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Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society
of Great Britain

AGM calls on the Council to promote high ethical standards

The **annual general meeting** of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, held on 24 May, has called on the Society's Council to "promote high ethical standards in the business and profession of pharmacy" — an amended version of the tabled motion.

Members had originally expected William Gould, of Stockton-on-Tees, to move that "this meeting calls upon the Council members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to adopt and implement standards of behaviour which are not only ethically high but are seen to be high" (*PJ*, 20 May, p609). Mr Gould, however, was not present and, after some debate, Michael Burden, of Leicester, was allowed to propose the motion in his stead.

Mr Burden told the meeting that the motion reflected the deep concern that our leaders should demonstrate behaviour of the highest ethical quality. If we as a profession are to hold our heads up high, we must have obvious recognisable and demonstrable evidence that our leaders have adopted and are implementing these elevated standards, he said.

The motion was formally seconded by Edward Mallinson, of Glasgow.

Carwen Wynne Howells, of Narberth, successfully proposed that the motion be amended because to use the term "adopt" implied that currently all members of Council were not in fact exercising high ethical standards at present, and she did not believe that that was what was intended by the proposer of the motion. Using the term "promote" would be far more acceptable to members.

Addressing the meeting, Gillian Hawksworth, of Huddersfield, and a past president of the Society, said that amending the motion had not altered what she was going to say. There is great importance in understanding the relationship between one's own priorities and those of your organisation, and demonstrating attitudes and behaviours which will encourage alignment between the two. Who would have thought it necessary to have put such a motion to the Council of a public regulator, she asked. It merely scratched at the surface. "I will mention no names," she said, "but while I am sure that those members of Council whom I know personally will have no problem with what I am saying, I think those who must look to their conscience (and you know who you are) should be ashamed that there has had to be the necessity for this



Carwen Wynne Howells: amendment would be more acceptable

motion to be tabled." She wondered how those who set the standards for the profession could not understand the standards of attitude and behaviour expected of them on the Council of the Society. In a world of ethical and moral accountability and responsibility, they must know what is expected [of them] as temporary custodians of the future of the profession. The crucial question was, "Who carries the respect of whom and why?" Urging the meeting to support the motion, she said that what she had witnessed at first hand was an unravelling of authority and respect, not only externally, but internally in terms of the profession's declaration of faith and optimism in the future through such behaviour.

Supporting the motion, Jonathan Buisson, of Hook, and a member of the Society's Council, said: "We are the leaders of the profession and we show leadership. And if we must show high moral standards, that is what we do, and will do, and will continue to do."

The motion was put to the vote and carried.

Afterwards, Graham Phillips, of St Albans, said that as a member of the Society's Council it saddened him to see a previous president of the Society apparently trying to besmirch the reputation of current Council members with unsubstantiated allegations. The motion she had spoken to was not the motion that was agreed by the meeting, which he was happy to support.

This week

■ Ethical standards

The Society's 165th annual general meeting has called on the Council "to promote high ethical standards in the business and profession of pharmacy". The wording had been amended from that of the tabled motion (p661).

■ Consultations

The President of the Society, Hemant Patel, in his address to the annual general meeting, urged all members to take part in a range of consultations due this year, giving their views to help shape the future of the profession. (p662).

Conference to look at getting more pharmacists involved in veterinary pharmacy

Getting involved in veterinary pharmacy is to be a theme of this year's weekend conference of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Veterinary Pharmacists Group.

The conference takes place in Stratford-upon-Avon on Sunday 16 July, preceded by dinner on the previous evening.

With the title "Choosing animal health through pharmacy: how pharmacists can get involved in veterinary medicines", the conference will include a session on training resources for pharmacists and support staff and a workshop session on how to increase pharmacists' involvement in veterinary pharmacy.

Other sessions will provide updates on veterinary legislation, vaccines, veterinary pharmaceuticals and zoonoses.

Further information about the conference appears on p665.

Election produces a single change on VPG committee

The election of five members to serve on the committee of the Society's Veterinary Pharmacists Group has resulted in one change in the committee's make-up.

Rod Jones — a former member of the committee — has replaced Phil Jobson, who did not seek re-election. Gordon Appelbe, Andrew Cairns, Sarah Cockbill and Robert Morris were all re-elected.

Official Notice, p665

2006 to be year of consultation, President tells AGM

For pharmacy, 2006 will be the year of consultation, according to the President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Hemant Patel. In his address at the Society's 165th **annual general meeting**, held in London on 24 May, the President urged all members to take part in a range of consultations, giving their views to help shape the future direction of the profession.

The consultations began with the draft Pharmacists and Pharmacy technicians Order made under Section 60 of the Pharmacy Act 1999. The President urged all pharmacists to have their say on the draft Order before the Government's consultation closed on 19 June. The Council had already made public its reservations about the scope of the Order and it would be agreeing its formal response shortly. "Together with our new Charter, this new legislation should ensure that our organisation is truly fit for purpose now and into the future," the President said.

The President continued: "I said that 2006 will be the year of consultation. We need our members' views on some key areas of our work and shall be engaging in some major consultation with you.

"We have drafted the first set of Rules relating to fitness to practise and registration to allow us to implement the Section 60 Order and we shall be putting them to members in July. This will allow us to implement the new regulatory framework for the profession."

Education

On education, the President said: "The Society has the responsibility of ensuring that the education and training that pharmacists receive delivers not only the knowledge but also the skills, attitudes and values that make for high quality and safe practice.

"We have a major new policy development programme under way to meet the challenges of educating and training the pharmacists of tomorrow. We have called this 'Fit for the future' because it will provide the foundations to underpin the development of the profession in future.

"We need to get the input of members about what pharmacists and indeed technicians need to know; what skills they need and how they need to behave in order to practise safely. I am delighted to announce the first step in this major consultation, which focuses on the principles that should guide pharmacy education. This is crucial work: my colleagues on the Council and I look forward to hearing from you throughout this programme."

Ethics

Turning to the Code of Ethics, the President said: "The profession needs a new Code of Ethics that reflects modern pharmacy practice. The profession has already responded to an initial consultation to help to shape a review of the Code of Ethics for Pharmacists



The President: members' views needed

and Pharmacy Technicians. There will be further consultations in 2006 to seek views on the structure and content of the revised codes. Your involvement will be vital, so please feed back your comments."

On public and patient involvement in the Society, the President said: "Pharmacy is patient-focused and the Council is drawing up a strategy to involve patients and the public more closely in our work. This will be another important consultation over the summer and we very much want our members' input into this important piece of work. Please have your say on this important consultation."

"Pharmacy 2020"

On the "Pharmacy 2020" project, the President said: "And, finally, colleagues, we shall embark on our next major piece of work to identify the future direction of pharmacy in the year 2020. We want this to be as successful a project as its predecessor, 'Pharmacy in a New Age'. That project shaped a highly aspirational vision for the development of the pharmacist's role. In just over 10 years that vision has been delivered. The secret of the project's success was actually very simple: it was because so many of our members got involved and had their say. The PIANA vision was truly representative of the profession and that is what we need for 'Pharmacy 2020'.

"I am delighted and proud that the Council has asked me in a personal capacity to lead this work. I am looking forward to sharing our plans with you and getting the show on the road — literally! I urge you to get involved and help us chart the next exciting stage of our profession's journey."

The President began his address by expanding on some of the main topics in the

Society's "Annual review 2005" document [which was sent to all members before the AGM].

He said that 2005 had proved another highly significant year for pharmacy and for the Society. The external climate for pharmacists had been highly dynamic, with changes in the working environment, a new NHS framework, growth in the numbers of schools of pharmacy, many more political and public expectations of the profession and profound changes in the Society's constitution and leadership.

Integrated role

The year had seen some important developments in the way the Society helped lead and develop pharmacy practice, the President said. He emphasised that the Council remained fully committed to the Society's integrated roles in professional development and leadership: "We are highly focused on fulfilling these roles in ways that get results and I think that the track record is good. But, as well as helping pave the way with Government for new roles and responsibilities, we know that we have to help pharmacists grasp their new professional opportunities and make the new future a reality for members in all sectors. I have already started to invite the sector committees to make direct presentations to the Council and their views are already shaping our work and policies."

Concluding his report on the year, the President commended the annual review to the meeting

Andrew Burr (Sutton Coldfield) congratulated the President on a very good annual report, which highlighted issues faced by the profession. Mr Burr then began to talk about the recent investigation into governance issues associated with North East London Local Pharmaceutical Committee.

Mr Burr was interrupted by a number of members who objected to him raising an issue that had nothing to do with the Society's annual review for 2005.

The President then asked the members present whether they wished to hear Mr Burr's question. After cries of "No", the President asked for a show of hands on whether the meeting wished to hear the full question. A majority of members indicated that they did not wish to hear it, and Mr Burr was asked to sit down.

The President's address was followed by a presentation on the financial statements for 2005, which will be reported next week.

Closing the meeting, the President said that it was a huge honour to serve one's profession at the highest level. "I have enjoyed working as President for the year," he said. "Furthermore, it is my intention to seek to represent you at the highest level again next year."

Chris Elmes/ITRPSGB

Charter medals for Kay Roberts and Allen Tweedie

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Charter gold medal for 2006 has been presented to Kay Roberts, a drug misuse expert from Glasgow who has served on many Society committees and drugs misuse bodies. The silver medal has gone to Allen Tweedie, from Newcastle upon Tyne, who has given many years' service to pharmacy in the north-east of England and is a pioneer of medicines management.

Making the presentations at a ceremony before the Society's **annual general meeting** on 24 May, the President, Hemant Patel, said that the medals, instituted in 1963, are awarded by the Council on the recommendation of the President. The gold medal recognises outstanding services rendered by a member to the Society or generally in promoting the interests of pharmacy. The silver medal recognises similar outstanding services rendered by a member locally or to a specific sector of the profession.

Gold medal

Presenting the gold medal, the President said that Diana Kay Roberts had started her career in hospital pharmacy followed by a period in community practice, before becoming deputy chief pharmaceutical adviser to the Welsh office in 1990 and acting chief pharmaceutical adviser in 1995.

In 1996 she moved to Scotland as area pharmacy specialist in drug misuse at Greater Glasgow Primary Care NHS Trust. From 2003 until 2005, she was a co-ordinator of the Greater Glasgow pharmacy needle exchange scheme. In 2003 she became independent consultant pharmacist on drug misuse, lead pharmacist for the substance misuse certificate at Royal College of General Practitioners, and a locum community pharmacist.

Since 2005 she has been a tutor for the certificate of substance misuse of the RCGP Scotland and in 2006 she became a member of the Glasgow children's panel, which considers cases under Scotland's system of juvenile justice centred on the welfare of the child.

Mrs Roberts is a past secretary and chairman of the Society's Harrow and Hillingdon branch and has served on the Society's Panel of Fellows, its working group on HIV AIDS, its working group on drug misuse, its substance misuse working group and its Shipman working group. She has been the Society's consultant adviser on substance misuse issues. She has also been active in a wide range of other bodies nationally and in Greater Glasgow.

The President said that, throughout her professional working life, Mrs Roberts has striven to achieve excellence in all that she has done. Her achievements are recognised internationally, not least through her high degree of involvement with harm reduction at an international level. She was a member of the executive programme committee for the International Harm Reduction Conference, in Belfast in 2005 and in Vancouver earlier this year. Her recognition has extended beyond the



Chris Elmes/ITRPSGB

The President with Mr Tweedie and Mrs Roberts

profession through her work with other agencies, including doctors, the police, drug agencies, local authorities and patient groups.

"Kay has had significant influence in the development of policies with regard to the treatment and care of drug misusers," said the President, "and many of these vulnerable patients and their families have benefited from her determined efforts. From a Glasgow perspective she has been active in promoting and advancing the important role that community pharmacists play in providing key services to those whose lives have been blighted by addiction, often the most disadvantaged living in the city's most deprived areas.

"She has participated in many definitive research studies which have helped to shape practice and attract the necessary resources required to take this forward. Not without challenge has she successfully championed the pharmacist's role in this area. A dedicated team of three pharmacists are now involved in taking the way forward and showing that her legacy will continue to flourish in the years ahead."

Mrs Roberts, in reply, said that the medal was an honour for which she thanked the President and the Council very much indeed. Throughout her career she had been fortunate to receive inspiration, encouragement and support from many others, without whom none of her achievements would have been possible.

Silver medal

Presenting the silver medal, the President said that Allen McCaskill Tweedie has served on the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee continually since 1980 and has been a member of Gateshead and South Tyneside Local Pharmaceutical Committee for 30 years. He has served on the Society's Border

Region committee since 1985. He was a member of the Department of Health medicines management advisory committee from 2001 to 2005. In 2005, he became a member of the professional and executive committee of Gateshead Primary Care Trust and was elected to the board of the Gateshead PCT in 2005.

From 1998 to 2005 Dr Tweedie chaired the Pharmaceutical Professional Leadership Group — a joint working group with representation from all major pharmaceutical bodies. As chairman of the group, in 1998 he gave a presentation to the then Minister of State for Health, which resulted in funding for a nationwide medicines management project — the largest practice research project ever in community pharmacy. The project was based on a partnership between pharmacy, medicine and the patient to manage the therapeutic effectiveness and economics of treatment in order to deliver better patient outcomes. The project proved to be a milestone, not only for contractors and community pharmacies but also for the research community. As one of the first multisite evaluations involving community pharmacists, it marked a significant stage in the development of the profession.

Dr Tweedie was made a fellow of the Society in 1999, and in 2004 was awarded a PhD by the University of Portsmouth for a thesis of the transformation of community pharmacy into a cognitive service provider.

"Allen, you have worked hard in the interests of community pharmacy, and the profession has benefited tremendously from your efforts. It therefore gives me great pleasure to ask you to come to the platform to receive this Charter silver medal for 2006."

In reply, Mr Tweedie said that he was greatly honoured by the award of the medal, which in reality recognised the efforts of many.

AGM adopts change to Code

The Society's **annual general meeting** has adopted the only change made to the Code of Ethics and Standards since the 2005 AGM.

The change was the addition of a new service specification for pharmacist prescribers, which was approved by the Council at its meeting in August 2005 (*PJ*, 13 August 2005, p201). Its introduction recognises the growth of supplementary prescribing by pharmacists, the proposals for independent prescribing and the repercussions of the Shipman Inquiry.

The President, Hemant Patel, said that the Council had decided that each year at the AGM it would we will report changes to the Code of Ethics made in the previous year. He moved the adoption of the change, which was agreed.

June MEP amendments

The monthly cumulative list of amendments to the 29th edition of 'Medicines, ethics and practice: A guide for pharmacists' is being held over this month. Owners of the guide are asked to retain the list of amendments published in *The Journal* of 6 May (p548) and to note the following additions:

Adartrel tablets POM
Cipralex oral drops POM
Curanail nail lacquer P
DuoTrav eye drops POM
Imigran Recovery tablets P
Macugen injection POM
Rotaric vaccine POM
Tygacil solution for infusion POM

A new edition of the guide is to be published shortly.

The branch network

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's local branches provide an opportunity for members to get closer to the workings of the Society and to meet with other pharmacists and share experiences.

With more than 130 branches nationwide, all pharmacists registered with the Society have the opportunity to belong to a branch that is either near to their home or near to their place of work. If the branch to which they are allocated is not the most convenient, members can opt to transfer to another branch.

To find out more about the network or to transfer to a branch more convenient for you, please contact the Society's membership unit (tel 020 7572 2331; e-mail b&ra@rpsgb.org).

Law and ethics bulletin

Contact details for organisations that may help with pharmacists' queries

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Legal and Ethical Advisory Service has produced the following list of contact details for organisations that pharmacists may find useful when researching queries for which the advisory service is not an appropriate source of information.

Medicinal products

Advertising of medicines, import and export licences, wholesale dealers' licences, assembly licences, clinical trials, unlicensed sales of prescription-only medicines via the internet or non-pharmacy premises

- Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) (tel 020 7084 2000; website www.mhra.gsi.gov.uk)

Controlled Drugs

Queries about Controlled Drug issues and enforcement of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations

- Home Office (tel 020 7035 0464; website www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Other health professions

Queries with reference to the actions of other health care professionals

- General Dental Council (tel 020 7887 3800; website www.gdc-uk.org)
- General Medical Council (tel 0845 357 3456; website www.gmc-uk.org)
- General Optical Council (tel 020 7580 3898; website www.optical.org)
- Health Professions Council (tel 0845 3004 472; website www.hpc-uk.org)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (tel 020 7637 7181; website www.nmc-uk.org)
- Pharmaceutical Society of

Northern Ireland (tel 028 9032 6927; website www.psnl.org.uk)

Social care

Queries relating to aspects of social care, including care homes and boarding schools

- Commission for Social Care Inspection (England) (tel 0845 015 0120; website www.csci.org.uk)
- Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (tel 0845 603 0890; website www.carecommission.com)
- Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (tel 01443 848 450; website www.csiw.wales.gov.uk)
- Social Services Inspectorate (Northern Ireland) (tel 028 9005 2050; website www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

Community pharmacy NHS contracts

Queries regarding the NHS contract for community pharmaceutical services

- Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (England) (tel 01296 432 823; website www.psnl.org.uk)
- Scottish Pharmaceutical General Council (tel 0131 467 7766; website www.spgc.org.uk)
- Community Pharmacy Wales (tel 029 2044 2070; website info@cpwales.org.uk)
- Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee (Northern Ireland) (tel 028 9032 0787; website www.pccni.org.uk)

Hospitals and prison service

Queries relating to activities in hospitals, non-registered hospital pharmacies and prison pharmacies

- Department of Health (England) (tel 020 7210 4850; website www.dh.gov.uk)
- Scottish Executive (tel 0131 244 2440; website www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd)
- Department of Health and Social Services (Wales) (tel 029 2037 0011; website www.wales.nhs.uk)
- Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland) (tel 028 9052 0500; website www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

Waste disposal

Queries about legislation on the disposal of waste

- Environment Agency (England and Wales) (tel 08708 506506; website www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) (Scotland) (tel 01786 457 700; website www.sepa.org.uk)
- Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland) (tel 028 9054 0540; website www.doeni.gov.uk)

Prescription pricing

Queries regarding endorsement of NHS prescriptions

- Prescription Pricing Division of the NHS Business Services

Authority (England) (tel 0191 232 5371; website www.ppa.org.uk)

- National Services Scotland (NSS) (Common Services Agency) (tel 0131 275 6000; website www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nss)
- Health Solutions Wales (HSW) (tel 029 2050 2413; website www.wales.nhs.uk)

Independent health care providers

Queries regarding independent health care providers such as private hospitals and clinics

- Healthcare Commission (England) (tel 020 7448 9200; website www.healthcarecommission.org.uk)
- Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (tel 0845 603 0890; website www.carecommission.com)
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (tel 029 2082 5111; website www.hiw.wales.gov.uk)

Veterinary regulations

Queries regarding veterinary regulations

- Veterinary Medicines Directorate (tel 01932 336 911; website www.vmd.gov.uk)

Data protection

Queries about data protection legislation

- Information Commissioner (tel 01625 545 745; website www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

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).

Statutory Committee decisions

Set out below are the outcomes of inquiries heard before the Statutory Committee of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain on Monday 22 May, Tuesday 23 May, Wednesday 24 May and Thursday 25 May 2006:

1. The resumed inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against **Manherlal Keshavlal Shah** (registration number. 63471) and **MAM International Ltd** (identification number 1001688) was adjourned for the committee to deliver its determination at a later date.
2. The inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against **Dinesh Parmar** (registration number 74869) was adjourned for the committee to deliver its determination at a later date.
3. The inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society

Veterinary Pharmacists Group

Annual weekend conference: Choosing animal health through pharmacy

- **Date:** 15 and 16 July.
- **Venue:** Stratford Manor, Stratford-upon-Avon.
- **Content:** How pharmacists can get involved in veterinary medicines.
- **Aim:** To provide an update on veterinary medicine legislation, with case studies on how the new regulations are impacting on pharmacy; to provide an update on training resources for pharmacists and support staff; to consider how to involve pharmacists more in veterinary practice; to provide updates on vaccines, pharmaceutical care for animals, veterinary pharmaceuticals and zoonoses.
- **Speakers:** to include John Fitzgerald, director of policy, Veterinary Medicines Directorate; Michael Jepson, tutor, VPG diploma in veterinary pharmacy; Michelle Styles, head of information services, National Pharmacy Association; Rod Jones, practising veterinary pharmacist; Alasdair King, veterinary manager, Intervet; Nigel Calvert, consultant in communicable diseases, Health Protection Agency.
- **Fees:** Full rate (including Saturday dinner and quiz, Saturday night accommodation, Sunday breakfast, Sunday conference, Sunday lunch and refreshments) £210; accompanying persons (Saturday and Sunday) £100; Sunday conference only (including lunch and refreshments) £30 members, £40 non-members. Closing date for registration, 30 June.
- **Further information:** Lorraine Fearon, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London, SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2409; e-mail lorraine.fearon@rpsgb.org).

4. Following the inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against **Ruxana Munshi** (registration number. 82341), the committee resolved to issue Ms Munshi with a reprimand. The committee found proved the Council's

allegation that the erroneous certification of prescription forms by Ms Munshi and/or her employees; the submission of these erroneously certificated prescription forms to the Prescription Pricing Authority for payment resulting in overpayment; and the failure to ensure that staff had the requisite knowledge, skills and fitness to perform work delegated to them, amounted to misconduct.

5. Following an application for restoration on behalf of **Piyush Patel** (previous registration number 76075), the committee directed that Mr Patel should be restored to the Register.
6. Following the inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against **Derek Michael Phillips** (registration number 75766), the committee resolved to direct the removal of Mr Phillips's name from the Register. The committee found proved the Council's allegation that discrepancies in Viagra 50mg and 100mg stock; breaches of Regulation 19 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations; breaches of the Misuse of Drugs Safe Custody Regulations; a failure to deal appropriately with Controlled Drugs (failure to segregate patient returns and date-expired stock); the supply of sildenafil without a valid prescription; breaches of Regulation 6 of the Medicines Sale and Supply Miscellaneous

Provisions Regulations 1980; and the condition of the pharmacy, notwithstanding a warning from the Society inspector, amounted to misconduct.

The full approved determinations, together with the Notices of Inquiry, can be found on the Statutory Committee page of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org).

David Gomez Secretary to the Statutory Committee

Veterinary Pharmacists Group election result

The election of five members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Veterinary Pharmacists Group to serve on the group committee has now been completed.

The result was as follows: voting papers sent out, 940; voting papers returned 799; papers void due to improper completion, 10.

Votes were cast as follows: Appelbe, Gordon, 131; Cairns, Andrew, 143; Cockbill, Sarah, 131; Evans, David, 86; Jones, Rod, 126; Morris, Robert, 106; Vernon, Geoffrey, 66.

Dr Appelbe, Mr Cairns, Dr Cockbill, Mr Jones and Mr Morris have therefore been elected to the Veterinary Pharmacists Group Committee.

Elected members normally serve for three years. However, the structures supporting the Council will be reviewed as the reforms stemming from the Society's new Charter and the proposed new legislation are agreed and implemented. Depending on the timing and outcomes of this review, the term of office for members elected in this election might be reduced.

Lorraine Fearon Secretary to the Veterinary Pharmacists Group

Veterinary diploma and certificate

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society offers a diploma in veterinary pharmacy and a postgraduate certificate in companion animal health care.

The core programme for the diploma consists of four modules, each of which includes a written assignment. The modules are: (1) companion animals and public health; (2) companion animal health care; (3) veterinary pharmacy; and (4) livestock health and husbandry.

Those aiming for the diploma must complete all four modules, undertake 75 hours of recorded practical experience, submit a dissertation and sit an oral examination. They study modules three and four during two consecutive three-day residential periods at Harper Adams University College, near Newport, Shropshire, where a full range of livestock units is available for study. These modules are assessed by written examination. The full diploma course can be taken in one year or spread over up to four years.

The postgraduate certificate can be obtained by completing the first two modules, which are studied through distance learning with the aid of a new veterinary pharmacy textbook and are assessed by written assignments. The certificate course includes a study day at Harper Adams. The study day offers an update on current issues together with case study exercises, consideration of dissertation topics and a link to the other two modules.

Further information and registration forms can be obtained from Lorraine Fearon, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2409; e-mail lorraine.fearon@rpsgb.org).

Direct debit

Sign up to pay your retention fee annually by direct debit. It is quick and easy, you cannot forget to pay and you will not risk being erased. Remember, fees are due and payable on 1 January every year. Contact the registration section and ask for a direct debit mandate (tel 020 7572 2322; e-mail registration@rpsgb.org).

DEATHS

Lewis On 8 February, Margaret Alice (Peggy) Lewis, née Rimmer, aged 78, of 36 Cross Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 9LB. Mrs Lewis registered in 1952 and retired from the Register in 2004.

TRIBUTES

Compagnone In a tribute to the late Aldo Compagnone (*PJ*, 20 May, p609), HAYLEY FILE writes: It was in 1997 that Aldo first came to Ferris Chemist's, Headcorn, to become our regular locum for the next four years. But Aldo was more than just a locum and quickly became part of the community. His enthusiasm for life and his Italian charm made him adorable to all. He had a brilliant mind and was interested in everyone and everything.

Fluent in several languages, Aldo was the most useful locum when advising our foreign visitors. I remember him helping a French woman who had recently moved to the village. She was so delighted to find someone who could speak her language that she would regularly bring her young son to the shop to practise his French

conversation. Aldo was more than happy to oblige.

There seemed to be nothing Aldo did not know, whether about pharmacy matters or any other subject, and I am certain he had memorised the whole of Martindale! After he retired from the pharmacy we kept his photograph on the dispensary wall with his telephone number as our helpline.

Aldo had a great passion for flying. Once, with another member of staff, I was fortunate to be his passenger on a day trip to Le Touquet. We had a wonderful day. I was a nervous flyer, but Aldo's calmness made us both feel safe. He kept the plane as steady as possible, especially on the return flight, when the back seat carried our duty frees and souvenirs from one of Aldo's favourite patisseries.

There are just too many fond memories of Aldo to mention.

Everyone at Ferris was saddened to learn the news of his death, and our thoughts are with his family.

I will be ever grateful to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from someone as wise and generous as my friend Aldo.

DIARY

Headquarters meetings

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

Monday 5 June

Infringements Committee. 10am. Meeting of Officers. 1pm.

Tuesday 6 June

Council meeting. 3.30pm.

Wednesday 7 June

Council meeting. 9am

Friday 9 June

Reciprocity. 10am.

Local meetings

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

Monday 5 June

North Hampshire Annual general meeting, Wheatsheaf, North Waltham. 7.30pm.

Tuesday 6 June

Lancaster "Child protection issues" by Anne Kopcke (designated nurse, child protection). Bluebell Hotel,

Heversham, Nr Milnthorpe. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Thursday 8 June

Edinburgh and Lothians "Caring for patients with cancer: challenges and opportunities" by Anna Gregor (clinical director, South East of Scotland Cancer Network). 36 York Place, Edinburgh. 8pm. Preceded by annual general meeting. 7.45pm. **Huddersfield** "Public health and emergency planning" by Judith Hooper (director of public health) and Neill McDonald (pharmaceutical adviser, North Kirklees Primary Care Trust). Oakwell Centre, Dewsbury District Hospital, Dewsbury. Light refreshments 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Monday 12 June

Barnet "Reporting patient safety incidents" by Jane Moore (patient safety manager for North London, National Patient Safety Agency). Education Centre, Barnet Hospital. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm. **Stockport** Programme planning meeting 2006-07. Postgraduate Centre, Pinewood House, Room GO8, Stepping Hill Hospital. 7pm.

Benevolent Fund

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Benevolent Fund is a registered charity set up to provide help to distressed members or former members of the Society, their widows, orphans or other dependants, and students registered with the Society.

The fund is urgently in need of donations to support its work. Donations can be sent direct to the Benevolent Fund, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN. Gift Aid donations are especially welcome. For further information about Gift Aid, contact the Society's finance department.

Some of the areas of support offered by or through the Benevolent Fund are outlined below. Unless otherwise stated, further information is available from the Benevolent Fund co-ordinator, Beverly Nicol (tel: 01323 890135).

Convalescence The Benevolent Fund supports those in need of convalescence or rest and recovery. Referral can be made to services suited to the individual's needs and geographical location.

Stress counselling The Benevolent Fund finances the Listening Friends Scheme, which provides an opportunity to talk about personal problems in complete confidence with a fellow pharmacist trained in listening skills. The service can be accessed by telephoning its helpline on 020 7572 2442.

Addiction treatment The Benevolent Fund provides support for the Pharmacists' Health Support Programme, an independent service which helps pharmacists who experience problems with alcohol or other drugs of addiction, or who have other problems that impair their fitness to practise. Help can be accessed through the Benevolent Fund co-ordinator (see above) or by telephoning a direct helpline (tel 01327 264531).

Financial assistance Financial assistance can be provided for those in genuine need. It may take the form of regular grants, one-off payments or interest-free loans.

Welfare advice The Benevolent Fund can offer advice on a wide range of welfare issues.



Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

London headquarters

Switchboard 020 7735 9141; direct dialling, see 'Medicines, ethics and practice'; fax 020 7735 7629; e-mail enquiries@rpsgb.org; website www.rpsgb.org

Scottish Department

Headquarters of the Society in Scotland (including library and information service) 0131 556 4386 (see also 'MEP' guide); fax 0131 558 8850; e-mail info@rpsis.com

Welsh Executive

Headquarters of the Society's Welsh Executive 029 2041 2800; fax 029 2041 2810; e-mail wales@rpsgb.org

Information centre

Book loans and information Library (loans, photocopies) 020 7572 2300; e-mail library@rpsgb.org Technical information, 020 7572 2302; fax 020 7572 2499; e-mail techinfo@rpsgb.org

Pharmacists' advisory service

Information on legal and ethical matters relating to pharmacy practice, 020 7572 2308; fax 020 7572 2510, e-mail ftp@rpsgb.org

Pharmaceutics information

Information, advice and problem-solving in pharmaceutics 020 7572 2302; fax 020 7572 2499; e-mail pharmaceutics@rpsgb.org

Benevolent fund

Financial help for pharmacists and their dependants and information about convalescence 01327 264739 or 01323 890135

Pharmacists' health support programme

Confidential help and support for pharmacists who experience problems with alcohol and other drugs of addiction 01327 264531

Listening friends scheme

Help from pharmacists trained in dealing with stress 020 7572 2442

Pharmaceutical press

Purchase of books and subscriptions to journals 01767 604971; fax 01767 601640; custserv@turpin-distribution.com; website www.pharmpress.com

Correction

The Law and Ethics Bulletin (p664) gives wrong website addresses for the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and Community Pharmacy Wales. The correct addresses are www.mhra.gov.uk and www.cpwales.org.uk