

Patterns in recruitment

Subtle changes in the patterns of pharmacist recruitment are beginning to be seen, according to *The Journal's* annual **Special feature** examining the market (p793). Concerns are being raised that the changes to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Register and the increase in fees are having some impact, as well as a reluctance for pharmacists in hospital to move to new posts until they understand the implications of Agenda for Change.

In community pharmacy one effect is that more locums are seeking permanent posts, possibly tempted by employers' willingness to pay pharmacists' retention fees. However, locum agencies are being innovative in their efforts to attract and retain locums. As reported previously (*PJ*, 21 May, p603) agencies are now devising loyalty schemes that

enable locums to earn points for every hour they work that can be put towards paying the retention fee, among other benefits.

These reports, however, are anecdotal and it is difficult to gauge whether or not the shifting patterns are national or local and only a feature of 2005. Moreover, there have been shortages of pharmacists in different parts of the country for many years and this year's picture may be little more than a variation on a theme.

In the hospital sector, problems are still being experienced. In addition to the stagnation seen while Agenda for Change banding decisions are made, there

remain many vacancies for pharmacists — possibly a reflection of the "fallow year" when the pharmacy degree course was extended to four years.

However, in the long term hospital recruitment may have been given something of a boost through because of the development of consultant pharmacy posts. In a **Vision for pharmacy** (p797) *The Journal* visited one foundation hospital trust that has no less than three consultant pharmacists in post. What is clearly exciting about these appointments is that the pharmacists involved are practising as clinicians at the limits of their experience and knowledge.

As a model for hospital pharmacy in the future, one can imagine the benefits of this sort of structure being felt in the lower rungs of the career ladder. Being part of a department that does not entail having to relinquish clinical work and join the management team as chief pharmacist in order to reach the top rung will be appealing, and it should help encourage younger pharmacists to stay in the hospital sector and not, as some fear, be attracted to the community sector by the promises of the new contract, now with a more clinical profile.

Editor and editorial director

Olivia Timbs
Tel 020 7572 2414

Deputy editor

Andrew Haynes, MRPharmS
The Society section
Tel 020 7572 2421

Managing editor

Graeme Smith, MRPharmS
Letters and other contributions
Tel 020 7572 2426

Assistant editor

Michael Thompson
Editor — PJ Online
Tel 020 7572 2428

News editor

Harriet Adcock, MRPharmS
Tel 020 7572 2415

News and feature writers

Dawn Connelly, MRPharmS
Tel 020 7572 2427
Tom Moberly
Tel 020 7572 2417
Hannah Pike, MRPharmS
Notice-board
Tel 020 7572 2430

Contributions editors

Gemma Cleveland
Reviews
Tel 020 7572 2416
Lin-Nam Wang, MRPharmS
Continuing professional development
Tel 020 7572 2413

Production editor

Christopher Icha

Website controller

Gowan Clews
Tel 020 7572 2418

Personal assistant to the editor

Emma Kerby-Evans
Tel 020 7572 2414

Administrative assistant

Pauline Heslop
Branch meetings, copyright, permissions
Tel 020 7572 2422

Editorial advisory board

Angela Alexander, FRPharmS
Judy Cantrill, FRPharmS
Noel Dixon, MRPharmS
John Hall, FRPharmS
Christina Lowe, MRPharmS
Steve Wicks, MRPharmS

Head of business development

Philippa Stahelin

Office administrator — sales

Jo Cook

Classified and systems support — sales

Clare Knights

Display sales

Stuart Thomas

Classified advertisement manager

Lily Emery

Classified advertisement executive

Anne-Marie Judge

Head of publishing services

John Wilson

Production manager

Joanne Marks

Production assistants

Hillary Carter
Adam Jones

Director of publications

Charles Fry