards in relation to sexual orientation. The Pharmaceutical Society NI will monitor the impact of our Standards in relation to sexual orientation and consider any further evidence provided to us.

The emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the new 2025 Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland will benefit pharmacists and patients across all age groups by: providing strategic and professional leadership; developing a workforce with the right skills, knowledge and experience; delegating responsibly and making sure there are clear lines of accountability; and, maintaining and strengthening governance to ensure the safe and effective delivery of pharmacy services.

²⁴ Pharmaceutical Society Northern Ireland (2024) ‘Interim Equality Monitoring Survey 2024-2025’ (accessed January 2025).

²⁵ NISRA (2023) ‘Census 2021 Main statistics for Northern Ireland - Statistical bulletin - Sexual orientation’ (accessed December 2024).

Section C: Assessment

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

Section 75 Category	Analysis	Level of impact: Yes - Minor / Yes Major / No
Age	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impacts in relation to age.	No
Dependants	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact in relation to dependants.	No
Disability	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact for people with disabilities.	No
Marital Status	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact for people in relation to marital status.	No
Men and Women generally	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact for men or women generally.	No
Political Opinion	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact in relation to political opinion.	No

Race / Ethnicity	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact in relation to race and ethnicity.	No
Religious Belief	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact in relation to religious belief.	No
Sexual Orientation	The Professional Standards set out for Chief Pharmacists will create an environment that supports equality, diversity and inclusion. We identified no negative impact in relation to sexual orientation.	No

Section D Record of Screening Decision

Title of policy / decision to be screened.

Consultation: Professional Standards for Chief Pharmacists in Northern Ireland (2025)

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

☐	<u>Screened In</u> – Necessary to conduct a full Equality Assessment
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☒	<u>Screened Out</u> – No Equality Assessment necessary (no impacts) N/A
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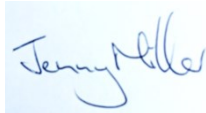
☐	<u>Screened Out</u> – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)
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Screening assessment completed by:

Name: Dr Jenny Millar

Job title: Business Support Manager

Signature:



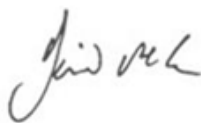
Date 31/07/2025

Screening decision approved by:

Name: David McCann

Job title: Interim Head of Regulatory Strategy

Signature:



Date: 31/07/2025