



Society's 2003 accounts show healthy position despite deficit

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's accounts for 2003 — now available from the Society's website — show a healthy financial position despite an operating loss for the year.

In an article in this week's *Journal* (p484), the Society's financial controller, Graham Duncan, explains that changes in accounting policy and improvements in systems and procedures have helped put the Society's finances on a "robust and sustainable" basis.

Commenting on the accounts for 2003, the Society's Treasurer, Linda Stone, said: "I am pleased that the changes made to the accounting procedures for 2003 have resulted in greater clarity and probity for our accounts. We have secured the balance sheet and by continually reviewing our tax position we have maximised our savings. I am confident that the base we have created this year is a firm foundation for our financial future."

The Society's full financial statements for 2003 were expected to be made available on the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org/society) at some time on Friday 16 April. Hard copies can be obtained from the

Society's finance administrator (tel 020 7572 2245).

A summary of financial information will also appear in the Society's annual review for 2003, which is to be distributed to all members of the Society with *The Pharmaceutical Journal* of May 1.

The annual review highlights the broad range of work undertaken by the Society in 2003.

Questions on the financial statements will be answered at the Society's annual general meeting, to be held at the Society's Lambeth headquarters on Wednesday 12 May at 7.30pm (see Official Notice, p491). The Society is inviting questions about the financial statements in advance of the AGM in order to allow full responses to be researched and provided at the meeting.

Questions should be submitted in writing by post to Graham Duncan, Financial Controller, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN or by e-mail to accounts2003@rpsgb.org to arrive no later than 4pm on Wednesday 5 May.

This week

■ Society's accounts for 2003

The Society's accounts for 2003, which are being placed on the Society's website, show a healthy position despite an operating loss (p483); article (p484).

■ Motion for Society's AGM

A motion tabled for debate at the Society's annual general meeting on 12 May seeks approval for a petition asking the Queen to reject the Council's proposal for a new Charter (p483)

■ BPC speakers announced

Details of major speakers at this year's British Pharmaceutical Conference have been announced (p485).

■ Council meeting observers

One of the observers at the Society's April Council meeting describes his experiences and impressions (p486).

■ BRM motions

The motions for debate at the Society's 2004 branch representatives' meeting are published this week, along with explanatory text supplied by the branches concerned and background information provided by the Council (p487).

AGM motion seeks to petition the Queen to reject the Council's proposed new Charter

A motion to be presented at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's 2004 annual general meeting seeks the meeting's approval for a petition to the Queen asking her to reject the Council's petition for a new Charter and any other petitions submitted without the consent of the Society's members.

The motion, to be moved by Mark Walker, includes the full text of the proposed petition (Official Notice, p491).

The AGM takes place on the evening of Wednesday 12 May, less than a week before the date set for a High Court hearing of an application for summary judgment of the Council's Charter petition claim. The claim has been listed for hearing in the Royal Courts of Justice, London, on Tuesday 18 May, continuing on the following day if necessary (*PJ*, 13 March, p305). The action has been brought by the Save Our Society group against the 16 members of Council who

voted in support of petitioning for a new Royal Charter plus the Society itself.

As *The Journal* went to press on 14 April, no other motions had been received for debate at the AGM.

Apart from debate on motions, the main purposes of the Society's annual general meeting are to present to the members the Council's annual review and financial statements for the previous calendar year and to report on any revisions to the Code of Ethics and Council Statements on ethical matters issued since the previous year's AGM. (Copies of the annual review for 2003 are to be sent to all members before the meeting and the full financial statements are being placed on the Society's website — see above.)

The formal business of the AGM will be preceded by the presentation of fellowship certificates and the Society's Charter gold and silver medals.

Questions for Council election candidates

At the request of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Council, *The Pharmaceutical Journal* has asked each candidate in the Council election three questions on matters of topical interest that have not been covered in candidates' statements of policy.

The questions we have asked are: (1) What continuing professional development have you undertaken in the past year, and did you find it a burden? (2) What are your views on the use of modern technology to allow a pharmacist in a remote location to supervise the dispensing and sale of medicines? (3) What one initiative would make the most difference to pharmacy practice in the next year, and why?

The responses to these questions are to be published in *The Journal* next week, by which time all members should have received their voting papers. Voters may wish to refrain from completing their voting papers until they have read the candidates' answers to our questions.

Society strengthens its finances despite reporting a deficit in 2003

A deficit in the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's financial results for 2003 is not causing any loss of sleep for the Society's Treasurer and finance staff. The Society's financial controller, **Graham Duncan**, explains

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has announced its financial results for 2003 with an operating loss. But before members become concerned, they should note that this is a planned and positive situation. Following a detailed review by the finance team, the Council took the decision to make several changes in accounting policy during the year.

The operating result for the year was positive and the final result occurs following deliberate actions taken by the Society. In addition to the change in policy, substantial improvements to systems and procedures have been implemented which have been commented upon and commended by both its internal and external auditors.

New thinking

During 2003, the Society strengthened its financial management team through the appointment of key personnel from commercial backgrounds who have sound experience of financial change management and of developing long-term financial strategies. The new director of finance and resources, Bernard Kelly, recognised the importance of managing the Society's finances beyond the current year and has put forward a long-term strategy to put the Society's finances on a robust and sustainable basis. To attain that goal, a number of steps needed to be taken.

Introducing change

The first step was to introduce a new accounting policy in the publications area. This requires that we recognise the editorial costs of our major reference works as they are incurred and not, as was previous practice, when the publication is sold. This new policy ensures that the Society's financial reporting is robust and transparent. This policy is conservative and more closely reflects the Society's true cash position. It is this change that has created most of the reported deficit.

This new policy was introduced for the following reasons:

1. Editorial costs are principally the salary costs of those permanent staff who form the editorial team of publications such as Martindale. Recognising these

costs as they are incurred is consistent with the rest of the Society.

2. The increasing frequency of publication and the growing importance of subscription income from the electronic forms suggest a more pragmatic policy is needed.
3. The new policy is more conservative and more closely reflects the Society's cash flow. The Society's financial situation is therefore more accurately represented.
4. The new policy is more tax efficient as it recognises costs as they are incurred rather than deferring them to a later date, thus ensuring a tax charge is crystallised at the latest possible date.

The effect of this change has resulted in additional costs of £838,000 for 2003 and the restated result for 2002 shows a reduction in costs of £1,225,000. There have been no cash costs associated with these changes as they merely reflect a change to the way in which these costs are reported.

The Society's reserves have also been amended to reflect the change in accounting policy. In 2002 reserves, there has been a reduction of £2,299,000 which relates to

2001 work-in-progress costs and £1,074,000 relating to 2002 work-in-progress. These changes have been verified against the normal accounting standards and have been audited and approved by the Society's external auditors.

For many years, the Society has had a charity, the Pharmaceutical Trust for Educational and Charitable Objectives (PTECO), to which the Society applies for grants to fund appropriate areas of its work. The second accounting policy change has been to Gift Aid the Society's operating surplus to this charity but not to make grant applications to that charity before the end of the year. In previous years, both transactions took place in the same period, which gave the Society's auditors and external bodies some concern regarding transparency of the transactions.

To improve the probity and transparency of these transactions and their effect on the Society's financial results, a process has been developed to separate the Gift Aid payments from grant applications.

Grant applications for funds were submitted to the trustees in March 2004. The trustees have approved grants against these bids to the value of £821,000.

Income and expenditure

To comply with accounting regulations, the introduction of a new policy requires us to restate our accounts for this year and the previous year on a consistent basis. The effect of the changes and the restatement is illustrated below.

The Society's income and expenditure statement has been reported (Table 1).

It should be noted that the 2002 result was greatly aided by the publication in the year of the 33rd edition of Martindale. The next edition is due for release in 2004.

In addition, the finance department has been reviewing the Society's tax position during the year. The finance team initiated a tax planning project to minimise any taxes payable. Corporation tax is payable on the Publications Directorate surplus in the year, irrespective of whether the Society as a whole reports a deficit. We are pleased that our tax planning has

Table 1: Income and expenditure

	2003 £'000	Restated 2002 £'000
Income	22,976	24,708
Expenditure	(22,788)	(22,287)
Operating surplus before adjustments	188	2,421
Accounting policy adjustment	(838)	1,225
Gift Aid to PTECO	(850)	(1,600)
Grants received from PTECO	—	1,600
Operating (deficit)/surplus as reported	(1,500)	3,646
Interest receivable and similar income	253	212
(Deficit)/surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	(1,247)	3,858
Taxation	107	(405)
Retained (deficit)/surplus for the year	(1,140)	3,453
Accumulated fund as previously reported	11,673	9,445
Previous year adjustment	(1,074)	(2,299)
Accumulated fund as at 1 January as restated	10,599	7,146
Accumulated fund as at 31 December	9,459	10,599

enabled the 2003 tax position to be reported as a positive charge to the accounts.

Balance sheet

The Society's balance sheet (Table 2) reflects the policy changes implemented but also reflects a rigorous approach to managing current assets such as stocks and debtors. Overall the result is that we have a leaner, fitter and more transparent balance sheet than in previous years. The changes adopted this year have enabled the following improvements to be reported:

1. Stocks, which include work-in-progress, have been substantially reduced as they now reflect only the production element of the publication and stock holdings.
2. Debtors, monies owed to the Society, have been reduced by tighter credit control procedures. This has improved our cash available and enabled us to reduce our debts.
3. Creditors, monies the Society owes to third parties, have been reduced. The Society's policy is to pay suppliers within their payment terms.
4. Cash reflects these changes and also the gift aid payment of £850,000 to the charity PTECO.

Table 2: Balance sheet

	2003 £'000	2003 £'000	Restated 2002 £'000	Restated 2002 £'000
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	6,163		6,270	
Intangible assets	542		758	
Investments	—		275	
		6,705		7,303
Current assets				
Stocks	532		982	
Debtors	3,764		5,303	
Deposits and cash	4,438		5,277	
		8,734		11,562
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		3,727		5,865
Net current assets		5,007		5,697
Total assets less current liabilities		11,712		13,000
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		688		750
Provision for liabilities and charges		—		86
Net assets		11,024		12,164
Funds employed		£'000		£'000
Accumulated Fund		9,459		10,599
Replacement Fund		1,565		1,565
		11,024		12,164

After all these changes, and in a year which did not feature the release of a new Martindale, the Society ended the year with £4.4m in the bank, £839,000 less than in the previous year.

Healthy finances

The Society's finances remain healthy and the new controls and procedures that have been introduced will help take us forward in the future.

The financial statements are being placed on the "About the Society" section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org/society). Members are invited to submit any questions to Graham Duncan, financial controller, either by e-mail to accounts2003@rpsgb.org or by post to 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN. All questions should be received by Wednesday 5 May.

A full presentation will be given at the annual general meeting on Wednesday 12 May, when all questions submitted by 5 May will be answered. Questions received after 5 May will be answered individually after the AGM.

As part of the AGM procedures, members will be asked to accept the 2003 financial statements. No vote will take place to approve the accounts.

Leading speakers confirmed for BPC 2004

Expert speakers from academia, industry, the health professions, the NHS, patient groups and government and acknowledged experts in their fields of research in the pharmaceutical sciences and practice will address the British Pharmaceutical Conference 2004, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has announced.

This year's conference takes place at Manchester International Convention Centre from Monday 27 September to Wednesday 29 September.

The conference theme this year is "Medicines: from cell to society". Speakers who will address the conference on topics related to the theme will include the following:

Monday 27 September

- Sir Nigel Crisp, chief executive of the NHS
- Professor Sandy Florence, University of London School of Pharmacy
- Professor Rob Horne, University of Brighton
- Chris Town, Vice-Chairman of the NHS Confederation negotiation team and Modernisation Agency implementation lead

Tuesday 28 September

- Professor Sir Harry Kroto, Nobel Laureate, University of Sussex
- Dr Jim Smith, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England
- Carwen Wynne Howells, Chief Pharmaceutical Adviser for Wales
- Bill Scott, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for Scotland
- Professor William Dawson, Bionet
- Dr Jean-Yves Maillard, University of Brighton
- Mike King, head of professional development and local pharmaceutical committee Services, Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee

Wednesday 29 September

- Professor Judah Folkman, Harvard Medical School, Boston, US
- Harry Cayton, Director for the Patient and Public Experience

The science programme is developed by the Conference Science Chairman, Professor Ruth Duncan and the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

New for BPC 2004 is a special day rate of £5 + VAT available for MPharm fourth-year

students and preregistration trainees attending the conference on Wednesday 29 September. On the Wednesday morning, student delegates will be able to attend conference scientific and practice sessions and in the afternoon a special session will be held reviewing career opportunities.

Also new this year is the opportunity for university spin-out companies and other research and development-focused small and medium enterprises to showcase innovation and allied technologies and present their latest technology and service offerings alongside the main symposium sessions.

Wally Dove, chairman of the Conference Committee, said: "We are committed to continuously grow and improve the conference and this year's programme will include sessions of interest to all, for both pharmaceutical science and practice."

Mr Dove added: "I am pleased that once again Boots The Chemists will be the overall lead sponsor for BPC 2004."

The programme and booking form are available via the events section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org/events) or by contacting the conference organiser, Health Links (tel 0121 248 3399; e-mail alyons@health-links.fsnet.co.uk).

An observer's view of the Council

Each month, representatives of some of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's branches and regions are invited as observers to either the meeting of the Council or meetings of major Council committees. **Malcolm Goldie** describes his recent experience as an observer

The Society's Border region was invited to send a representative to Lambeth as an observer at the Society's April Council meeting. As a member who had never attended such a meeting I was asked if I would like to go and I gladly seized the opportunity.

Council meetings are normally held in the week containing the first Wednesday of the month. This year, to avoid Easter, the April meeting actually took place on the last two days of March. I thus presented myself at 2.24pm on Tuesday 30 March at 1 Lambeth High Street, where I met my two fellow observers from the Society's local network — Philip Rogers (Bath branch) and Brian Wells (Hull branch). Sally Holden from the Society's membership unit escorted us to be introduced to Robert Darracott, the Society's director of corporate and strategic development.

At this stage we were each presented with a large bundle of papers, held together with a treasury tag. We were told that the papers were confidential and would have to be returned to the office before we finally left the building on Wednesday. We could, however, take them away overnight. The papers consisted of the agenda for the meeting and various documents giving background details and other information on the various agenda items.

We were taken into a small committee room to be given a brief explanation of the meeting and its procedures. We heard that the meeting is split into distinct parts — an open session to which the press are admitted, a closed session with entry allowed only to relevant Society staff and the observers, and a confidential session for Council members only.

Just before 3.30pm we were ushered into the Council Chamber and directed to comfortable seats along two sides of the room. At the appointed hour all present stood in silence to greet the President, Gill Hawksworth, wearing her chain of office. She took her chair, greeted Council members and welcomed the observers and the meeting then proceeded.

There is no need for me to offer a word-by-word account of the meeting, since the main items have already been reported in *The Pharmaceutical Journal* and, under a scheme introduced this year, a detailed transcript of Council business held in open session is due to appear on the Society's website shortly. I shall therefore content myself by recording some personal observations by which I hope to convey an impression of the spirit of the meeting and the atmosphere at Lambeth.

The business of the meeting took its flavour from the participants' sober dress — lounge

suits for the men and correspondingly smart dress for the women. A certain dignity was added by the fact that the President's chain of office, all 16 ounces of it, remained round her neck throughout the meeting.

Council members who wished to speak had to catch the eye of the President or Vice-President Alison Ewing. Members were then called upon by forename to add their contribution. (We had been informed that the meetings used to be much more formal, with surnames being the order of the day and Council members having to stand to speak.)

One unusual procedure was the process whereby, during the open part of the meeting, a member might request that something he or she was about to say should not be reported. The procedure was to ask to speak "under the flag". The "flag" in question is a black metal stand topped by a metal plate inscribed "Committee". The Treasurer, Linda Stone, placed the flag on the Officers' table, where it remained as a reminder until the Council decided to return to reportable discussion.

The President, ably assisted by the Secretary and Registrar Ann Lewis, controlled the meeting in a firm manner that was willingly accepted by the Council members. Except for the occasional whispered exchange between members seated in adjacent seats, all communication was through the chair, and discipline was exemplary.

Readers may infer from this description that Council meetings are sombre and humourless, but this is not so, for there were occasional elements of levity during the

sessions. But there was always a predominant air of respect for the President and Officers and those members of the Society's staff who were called upon to address the meeting. And there was also respect for the actual proceedings, perhaps engendered by an awareness of the potential importance of some of the decisions the Council is called upon to make.

The first day's work ended at 6pm and, as there was no formal Council dinner on this occasion, the guests were taken to dinner at a local restaurant by Jean-Pierre Moser, the Society's head of public relations and membership. After an enjoyable evening, we returned to our hotel to ready ourselves for the next day's business.

The Wednesday session began promptly at 9am. The procedure was the same as on the previous day and we were just getting the hang of it when the closed session ended and we were ushered from the Council chamber before the confidential session started.

My overriding impression of the Council meeting is one of correctness, bordering on formality, with a strong suggestion of sincerity and objectiveness. As guests we were treated with the utmost respect and kindness. Council members and staff were without exception welcoming, friendly and only too willing to answer all our questions.

My previous impressions of the Society were to a large extent rewritten by my visit. I left Lambeth with the distinct image of a professional group dedicated, as the Society's notepaper states, to "helping pharmacists achieve excellence".

The branch and regional observer programme

The objective of the Society's branch and regional observer programme is to give members of the Society an insight into how the Council and its committees operate. The Council believes it is important for as many members as possible to gain experience of such meetings.

Each branch and region is given the opportunity to send an observer to attend either a Council meeting or meetings of Council committees at the Society's London headquarters. It takes roughly two years for all branches and regions to be invited and for the cycle to start again.

Each September a programme circulated to branch and regional secretaries lists those branches and regions allocated to specific meetings during the following calendar year. The committee of each branch and region on the list is asked to nominate someone to attend and pass details of the nominee to the membership unit as soon as possible. Branches are also asked to pass the nominee's details to the secretary of their regional committee.

The membership unit then contacts the nominated observer with full details of their attendance at the Council or committee meeting.

Up to seven observers are invited to each meeting. Council observers attend for one-and-a-half days and observe a full Council meeting. Committee observers attend for one day and can see at first hand the workings of the Society's Education, Science, Law and Ethics and Practice Committees. After the meeting, the observers are asked to share their experience by giving a report on their attendance to both the branch and regional committees.

The membership unit maintains a reserve list of members who would like to be observers. If a nominated observer is unable to attend it will try to fill the spare place from this list. Any members of the Society who would like to attend a Council or committee meeting as an observer should let their branch secretary know. Observers may claim an attendance allowance of £160 per day.

Malcolm Goldie, from Gosforth, is regional communications officer for the Society's Border region

Motions for branch representatives' meeting

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's 2004 branch representatives' meeting takes place at its London headquarters on Thursday 13 May. Set out below are the 12 motions submitted for debate, each followed by an explanatory paragraph from the branch or branches concerned and background information provided by the Society's Council. All motions carried by the meeting will be referred to the Council for consideration.

1. Birmingham *That the agencies responsible for the safety, quality and efficacy of authorised medicinal products, which are the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, should be supported in their action to help the public to recognise and benefit from being more able to distinguish medicinal products which are authorised from products which are not.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: At present authorised medicinal products are identifiable by the discreet small print of a unique marketing authorisation number on their labels, but the significance is unlikely to be understood by many members of the public. At best the number, if seen, may be thought to be just part of the batch record.

The Society is concerned that the authorisation of medicines, which is intended to ensure their quality, safety and efficacy, whether for human or animal use, and their consequent benefit, is less well understood than it should be by the public and by medicine users. The need for anyone to be easily able to distinguish products that are not authorised from those that are authorised deserves reappraisal. We would wish to encourage and support the government agencies responsible for authorised medicinal products in their endeavours to make marketing authorisation details on medicinal products more self-evident in such a way as to better reflect the benefit of the authorisation to and for the patient and user.

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate has already decided to take action to address these issues and it has been indicated that they would welcome support from professional bodies. It is hoped that the recently restructured Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (formerly the Medicines Control Agency) will soon consider taking joint action to meet this need.

We are all aware of the way in which many unauthorised products are promoted to give the impression that they will effectively help restore or improve health but have not been subject to proper testing in order to justify the claims. At present, the situation is aggravated by the fact that many claims made on the internet are apparently outside the control of the Advertising Standards Agency.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society recognises that it is important for the public to be able to clearly identify medicinal products that have been licensed by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency or the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal products or the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

The Society regularly runs news items and public campaigns that are designed to emphasise the importance of the public taking care with their medicines and pointing out that "natural" does not necessarily mean "safe" when it comes to herbal products and food supplements. Legislation on standard herbal medicines is in the pipeline and this will provide a platform for further public information work.

The MHRA has no plans at present to run any campaign highlighting the issue of unlicensed medicines and are not likely to have in the immediate future.

2. British Pharmaceutical Students' Association *That the RPSGB should consult the BPSA with regard to student issues within the profession for an official student opinion.*

THE ASSOCIATION SAYS: Recently there have been a number of matters that directly affect students, and which students feel that they should be consulted on. The BPSA believes that the Society should be more proactive in approaching and consulting the BPSA on issues that affect students; this is particularly relevant regarding current subjects such as tuition fees and the impact they will have on the study of pharmacy in the UK. The BPSA could also be asked to provide input for articles relating to students in *The Pharmaceutical Journal*.

The BPSA has access to student opinion, and should be invited to voice this, in view of its status as the official student branch of the RPSGB.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The BPSA is invited each year to nominate a student member of the Society's Education Committee. It is chiefly within the Education Committee that the kinds of student issue referred to in the motion are considered. In the recent past, the Education Committee considered the White Paper on "The future of higher education", which carried the proposal for variable tuition fees. At the time, the committee made points on behalf of the Society, that this measure could further engender a "what do I need to pass" mentality among students; that schools of pharmacy may polarise into "have" and "have not" institutions, depending on their marketability, with the latter in danger of losing their accreditation by the Society; and that increased tuition fees might discourage students from studying longer courses such as the master of pharmacy programme.

The input of the BPSA into the life of the Society is further supported by its right to submit motions to this branch representatives'

meeting and to send delegates to the British Pharmaceutical Conference. Regular liaison meetings are held, attended by Officers and staff.

Journalists on *The Pharmaceutical Journal* are happy to seek a comment from the BPSA when a story is of relevance to students. This has been done in the past. Whether or not the BPSA's opinion would be sought on these or other issues would be up to the discretion of the editor and news editor.

However, a difficulty for *The Pharmaceutical Journal* has been knowing whom to contact. It should be the BPSA's responsibility to provide the name of a press contact who can respond authoritatively within the short timescales involved in preparing stories.

Some indication of other issues relevant to the whole profession about which the BPSA would like to comment, if asked, would also be helpful, provided it is updated regularly.

3. Brighton *That all prescriptions for oral medicines should carry complete dosage instructions.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: Many patients are unable to remember verbal instructions for longer than a few seconds, do not always understand their medication and cannot recall the advice received from the prescriber to tell the pharmacist, in order that this can be written on the label and re-enforced by the pharmacist's counselling.

Additionally the recent government report published by the Department of Health "Building a safer NHS: improving medication safety" states that the instruction "as directed" should never be used on a prescription. Also that all prescriptions should be "clear, unambiguous and leave no doubt as to the prescriber's intentions".

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The issue has been raised with the Department of Health on a number of occasions. We will attempt to ensure that it is built into the specifications for the electronic transmission of prescriptions in the NHS IT programme. The Society will also ask the Department of Health to follow its own advice and build this concept into legislation.

4. Cheltenham and Gloucester *That the Council should issue specific guidance to the owners of pharmacies to ensure that provision is made for appropriate breaks to be taken by staff when working long shifts."*

THE BRANCH SAYS: The Code of Ethics, Part 2, Paragraph A2, refers to the responsibility of pharmacist owners to ensure that they do not

impose conditions on pharmacists that may affect their ability to comply with their professional and legal duties. Despite this there are owners, both individuals and multiples, who do expect employees and locums to work excessive hours without a break. Paragraphs A1(a) and (d) advise pharmacists that they should not accept employment where they are not fit for the required tasks or where the conditions do not allow them to comply with their responsibilities, and this is interpreted as covering meal breaks. However, complying with this can pose a particular problem for a locum working in a pharmacy for a short period to assert his or her professional authority when the normal full-time pharmacist has acquiesced with a lower standard than should apply. It would be helpful in order to secure compliance with the code if owners of pharmacies were reminded in a no uncertain manner of their professional obligations.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: A similar motion submitted by the Brighton branch was carried in 2001. A Law and Ethics Bulletin item was published in *The Pharmaceutical Journal* (PJ, 16 June 2001, p811) by the Society concerning pharmacists' working hours. For ease of reference it is repeated below:

Pharmacists are reminded that they should ensure that they do not work for extended periods without taking appropriate rest breaks. Not taking appropriate breaks could adversely affect a pharmacist's ability to practise safely. The new Code of Ethics supports this requirement by stating that pharmacists should ensure that they "do not work in conditions that do not enable them to comply with the key responsibilities of a pharmacist".

Similarly, pharmacy owners, superintendent pharmacists and managers have a personal professional responsibility to ensure that they do not seek to impose conditions on pharmacists that may adversely affect their legal and professional duties. Requiring employee pharmacists to work extended periods without adequate provision for rest breaks could constitute a breach of this requirement of the Code of Ethics.

The Society has no authority to prescribe what hours pharmacists may work. As responsible professionals, pharmacists must make individual judgements about their working hours and their capacity to undertake the tasks they are asked to perform.

5. Hull *That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Society support the members by reinstating the funding of special interest group magazines.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: In an effort to move funding from membership support to pay for enhanced registration activities and to save costs, the Society has reduced monies available for services to the special interest groups and stopped funding the newsletters for the

Industrial Pharmacists Group and the Veterinary Pharmacists Group.

This reinforces the impression of many that the Society is not interested in the support of the non-community pharmacist members.

The Industrial Pharmacists Group has temporarily kept its newsletter by sponsorship from individual committee member's companies; however, this support is now coming to an end. The *Industrial Pharmacist* magazine is the only tangible benefit that most industrial pharmacists get from the Society. As most industrial pharmacists do not have to be registered to be able to do their work, the loss of the magazine is likely to increase the numbers of those who decide not to renew their membership.

Industrial pharmacists are committed to the Society and contribute to the knowledge base of the profession. However if they are cast adrift by the Society then we believe that the loss will be everybody's.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Industrial Pharmacists Group newsletter was published by the Society from 1996 to the end of 2000. In 2000 the Council set a priority budget to enable it to meet the challenges of the future, which led to changes in the level of funding in many areas of activity, including subsidy of the newsletter. However, the Society arranged for the newsletter to be published by an independent publisher, Euromed, for three years with sponsorship from a number of pharmaceutical companies.

This agreement came to an end in December 2003 and Euromed decided that the publication was not commercially viable. As an interim measure, the Industrial Pharmacists Group was offered pages in *The Pharmaceutical Journal* every other month. The Society decided to approach other publishers to publish the newsletter and discussions with an alternative publisher are now ongoing.

6. Oxfordshire *That the Society sets up and maintains an electronic register of its members with e-mail addresses for Branch mailing purposes using the annual subscription form to collect data.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: Branch secretaries currently request addressed adhesive mailing labels from IT services which are used to inform branch members of meetings via the postal system.

An electronic register of members' e-mail addresses would facilitate the distribution of newsletters to branch members, save branch secretaries' time and valuable branch funds.

Some branches are already using electronic mailing organised at branch level, however it would be useful if this facility was organised centrally from headquarters.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society recognises that e-mail addresses are a useful means of communication with members but it should be borne in mind that some people do not have access to e-mail.

It is not a statutory requirement for the Society to collect members' e-mail addresses. The main reason for currently not doing so is because the administration and maintenance of the data would require additional resources. If the Society did collect and maintain e-mail addresses for members, in order to ensure that the data was useful and timely it would be necessary to have a process in place to ensure that the e-mail addresses were current. Evidence suggests that people frequently change their e-mail address or have several e-mail addresses. The Society currently has to deal with over 250 changes of postal addresses per week, which consumes considerable resources. The maintenance of e-mail addresses would have similar resource implications.

Branch secretaries who collect and use their members' e-mail addresses must ensure that they comply with data protection legislation. They must ask for their members' permission to use their e-mail addresses for bona fide branch purposes and should send information out by blind copy to avoid e-mail addresses being misused. Branch members should be asked to give explicit consent for such use and assurances that their details will only be used for branch purposes and not be passed to third parties. This ensures that e-mail addresses of other recipients are not transmitted, thereby complying with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

It might be envisaged that to hold this centrally would create less work for the branch committees but because of the changing nature of the information branch secretaries are in a better position to check regularly that the data is up-to-date by obtaining confirmation at branch meetings. Many branch secretaries now request and collect members' e-mail data. This provides a useful way of reducing postage costs and time spent on administration.

7. South Cheshire *That the Society should review the scale of annual fees payable by members. It should include a fee for non-working members below retirement age, which is more commensurate with that payable by those over retirement age.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: Non-working members do not necessarily have any income, but if below retirement age are required to pay an annual fee of £116. Those over retirement age, and therefore assumed to be in receipt of a pension, pay a fee of £22. If members in either group plan to work occasionally as locums then the current fee of £116 remains appropriate.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society's fee structure is detailed in the Byelaws. The Council considers and makes proposals in relation to fees. The Society's fees have to be agreed by Privy Council and, as part of the process, members are invited to comment on the proposals.

A review of the entire retention fee structure is in train. This will address the issue raised specifically in this motion as well as

other inconsistencies and revise the Society's fee structure in line with its role as a modern regulator.

8. South Staffordshire *That each community pharmacy should have a local nominated pharmacist contact to develop effective working relationships with other health professionals and their local community.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: This motion has arisen from the need for other health professionals and primary care organisations to have a local pharmacist contact for each community pharmacy where the pharmacist in charge varies from day to day and where a local issue is unlikely to require escalation to the overall responsible pharmacist, for example, the pharmacy superintendent.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society recognises that it is a problem when community pharmacies do not have a regular pharmacy manager. The Society also recognises that this can cause problems of continuity, leading to confusion and breakdown of communication between pharmacy, other health professionals and the local community. Effective working relationships are extremely important to integrating pharmacists into the health and social care team, successfully providing new and existing services and ensuring that each patient receives the best possible care.

The Society agrees that a pharmacist or other regular member of staff should be nominated as key contact for each community pharmacy and it will raise this with superintendent pharmacists and encourage them to address this issue.

9. British Pharmaceutical Students' Association *That there should be a formal national reporting system for pharmacy-related medication errors.*

THE ASSOCIATION SAYS: Each year thousands of pounds are spent caring for, and recompensing, patients who have been adversely affected by medication errors, draining resources from other areas of patient care.

An anonymous, confidential reporting system, similar to the "yellow card" scheme should be developed to assist in the identification of common errors. With an overall aim to improve the quality of dispensing practice in line with the ideals of clinical governance, it would allow all pharmacy staff to learn from one another and develop strategies to minimise errors. Many hospitals and community pharmacies already have such a system in place, extending it to a national level can only benefit the profession.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: Since the BPSA proposed this motion, the National Patient Safety Agency has launched its National Reporting and Learning Scheme. This scheme will monitor and share the learning from all errors reported throughout the NHS. The lessons from the errors will be fed back to the

profession and to the NHS. The Society has worked with the NPSA on the scheme and is confident that it fulfils the BPSA's goals.

10. Brighton *That all prescriptions should provide the age of the patient. This will ensure that the pharmacist is able to check the suitability of the dose and that the advice given about the medication is tailored to the individual and so will improve concordance.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: For the pharmacist to impart relevant and current information on the medicines prescribed, all necessary information should be given on the prescription to ensure this is as accurate and pertinent as possible.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society believes that pharmacists need access to all relevant information about the patient in order to ensure that the patient's medication is appropriate. This goes much further than information about the age of the patient. The Society would like to see pharmacists have access to relevant parts of the patient's medical records, with suitable patient agreement. The Society is working with the Department of Health and the NHS IT programmes to make this happen in practice.

11. West Metropolitan; Oxfordshire *That it is the opinion of this meeting that, in the interests of patient safety, the registration requirements for European pharmacists wishing to work in Britain should include an assessment of competency in English, in law and in ethics, and that the RPSGB should lobby for a change in European legislation to allow this to be done.*

THE BRANCHES SAY: Currently, pharmacists who are nationals of a member state of the European Economic Area, who have a degree in pharmacy from a member state of the EEA which complies with training directive 85/432/EEC and who are in good standing with their professional authority in their member state are eligible to register with the RPSGB without any further testing.

This contrasts with non-European overseas pharmacists who are required to be tested in the International English Language Testing System (listening, reading, writing and speaking) and gain a score of 7 in each test parameter.

Training directive 85/432/EEC ensures that European pharmacists are well trained as pharmacists, but unless they have a good comprehensive grasp of the English language and its nuances, as well as of pharmacy law and ethics as they apply in this country, patient safety will be compromised.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: An EEA national with a pharmacy qualification, which complies with the relevant directives and is listed in the Schedule to the Pharmacy Act as amended by SI 2003 No 3148 is entitled to automatic recognition of that qualification and registration with the Society.

A new Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications 2002/0061 is currently being negotiated and is likely to be adopted in 2005. The purpose of this directive is to consolidate existing directives, take account of European Union enlargement and promote greater mobility of workers and services. Under Article 49 it is proposed that EEA nationals who move to another member state to practise a profession "have a knowledge of languages necessary for practising the profession in the host member state".

It is not yet possible to language test EEA nationals before registration at this stage.

"Employment of EEA nationals: ensuring language competency" (HSC 1999/137) provides guidance to NHS employers in England. This guidance reminds employers that evidence of registration of EEA nationals does not of itself guarantee linguistic competence. It advises employers to assess competence to communicate in English, to the standard required by the post concerned, of all job applicants, regardless of their nationality. Under the Code of Ethics pharmacist proprietors, superintendent pharmacists and pharmacist managers in hospitals must ensure that pharmacists employed by them are sufficiently competent in English.

12. South Cheshire *That the Society should amend the Data Protection Act registration, enabling other non-profit making organisations to access membership lists for educational and joint working purposes.*

THE BRANCH SAYS: The Society has accepted that CPD is a necessary part of practising as a pharmacist. At BPC 2003 it was reported that 50 per cent of pharmacists work as locums and as such are not necessarily tied to one employer. It is the responsibility of the individual to maintain and/or update their skills, but organisations offering local educational courses, eg, primary care trusts, are denied free access to local membership details. Currently pharmacists can only be contacted via their workplace. Access to localised lists could target pharmacists in employment, on long-term leave or taking career breaks, thus encouraging a stronger local network, encourage return to work following career breaks and building bridges between various local organisations.

THE COUNCIL SAYS: The Society's current notification entry on the Information Commissioner's register of data controllers does not explicitly preclude any particular use or disclosure of data. The Society's privacy statement (available on the website, www.rpsgb.org) allows disclosure to third parties "where this is in pursuance of the Society's aims and objectives". There is a process for taking such decisions on disclosure requests.

If it is decided to disclose to a particular recipient group, the Society is responsible for ensuring, insofar as it can, that the data is correctly handled and only used for the purposes agreed.

Striking-off for pharmacist guilty of indecent assault

A Birmingham pharmacist who had been convicted of indecent assault has been struck off the register by the Statutory Committee.

At its hearing on 16 June 2003 the committee inquired into the case of David Thomas Wilson, of 5 Dawberry Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham. Information had been received that on 10 May 2002, at Birmingham Crown Court, Mr Wilson had pleaded guilty to, and been convicted of, an indecent assault on a female and of taking an indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph of a child. He had received a community punishment order for 200 hours in respect of the first offence, and a concurrent community service order for 200 hours for the second. He was also ordered to pay costs of £1,000 and his name had been entered on the sex offenders' register for five years.

Geoff Hudson, of Penningtons (solicitors), presented the facts of the case to the committee.

Paul Troop, of counsel, instructed by Hadgkiss Hughes & Beale (solicitors), represented Mr Wilson, who was present at the inquiry.

The committee heard that the victim of both offences was 15-year-old girl. At the trial, the presiding judge had said that the girl "had been obviously consenting" to the offences.

Giving the committee's decision, the chairman (Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC) observed that the young woman involved had received money from Mr Wilson and, it appeared, had allowed the course of conduct to continue, with her consent, for a number of months.

However, there had been an extended course of inappropriate conduct prior to the indecent assault and the taking of the photograph. What had happened was not a much regretted isolated moment of criminal irresponsibility but the culmination of a

relationship over a matter of months. Such conduct on the part of a professional person was wholly unacceptable and rendered Mr Wilson unfit to be on the register, said Lord Fraser.

The committee was advised that Mr Wilson had been removed from the register in 1991 for theft and false accounting, being restored in May 1994. Although the matter responsible for the current hearing was clearly different in character, the committee could not wholly ignore the fact of that earlier removal, said the chairman. However, even if there had been no previous direction for removal of his name, the circumstances of the present conviction were such that, even if that were the only matter before them, the committee would order his removal.

Mr Wilson's name was ordered to be struck off the register. He had three months in which to appeal.

Pharmacist reprimanded for errors in methadone supply and recording

The duty incumbent upon pharmacists to properly maintain the Controlled Drugs register was emphasised when the Statutory Committee reprimanded a pharmacist for failures in the supply and recording of methadone.

When it met on 18 June 2003, the committee considered the case of Anthony Christopher Lawlor, of 109 Station Road, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. A complaint had been received from the Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society alleging that, on dates between August 2000 and January 2001, Mr Lawlor had made advance supplies of methadone otherwise than in accordance with the prescriber's instalment directions, had failed to maintain an accurate Controlled Drugs register and had failed to endorse prescriptions correctly.

Geoff Hudson, of Penningtons (solicitors), presented the facts of the case on behalf of the Society.

Denis Keegan, of Turner & Debenhams (solicitors), appeared on behalf of Mr Lawlor, who attended the inquiry.

The committee heard that Mr Lawlor, in partnership with his wife, owned a pharmacy at 24 Church Road, Aston, Birmingham, which did not open on Saturdays or Sundays. An examination of the prescriptions for two named patients had revealed a number of irregularities in the supply and recording of methadone, in breach of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1985.

Giving the committee's decision, the chairman (Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC) said that the closure of Mr Lawlor's pharmacy on Saturdays or Sundays was in part the cause of some of the problems that

had arisen. An addict's prescription regularly brought to the pharmacy was for a daily supply of methadone mixture, with two days' supply to be issued on the Saturday. However, because the pharmacy was not open at the weekend, Mr Lawlor would dispense three days' supply on the Friday. He told the committee this had been done with the verbal agreement of the prescribing doctor.

Although there was some evidence for such an agreement, said the chairman, Mr Lawlor did not seek consent on every occasion. He assumed that, having been given once, consent would be forthcoming again. However, a verbal variation of the prescription was not sufficient: "A new written prescription must be secured if weekend supplies are to be dispensed on a Friday and not a Saturday", emphasised Lord Fraser. On at least eight occasions between October 2000 and January 2001 the addict had been given three days' supply on a Friday.

Further, the chairman continued, although it was required that such prescriptions were endorsed with the date the supply was made, Mr Lawlor had endorsed each prescription as if the supply had been made on the day specified by the prescriber instead of the days on which it had actually taken place.

There were also irregularities in the Controlled Drug register entries relating to the methadone supplies. Mr Lawlor had made 94 separate supplies of methadone to the addict but had made only 23 entries. Of those, the chairman noted, only eight had given the same details as the endorsements on the prescriptions to which they were supposed to relate. The CD register entries

had been made on the occasion of the first day's supply but had related to the full quantity called for by the prescription. In one instance, a prescription had been endorsed to show 12 separate supplies but there was no corresponding entry whatsoever in the register.

There was a "similar sorry tale" in relation to methadone supplies to another patient, the chairman added.

The matter of a prescription entered into the CD register with the wrong date was not particularly significant considered against the other errors. Those, said Lord Fraser, were much more serious and were regarded by the committee as amounting to misconduct such as to render Mr Lawlor unfit to be on the register.

However, continued the chairman, Mr Lawlor had had to learn a salutary lesson that had caused him considerable distress over the past two-and-a-half year, not least because he had faced criminal charges, which were ultimately dismissed. The committee was satisfied that he had learnt his lesson. Recent visits by one of the society's inspectors had found his CD register in order. Mr Lawlor was reprimanded.

The chairman emphasised that a CD register was not kept just for a pharmacist's internal recording purposes but for a wide range of law enforcement authorities. Parliament had ordained the precise terms on which it should be kept. A pharmacist who failed to maintain the register as required by the law was subject to a possible criminal law penalty. Those who came before the Statutory Committee for such a failure had to recognise the peril it might do to their careers.

DEATHS

Costa On 19 March, Adekunle Oluwole Costa, of Marlborough House, 4 Marlborough Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH14 0HJ. Mr Costa registered in 1970 and retired from the register in 1998.

Curry On 2 December 2003, Geoffrey Richard Curry, MRPharmS, of "Beau Cottage", Main Street, Wilton, Pickering, North Yorkshire YO18 7LE. Mr Curry registered in 1985.

Dinkel On 11 March, Maxwell Ockendon Dinkel, MRPharmS, of 13 Tudor Close, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey SM3 8QS. Mr Dinkel registered in 1954.

Everitt On 16 March, Henry James Everitt, of "Eastbury House", Long Street, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3BZ. Mr Everitt registered in 1932 and retired from the register in 2003.

Hallett On 16 March, Stuart Hallett, MRPharmS, of 48 Micheldever Road, Whitchurch, Hampshire RG28 7JH. Mr Hallett registered in 1959.

Hoole On 24 February, William Hoole, MRPharmS, of "The Old Meeting House", Shirenewton, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 6AQ. Mr Hoole registered in 1963.

Hudson On 13 March, William Wright Hudson, FRPharmS, of 10 Fallowfield Avenue, The Gardens, Daltongate, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7DX. Mr Hudson registered in 1933. He was a proprietor of four pharmacies in the Bradford area and chairman of the board of Bradford Alliance Ltd. He was twice chairman of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Bradford branch and a committee member of the Yorkshire region. He was also a former chairman of Bradford Local Pharmaceutical committee and a member of the Bradford Executive Council. He sat on the board of governors of the Institute of Technology, Bradford, and later served on the council of the University of Bradford. The university awarded him an honorary degree of master of pharmacy in 1973 and in 1975 he was awarded the Society's Charter silver medal.

Newton On 14 March, Viola Mary Newton, née Roberts, MRPharmS, of Fern Villa Residential Care Home, Ings Lane, Elleker, Brough, North Humberside HU15 2DT. Mrs Newton registered in 1932.

Whitehead In September 2003, Joseph Whitehead, MRPharmS, of 35 Finch Park, Beverley, North Humberside HU17 7DW. Mr Whitehead registered in 1955.

OFFICIAL NOTICES

Communications to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society should be addressed, unless otherwise stated, to: The Secretary and Registrar, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7735 9141; fax 020 7735 7629). Official Notices also appear in the Notice-Board section of PJ Online (www.pjonline.com/notices).

Annual general meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 163rd annual general meeting of the members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society will take place in the Assembly Hall, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1, on 12 May 2004, at 7.30pm.

The following business will be conducted:

1. Presentation of the annual review of the Council for 2003.
2. Presentation of the financial statements for 2003.
3. Report of revisions to the Code of Ethics and Council Statements issued since the 2003 annual general meeting.
4. Adoption of rules of procedure for debate of motions (Byelaws, Section VI, Paragraph 3): "A member may raise any matter or move any motion at any annual general meeting of which he has given the Secretary notice in writing not later than the 20th day of April in the year in which the said meeting is to be held. The Rules of Procedure for debating such motions shall be proposed by the Council and presented for adoption at each annual general meeting at which such a motion is to be moved." The proposed rules will be circulated at the meeting.
5. Consideration of any matters raised or motions moved by members of which notice has been given in writing no later than 20 April 2004.

The following motion will be moved by Mark Walker, MRPharmS:

"That this 163rd annual general meeting of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain approves the following petition:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL

The Humble Petition of the Members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (hereinafter

referred to as "the Members") sheweth as follows:

1. Her Majesty Queen Victoria was pleased by Royal Charter dated 18th February 1843 to grant the Members a Royal Charter of Incorporation (hereinafter referred to as "the Royal Charter of Incorporation") and a Common Seal.
2. Your Majesty was pleased by Royal Charter dated 19th November 1953 (hereinafter referred to as "the Supplemental Charter of 1953") to amend and to add to the Royal Charter of Incorporation however the grant to the Members of a Royal Charter of Incorporation bestowed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria was graciously retained and continued by Your Majesty.
3. The Members humbly inform Your Majesty that the Petition dated 3rd of December 2003, signed on behalf of the Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and sealed with the Members' Common Seal was submitted to Your Majesty without the consent of the Members. The Members humbly pray that Your Majesty rejects that Petition forthwith.
4. The Members humbly pray that Your Majesty refrain from considering all future Petitions concerning the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and retain the Supplemental Charter of 1953 until such time as a Humble Petition is sheweth by the Members.

YOUR PETITIONERS therefore most humbly pray that Your Majesty may be graciously pleased in the exercise of Your Royal Prerogative to grant our Petitions and retain the Supplemental Charter of 1953 or as may seem proper to Your Majesty.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS will ever pray etc."

Ann Lewis
Secretary and Registrar

The following programme of events takes place on 12 May before the AGM: 5pm, tea and sandwiches available in the hall foyer for those attending the AGM; 5.45pm, presentation of fellowship certificates for 2003, followed by presentation of the

Charter gold and silver medals for 2004; 6.30pm, one-hour discussion forum, led by the President, designed to provide an informal opportunity for members to discuss issues of interest.

Council voting papers

Voting papers for the 2004 Council election have now been posted to members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. After completion, the papers should be returned to Electoral Reform Ballot Services Ltd, PO Box 6352, London N1 1YR, to arrive not later than noon on Friday 14 May.

The business reply envelope sent to members living in Great Britain and Northern Ireland is marked "second class" and members are asked to post their voting papers as early as possible.

Any member who does not receive voting papers should contact the Society's head of central administration (tel 020 7572 2205) so that a further set can be sent.

Statutory Committee inquiries

The Statutory Committee will meet at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1, at 9.45am on Monday 19 April, Tuesday 20 April and Wednesday 21 April 2004 to hear the following inquiries and applications:

Monday 19 April

1. An application for restoration by a person whose name has been removed from the Register.
2. An inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against a pharmacist which alleges that breaches of Clauses 5 and 9 of the Drug Tariff resulting in overpayments to the pharmacist amounts to misconduct.

Tuesday 20 April

3. An application for restoration by a person whose name has been removed from the Register.
4. A resumed inquiry into a pharmacist convicted of driving with an alcohol level which exceeded the prescribed limit.
5. An application for restoration by a person whose name has been removed from the Register.

Wednesday 21 April

6. An inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against two pharmacists and a company which alleges that a

dispensing and labelling error, failing to record the error, having an out-of-date drug, failure to have adequate systems in place to prevent those events and misleading a Society inspector amount to misconduct.

Mary Timms

Acting Secretary to the Statutory Committee

DIARY

Headquarters meetings

The following meetings take place at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's London headquarters

Monday 19 April

Statutory Committee. 9.30am.

Tuesday 20 April

Statutory Committee. 9.30am.

Wednesday 21 April

Statutory Committee. 9.30am.

Local meetings

Events listed below are meetings of branches of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Details of all future meetings notified to *The Journal* appear in the Diary section of PJ Online (www.pjonline.com/diary)

Monday 19 April

Bromley Annual general meeting. Postgraduate Centre, Queen Mary's Hospital, Froggnal Lane, Sidcup. Buffet 7pm, meeting 8pm.

Slough "Immunosuppression in organ transplants" by David Rich (Wyeth Laboratories). John Lister Postgraduate Centre, Wexham Park Hospital, Slough. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Stirling and Central Scottish Annual general meeting and "Continuing professional development: completing the cycle" by Gill Hawksworth, President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Grange Manor Hotel, Grangemouth. 7.30pm.

Stockport "The Council member's tale" by Alison Ewing, Vice-President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Pinewood House, Stepping Hill Hospital. 7.30 for 8pm.

Tuesday 20 April

Bedfordshire "Medication errors" by David Cousins, head of safe medication practice, National Patient Safety Agency. Silsoe College. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Buckinghamshire Annual general meeting followed by "Patient

safety" by Wendy Harris, senior pharmacist, National Patient Safety Agency. BMI Chiltern Hospital, Great Missenden. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Northern Scottish Discussion of motions for the branch representatives' meeting, followed by committee meeting. Conservatory, Marriott Hotel, Culbock Road, Inverness. 7.30pm.

Oxfordshire "Managing common ear, nose and throat problems." George Pickering Postgraduate Centre, Level 3, John Radcliffe, Headington. Light refreshments. 7.30 for 8pm.

Plymouth "Hepatitis C" by David Temple, Cardiff University. Postgraduate Medical Centre, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth. Buffet. 7.15pm.

South West Metropolitan

"Advances in diabetes." Alastair Hunter Room, 2nd Floor, St George's Hospital Medical School, Cranmer Terrace, London SW17. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Sunderland "An overview of mental health disorders" by Stephen Martin, professor of psychiatric medicine, University of Sunderland. Sunderland Marriott Hotel, Seaburn. Food and refreshments available. 7.30pm.

Wednesday 21 April

Barnet "Common eyelid problems: diagnosis and treatment" by Marvyn Elton. Postgraduate Medical Centre, Barnet General Hospital. Food 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan

"Current issues" by Gill Hawksworth, President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Aberdare Hall, UWC Corbett Road, Cathays Park, Cardiff. Buffet. 7 for 7.30pm.

Reading Annual general meeting and "Cannabis" by Tony Moffat, chief scientist, Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Royal Berkshire Hospital, Postgraduate Centre. Buffet. 7.30 for 8pm.

Solihull Annual general meeting. Education Centre, Solihull Hospital. Light buffet 7.00pm, meeting 7.45pm.

South Staffordshire "The eyes have it." Chase Golf Club, Pottal Pool. (off A34 Stafford to Cannock). 7.30 for 8pm.

Thursday 22 April

Birmingham "Reducing coronary risk: background to statins over the counter" by Jerry Cottrell, director of clinical affairs Europe, Johnson & Johnson. Birmingham Medical Institute, 36 Harborne Road, Edgbaston. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Cambridge "International pharmacy." Boardroom, Addenbrooke's Hospital. 7.30pm.

South Cheshire Annual general meeting and "Current issues in pharmacy" by Alison Ewing, Vice-President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Delamere Suite, Fourways Inn (A556) Oakmere, Northwich. Meal 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Wirral "Palliative care" by Iain Thompson, Macmillan nurse, Centre for Oncology, Clatterbridge. Postgraduate Medical Centre, Clatterbridge Hospital. 7.30 for 8.15pm.

Monday 26 April

Bury and Rochdale "Children's National Service Framework" by Tony Nunn, director of pharmacy, Alder Hey Children's Hospital. Village Bury, Waterfold Business Park, Rochdale Road, Bury off Junction 2, M66. 7.30 for 8pm.

Nottingham Annual general meeting and "A pharmacy strategy for Nottingham city" by Stephen Hayes, pharmaceutical adviser, Nottingham City Primary Care Trust. School of Pharmacy, University of Nottingham. Cheese and wine 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Local meetings

The local meetings section of *The Journal's* weekly Diary column is intended for brief reminders of Royal Pharmaceutical Society branch and regional meetings.

Branch secretaries are asked to submit meeting details as early as possible. Programme cards are welcome at the beginning of the season, but *The Journal* should be notified promptly of any subsequent amendments.

The Diary column covers the eight days from the Monday after the date of publication to the following Monday, inclusive. *The Journal* cannot guarantee the inclusion of information received later than the Tuesday morning before the date of publication. Late information can, however, be added to the Diary section of *PJ Online* (www.pjonline.com/diary), which gives regularly updated details of all future meetings notified to *The Journal*.