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Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society
of Great Britain

Statutory Committee confirms its decision not to hear delayed cases

The Statutory Committee of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has confirmed that it will not normally inquire into cases arising from convictions or alleged misconduct that come to the Society's attention more than four years after the event.

The ruling, which takes immediate effect, is set out in a practice direction issued by the chairman, Lord Fraser of Carmillie, on 28 September. It follows a decision earlier this year to stay a case concerning a pharmacist's conviction for dishonesty eight years ago (*PJ*, 9 September, p319).

The practice direction, headed "The holding of inquiries in circumstances in which delay is alleged", reads as follows:

"1. Where allegations have been notified to the Society by the Pharmaceutical Fraud Team at the Counter Fraud Service ('the CFS') or any authority responsible for the licensing of medicines or the regulation of health care professionals ('the authority'), and the Society is notified on a date which is more than four years after the latest date on which the allegations first came to the attention of the CFS or authority, the Statutory Committee will not hold an inquiry into the case.

"2. Where the Society is made aware of convictions received by a registrant, and the

date on which the Society is made so aware, is more than four years from the date on which such convictions were received by that registrant, the Statutory Committee will not usually hold an inquiry into the case.

"3. Where the Society is made aware of allegations of misconduct, and the date on which the Society is made so aware is more than four years from the date on which the allegations first came to light, the Statutory Committee will not usually hold an inquiry into the case.

"4. Notwithstanding paragraphs 2 and 3 above, there may be exceptional circumstances in which the public interest, or the interests of the profession, require that an inquiry should be held. In cases of this kind, the chairman will consider any written representations from the parties as to whether or not to order that an inquiry should be held, before making his decision.

"5. Where it is claimed that the Society, in respect of its handling of a case after being made aware of an allegation of misconduct, has itself caused delay, the Statutory Committee will decide whether to hold or to continue with an inquiry on a case by case basis, in accordance with the prevailing case law and after considering any representations from the parties."

This week

Statutory Committee

The Statutory Committee has confirmed that it will no longer normally inquire into cases more than four years old (p461).

Payment of retention fees

A new online system for retention fee payment is proving easy to use (p462).

Board elections candidate packs

Candidate packs for the Society's national pharmacy board elections are now available online (p463).

Society to consult prison pharmacists on policy issues

In future, representatives of prison pharmacy will be consulted by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Law and Ethics Committee before it makes policy decisions or produces guidance that may have an impact on those working in the prison environment.

At its meeting on 26 September, the committee received a paper on key issues relating to prison pharmacy. The committee noted that prison pharmacists are keen to feed into any policy or guidance documents that may affect their work. Although they aim to adhere to the principles of Society policy and guidance, they sometimes experience practical difficulties when attempting to implement these in a secure setting.

Society to consult widely on standards for prescribers

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is shortly to begin a consultation across the profession on professional standards for pharmacist prescribers.

At its meeting on 26 September, the Society's Law and Ethics Committee considered draft standards, which had already been seen by the Practice Committee. It was agreed that committee members would forward comments to the head of quality improvement, Heidi Wright, to inform the consultation with the profession.

The committee heard that focus group sessions were to take place in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff in October, after which the drafts would be amended before being circulated widely for comment. It was hoped that a final draft would go before the Council at its December meeting.

Paracetamol overdose survey was wrong

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Law and Ethics Committee has asked the Society to write to the *Postgraduate Medical Journal* drawing its attention to errors in a published survey concerned with paracetamol overdose.

Researchers had visited eight pharmacies and at four of them had been able to purchase at least 48 paracetamol tablets, which the study claimed was more than the "restricted" amount permitted (*PJ*, 5 August, p151). However, the study had confused the maximum pack size for pharmacy sale (32) with the maximum number of tablets or capsules legally allowed in a single transaction (100). Although some pharmacies had sold more than 32 tablets, there was no evidence of any sale exceeding 100.

The committee noted at its meeting on 26 September that the main part of the study had involved interviews with 107 people admitted

to hospital for acute paracetamol overdose. Of these, 106 had obtained paracetamol tablets from non-pharmacy outlets and the remaining one had purchased an "excessive" amount ("excessive" being defined in the study as more than 32 tablets) from a pharmacy.

The committee was reminded that the Code of Ethics requires pharmacists to act in the best interests of patients and the public and that pharmacists must therefore use their professional judgement when they receive requests for large quantities for paracetamol. Although none of the pharmacies mentioned in the study appeared to have sold more than the legal maximum, the committee agreed that it would be timely to remind pharmacists of the legal and professional considerations in selling multiple packs of paracetamol and recommended publication of a Law and Ethics Bulletin (*PJ*, 7 October, p430).

Advice to be offered on use of homeopathic medicines in malaria prophylaxis

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is preparing advice for pharmacists who are asked to supply homeopathic medicines for malaria prophylaxis.

Following media reports of an investigation into the supply of homeopathic medicines by clinics and pharmacies for that purpose, the Law and Ethics Committee considered the matter at its meeting on 26 September.

The committee heard that the Faculty of Homeopathy (the professional body for health care professionals who integrate homeopathy into their practice) does not promote homeopathy for the prevention of malaria and has worked with the Health Protection Agency to produce guidance advising against it.

The Society's advice is being prepared in consultation with the Faculty of Homeopathy and the HPA. It will appear as a Law and Ethics Bulletin item.

New pocket companion to clinical pharmacy

A pocket guide to clinical pharmacy has been published by the Pharmaceutical Press (the publishing division of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society).

'Clinical pharmacy pocket companion' is an A-to-Z pocket book designed to provide concise and practical pharmaceutical information for clinical pharmacists. It provides the user with a range of tools, suggestions and advice to assist in the provision of pharmaceutical care.

The Pharmaceutical Press says that the new book brings together disparate information not easily found in other reference sources and deals with obscure problems as well as routine queries arising from therapeutic drug monitoring, electrolyte disturbances, management of disease states and peri-operative drug administration.



The book has been written by three pharmacists from Queen's Park Hospital, Blackburn — Jane Wright (principal pharmacist), Alistair Gray (community services pharmacist) and Vincent Goodey (pharmacy department).

The Pharmaceutical Press says: "This is a useful, practical guide in a handy format. It will be an invaluable tool for practising pharmacists and also a helpful study aid for pharmacy students."

The new publication is a compact, PVC-bound book with 480 pages of 180mm x

100mm. It costs £21.95.

UK orders can be placed by telephone (01767 604 971), fax (01767 601 640) or e-mail (custserv@turpin-distribution.com) or through the Pharmaceutical Press website (www.pharmpress.com).

Pharmacy technicians find new online payment system easy to use

A new online tool for the payment of retention fees to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society is proving a success during a trial with the registration of pharmacy technicians.

The Society expects to offer the same payment tool to pharmacists from the end of November.

The new method has been introduced following the success of the 2006 online fee collection, when more than 60 per cent of pharmacy technicians and 21,000 pharmacists opted to pay online.

The new payment method allows technician registrants to log into a secure, password-protected, area of the Society's website to pay their 2007 retention fees online and download a receipt.

The first 100 pharmacy technicians to use the service were invited to take part in a survey. On a scale of 1 to 5, 85 per cent of respondents gave the new online payment system the highest rating of 5, finding the

service "a breeze" to use, with the remainder of respondents rating the service at no less than 4.

One registered pharmacy technician who paid her 2007 fee online, Joanne Taylor, said: "It is quick and easy and takes the stress out of renewing your fees. I would recommend it to others."

The Society's head of registration, Andrew Gardner, said: "Although it is not a representative sample, this snapshot of views is a good indicator that the new arrangement is seen to be user-friendly. The feedback we received has already helped to improve the service for other technicians who have yet to sign up."

Pharmacy technicians were also asked what they would like to see offered in the secure pages in the future.

Commenting, Mr Gardner said: "The responses to the survey demonstrate the growing importance of the internet to all our lives. We can see from the technicians who replied

that they are open to new services when they become available, such as being able to change their address online. We will continue to trial the service and continue to welcome people's views."

Registered technicians have until 31 December to pay either the practising fee of £93 or the non-practising fee of £71. Technicians who do not make payment by the end of the year will be removed from the register and must reapply for registration.

The online payment system can be accessed at anytime by visiting the "Registration and support" section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org). Once logged into the secure section, they can make their fee payments. Those who pay online receive instant confirmation of their payment by e-mail but all registered technicians are able to download or print receipts from their accounts within 24 hours of making a payment.

Showcases

Two portable showcases holding pharmacy items from the 19th and early 20th centuries are available on loan from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's museum for display at sites such as community pharmacies, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, local museums, libraries, schools and other education centres.

One case is themed around the art of Victorian dispensing and includes a pill mortar, pill machine, pill rounders and silverers, powder folders and suppository moulds. The other case has a Victorian ceramic inhaler, a group of medicine and poison bottles, rectal ointment introducers and a range of 19th and early 20th century medicines.

Each case consists of a clear Perspex display unit on a waist-high plinth. The objects are permanently secured to the base of the sealed unit. For transit,

the plinth becomes a protective case. Packed for transit, the cases are 75cm x 60cm x 90cm high. Each weighs about 40kg.

The cases may be borrowed singly or as a pair. The standard loan period is one month, but longer periods can sometimes be arranged. Borrowers may collect the cases, or the museum can arrange delivery at cost. Loan attracts a small administration fee, and borrowers must meet certain conditions as regards security during use and transit.

Further information about the showcases can be obtained from the Museum Office, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2210; fax 020 7572 2499; e-mail museum@rpsgb.org) Information is also available from the museum section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org/museum).

Candidate packs for national pharmacy boards now available online

Candidate packs and further information for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who are considering standing for election to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's new national pharmacy boards are now available from the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org).

A "National boards elections" quick link on the right-hand side of the home page makes it easy for prospective election candidates to find the candidate pack to download.

Those who prefer to receive the candidate pack material in printed format should contact the relevant returning officer for the Scottish or Welsh elections or Averil Ridgway for the English election, as set out in the Official Notices on p465. These contacts can also answer any questions relating to the role of national pharmacy board members, the

election process, the documentation or any other aspect of the election procedures.

Separate candidate packs have been produced for England, Scotland and Wales. As well as providing nomination forms and declaration forms, the packs are designed to give prospective candidates a clear outline of what is involved in being a national pharmacy board member and in standing for election.

Included in each pack is a paper for prospective candidates summarising the responsibility and functions of the boards, the responsibilities and obligations of board members and the relationship between the boards, the Council and Society staff.

The pack also includes a note of the procedures applicable to the elections. This note details the requirements for nominators

and the material which is required in order for a nomination to be valid, and contains information on canvassing and publicity.

Another inclusion is a guidance paper to help candidates through the process of nomination and the submission of the required documentation. Finally, the pack contains a checklist of items that should be included in a nomination submission. Mandatory inclusions on the list are a completed and signed nomination form, four signed declarations and particulars of the candidate's work within the profession. Among optional inclusions are an election statement and a photograph.

The closing date for receipt of nominations and all supporting documentation is noon on Friday 3 November 2006.

Society urges pharmacy technicians to consider seeking election to national boards

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is hoping that all practising registered pharmacy technicians in England and Wales will give consideration to standing in the national pharmacy board elections.

The English Pharmacy Board and the Welsh Pharmacy Board each have one place for an elected technician as well as 11 places for elected pharmacists. (In Scotland, where there are no plans for pharmacy technicians to be regulated by the Society, all 12 elected places are to be filled by pharmacists.)

The Society would like to see enough nominations to provide the electorate with a choice of candidates in each election. There is some concern that pharmacy technicians may be inhibited from seeking election by the prospect of being the only technician on a board otherwise made up solely of pharmacists (plus an appointed lay member of Council in England).

Particular concern has been expressed about the situation in Wales, where the pool of potential election candidates is small. Only about 250 pharmacy technicians are eligible to stand for the place on the Welsh board, whereas 14 times that number — about

3,500 technicians — are able to stand for the one place on the English board.

The Society is therefore looking for pharmacy technicians in both England and Wales who believe they have something to offer the profession and who enjoy taking a high level of responsibility. If not already on the voluntary register of pharmacy technicians, they should apply to join as soon as possible, because they will need to be registered on Part 1 (practising) of the register by 3 November in order to stand for election.

They will also need to be formally nominated by one other pharmacy technician on the practising part of the register and with a registered address in the same country. They might wish, however, to find more than one nominator in case the credentials of a nominator present a problem.

Potential candidates will need to obtain a nomination form and guidance papers, which can be found on the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org) by following a link on the right of the home page; alternatively, if they prefer to be sent hard copy, they should contact the returning officer or other contact for their country (see Official Notices, p465).

Society's museum presents 18th century prints to Lambeth Palace library

The museum of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has presented several 18th century prints to the library of Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which lies directly across Lambeth Road from the Society's headquarters.

The prints were acquired by the museum after the Society's move to its Lambeth site 30 years ago. They include such details as the Horse Ferry, controlled by the palace, which for centuries transported people and livestock across the Thames. The first Lambeth Bridge was built on the line of the Horse Ferry in 1862, but the ferry had already ceased operation following the completion of Westminster Bridge in 1750. The approach to Lambeth Bridge from the Westminster side of the river retains the name Horseferry Road.

The museum recently decided that, although of local interest, the prints were unlikely ever to be exhibited by the museum because they have no pharmacy connection. Staff of Lambeth Palace library were invited to view nine prints and were pleased to accept all of them into their collection.

Replica jars

Replicas of three ceramic jars from the collections of the Museum of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society are available for purchase from the Society:

- Leech jars — copies of a fine example of a 19th century glazed earthenware show jar for leeches, 15cm high with a circumference of 15.5cm, £50
- Drug storage jars — replicas of a pot used for storing candied orange peel, bearing the inscription "C: CORT: AUR", which is an abbreviation of the Latin "Conditus Cortex Aurantiorum", £56
- Syrup jars — copies of a jar bearing the inscription "S ROSAR. CU AG", an abbreviation of the Latin "Syrupus Rosaceus Solutivus cum Agarico" (solute syrup of rose with agaric), £86

The jars are available by mail order direct from the museum. Full details and an order form can be downloaded from the museum section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org/museum), which also has photographs of the jars. Alternatively, orders can be placed by contacting the museum (tel 020 7572 2210; e-mail museum@rpsgb.org).

The mail order postal charge within the United Kingdom is £22, which covers up to five leech or drug jars or two syrup jars. Postage charges for Europe and the rest of the world are given on the order form or are available by contacting the museum.

The jars and other merchandise, including cards and books, can also be bought in person from the Library at the Society's headquarters during normal working hours.

Law and ethics bulletin

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2006

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2006, which came into force on 1 October 2006, revoke and replace The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005. The Veterinary Regulations 2006 were introduced by Statutory Instrument 2006/2407, which can be viewed at www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/20062407.htm.

The following changes from the Veterinary Regulations 2005 are relevant to pharmacists involved in the receipt and supply of veterinary medicinal products (VMPs).

A pharmacist may only supply a VMP classified as a POM-V, POM-VPS or NFA-VPS from registered pharmacy premises.

Written prescriptions Pharmacists supplying a VMP against a written prescription may only supply the product specified on that prescription. They must take all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the prescription has been written and signed by a person entitled to prescribe the product and must also ensure that it is supplied to the person named on the prescription.

A written prescription for a POM-V or POM-VPS must now include the telephone number of the person prescribing the product in addition to their name and address.

Where that prescription is for a Controlled Drug, it is now valid for 28 days (this has increased from three weeks) in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001, as amended.

Supplies made under the cascade Pharmacists must not supply a

medicinal product authorised for human use for administration to an animal, other than in accordance with a prescription from a veterinary surgeon that specifically states that the medicinal product is for administration under the cascade, either by that veterinary surgeon or under his direction and responsibility.

Pharmacists supplying a VMP for use under the cascade must ensure that the VMP is labelled in accordance with the Regulations. This includes the name and address of the pharmacy or veterinary surgery supplying the VMP. Previously there was a requirement to include the date of dispensing on the label. There is now a requirement for the VMP to be labelled with the date of supply.

Supplies of products for incorporation into feedingstuffs A pharmacist may only supply a VMP which is intended to be incorporated into a premixture or feedingstuff to an approved premixture manufacturer or an approved feedingstuffs manufacturer.

Records of the receipt or supply of prescription products When any person permitted under the Regulations to supply a VMP classified as POM-V or POM-VPS, receives or supplies any such VMP they must keep all documents relating to the transaction, which must now also include a record of the batch number.

However, where the VMP is for a non-food-producing animal, the batch number need only be recorded either on the date he receives the batch or the date he starts to use it.

The labelling of a VMP at the time of retail supply Pharmacists must not

supply a VMP which is in the container specified in its marketing authorisation (MA) if any information on the outer packaging (or, if there is no outer packaging, the immediate packaging) is not clearly visible at the time of supply or has been changed in any way. This does not apply where a pharmacist amends the label in accordance with a prescription from a veterinary surgeon, provided that the unamended information remains clearly visible.

A pharmacist who supplies a VMP in a container other than that specified in the MA must supply sufficient written information (which may include a copy of the summary of product characteristics or the package leaflet) to enable the product to be used safely.

□ Guidance on the sale and supply of veterinary medicines is currently being updated, but will be on the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org) in due course.

Clarification: products containing citronella oil or eucalyptus oil

Further to the recent Law and Ethics Bulletin regarding products containing citronella oil or eucalyptus oil (*PJ*, 7 October, p430), pharmacists should note that the information does not apply to medicinal products. As was clearly stated in the text, it is only biocidal products containing these oils that were required to be removed from the market by 1 September 2006. Pharmacists are advised to check stocks of biocidal products such as insect killers/repellants and cat and dog flea preparations.

Society to lose its strategic development director

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is to lose the head of one of its directorates after little more than three years' service.

Rob Darracott, director of corporate and strategic development, is to leave the Society in the new year to take up a post as chief executive of the Company Chemists Association (see p441).

Mr Darracott joined the Society on 3 November 2003 as the final director to be appointed within the Society's new directorate structure. He will also be the first to depart.

Places still available at meeting for branch secretaries

The opportunity remains open for any branch or region of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to send a representative to a meeting in London next week at which participants can learn more about key aspects of the Society's work.

The meeting, to be held on Wednesday 18 October at the Mermaid Conference and Events Centre, will include presentations from the Society's Secretary and Registrar, Ann Lewis, and from directors and senior staff of the Society.

The agenda includes a session for sharing best branch and region practice, a discussion forum and sessions covering the development

of pharmacists' roles in supporting chronic illness, the Pharmacy 2020 initiative and the national pharmacy boards.

Council member John Gentle, one of two nominated branch sponsors on the Council, says: "This is a key time for both the profession and the Society and the day will give local representatives the opportunity to find out first hand about the Society's work across all the directorates."

Any branch or region that wishes to send its secretary or a nominated deputy to the meeting can obtain further information and an agenda from the membership unit (tel 020 7572 2331; e-mail b&ra@rpsgb.org).

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).

English Pharmacy Board elections

Nominations for election as members of the English pharmacy board of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society should be received by David Pruce, Returning Officer for England, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN, by noon on 3 November 2006.

Nominations must comply with eligibility and other requirements as set out in documents in the candidates' pack and summarised in a previous Official Notice (*PJ*, 7 October, p432). The candidates' pack is available from Averil Ridgway at the Society's headquarters (e-mail EPBelections@rpsgb.org) or can be downloaded from the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org) by following a link from the home page.

David Pruce Returning Officer for England

Scottish Pharmacy Board elections

Nominations for election as members of the Scottish pharmacy board of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society should be received by Lyndon Braddick, Returning Officer for Scotland, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 36 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3HU, by noon on 3 November 2006.

Nominations must comply with eligibility and other requirements as set out in documents in the candidates' pack and summarised in a previous Official Notice (*PJ*, 7 October, p432). The candidates' pack is available from the Returning Officer for Scotland (e-mail SPBelections@rpsgb.org) at the address above or can be downloaded from the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org) by following a link from the home page.

Lyndon Braddick Returning Officer for Scotland

Welsh Pharmacy Board elections

Nominations for election as members of the Welsh pharmacy board of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society should be received by Cath O'Brien, Returning Officer for Wales, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, Gloucester House, 14 Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff CF10 5DP, by noon on 3 November 2006.

Nominations must comply with eligibility and other requirements as set out in documents in the candidates' pack and summarised in a previous Official Notice (*PJ*, 7 October, p432). The candidates' pack is available from the Returning Officer for Wales (e-mail WPBelections@rpsgb.org) at the address above or can be downloaded from the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org) by following a link from the home page.

Cath O'Brien Returning Officer for Wales

TRIBUTES

Williams In a tribute to the late Thomas Burton Williams (*PJ*, 23 September, p378) ROBERT WEBB, former area pharmaceutical officer for Shropshire, writes: When I took up the position of area pharmacist for Shropshire in 1973 Burton was in post as principal pharmacist based at the Royal Salop Infirmary (RSI) in the centre of Shrewsbury. Burton's first post at the RSI, in February 1947, was that of assistant pharmacist. Later that year he became pharmacist-in-charge. With the inception of the NHS and responsibility for additional hospitals in Shrewsbury and Shropshire, Burton moved up the grades of chief pharmacist to become group chief pharmacist in April 1960.

In 1973 Burton accepted my arrival with courtesy and friendliness, so typical of the man. I shall always be grateful for his loyalty and the help and support he gave to me in establishing an area organisation. In this his greatest contribution came years earlier when, through foresight and persistence, he secured generous floor space for the pharmacy in the planned new hospital in Shrewsbury. This meant that when the pharmacy in the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) opened in 1977, it had the space and facilities for the practice of all aspects of hospital pharmacy at that time. Sadly the opening of the new

Royal Pharmaceutical Society and Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Residential course: Tableting technology for the pharmaceutical industry

- **Date:** Monday 27 November (10.30am) to Wednesday 29 November (3pm).
- **Venue:** Moller Centre, Cambridge
- **Content:** An intensive course on the formulation, production and properties of pharmaceutical tablets, including the basic concepts of equipment selection, granulation and end-point determination, formulation optimisation and prediction, in-process monitoring, film coating and official and non-official dissolution tests. The course is designed to be applicable to the day-to-day problems of tableting, linked to a sound theoretical knowledge of the principles involved.
- **Aim:** To provide an intensive introduction to the essentials of the formulation of tablets, the properties of materials used in making tablets, the mixing and granulation processes, roller compaction, tablet machines and instrumentation, the requirements of Good Manufacturing Practice, scale-up of processes, process validation, tablet testing and film coating.
- **Course fees:** Member of the Society or APS £1,440; others £1,500. Fees include two nights' accommodation, meals and refreshments, a welcome reception, a social programme and a resource pack with full course documentation and CD-ROM.
- **Further information:** Julie Churchill, 3rd Floor, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2261; fax 020 7572 2506; e-mail science@rpsgb.org). The course brochure can also be downloaded from the science pages in the "World of pharmacy" section of the Society's website (www.rpsgb.org).

hospital also meant the closure of Burton's beloved RSI.

Burton brought to his hospital service not only great integrity but also a genuine and abiding concern for patients. This commitment is best illustrated by his attitude to on-call services. Way back in 1947 he introduced a formal, though unpaid, on-call service. He participated in this scheme until his retirement. In 1973 I found that Burton and his deputy, the late Harry Wilkinson, had kept the system going for a number of years by means of a one-in-two rota, there being no other full-time pharmacists to join the rota. This arrangement also demonstrated Burton's tenacious qualities, not always on the surface but definitely there.

Burton was a gentle man who never sought the limelight. His quiet sense of humour could often come as a surprise.

I remember that early in 1981, after much hard work, a formulary for the RSH was about to be introduced. A day or two before the launch, Burton gave me his own treasured and heavily annotated copy of the Pharmacopoeia of the RSI dated 1936, a generous gesture from a man who loved his books.

It was fitting that in early June 1981, shortly before his retirement, Burton's contribution to the practice of pharmacy was recognised with the award of the fellowship of the Royal

Pharmaceutical Society, of which he was justly proud. Later that month Burton retired after 34 years of service in Shrewsbury, during which time he had never taken a day off through illness. Did all those peppermints contribute to this possibly unique record? The retirement started off on a high note when Burton and his wife Ann attended a Buckingham Palace garden party in July. Burton and Ann had 14 happy years together in retirement before her death in April 1995.

Following my retirement in 1996 there was time to visit Burton more frequently. Initially my wife and I would take him to his favourite country inn for lunch. As he became more infirm our visits were to his book-lined home in Shrewsbury. Latterly we had visited Burton in the nursing home in Shrewsbury where he had recently celebrated and greatly enjoyed his 90th birthday.

Whatever the location, it was always a pleasure to visit Burton. News of his family always featured in our conversation and, when on good form, he would talk of earlier times. From these reminiscences we learnt about his childhood and schooling in and around Wrexham, his student days in Liverpool, his wartime service as a pharmacist in the Royal Navy, which finished in 1946, and the introduction of the NHS. Some of his funniest anecdotes related to his efforts to bring a structured pharmaceutical

service to the many cottage hospitals in Shropshire in the 1950s.

During the many years in which we have known Burton so many people, from all walks of life, have described him as "a lovely man" and this is how we will always remember him.

Our thoughts must now be with David and Philip, his two sons, and their families.

MICHAEL SHEMILT, pharmacist at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford, writes: I first met Burton when I moved from the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital in Oswestry to take up the post of staff pharmacist, production, at the then brand new Royal Shrewsbury Hospital in 1979. I worked with him from then until he retired in 1981.

An experience I shall never forget happened not long after I started. On this particular day Burton said to me "Have you ever tried Worthington White Label?" I replied that I had not, and at this point I was accompanied by Burton to the Loggerheads pub in Shrewsbury. Burton ordered two bottles of the said ale. "An ale as fine as this only comes in bottles," I was informed. After pointing out the "by appointment to Her Majesty the Queen" label on the neck of the bottle Burton, in true pharmaceutical fashion, started to decant the beer into the glasses. This, as he pointed out to me, was because there was a residue of yeast in the bottom of the bottle, hence the reason for careful pouring. We proceeded to enjoy this most excellent of beers and one another's company. (For the connoisseurs among you, if you would like to try this for yourselves it is still available but is actually called Worthington White Shield.)

My memories of Burton are of a kind and gentle man with a glint in his eye and a tremendous sense of fun.

ROGER SKEWS, head of pharmacy, Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust, writes: When I was trying to choose a career, I managed to get a holiday job down in the basement, beside the steam pipes, in the pharmacy at the Royal Salop Infirmary, Shrewsbury. The chief pharmacist was one Burton Williams.

I was immediately influenced by Burton's enthusiasm and his deep-rooted belief in service and care for patients, and despite the stereotype pharmacy in the basement, I quickly became hooked on hospital pharmacy.

I later also worked with him as an undergraduate, and finally was

quietly taken to the local hostelry opposite the hospital, and made to promise I would not return but immerse myself in the large teaching hospitals to gain as much experience and knowledge as possible at this stage of my career. Only then could I return and buy him a beer.

I took his advice and 12 years later, on his retirement, had the privilege to become his successor as chief pharmacist at the newly opened Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

Burton's vision for the future of pharmacy was exquisite and his new pharmacy was a revelation — large, with almost every modern facility you could ask for, well staffed, well organised, and not a steam pipe or basement in sight!

I owe much to Burton, his guidance, professionalism and concern for his fellow man, but above all, his friendship and inspiration. And yes, we finally met again and I bought him that beer!

DIARY

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 16 October

Bromley "Paediatric epilepsy" by Sanjay Sahi (consultant, Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup). Frognal Postgraduate Centre, Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup. Buffet 7pm, meeting 8pm.

Tuesday 17 October

Croydon "Glaucoma and dry eye conditions" by Dilo DeAlwis (consultant ophthalmologist, Mayday Hospital). Postgraduate Medical Centre, Mayday Hospital. Buffet. 8pm.

Durham "Migraine: causes and treatments". Eden Arms Hotel, Rushyford. Buffet. 7.30pm.

Harrow and Hillingdon "Breast cancer: an update" by Carlo Palmieri. Cumberland Hotel, Harrow. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Isle of Man "What we can learn from our European neighbours: pharmacy in the EU" by Rob Darracott (director of corporate and strategic development, Royal Pharmaceutical Society). Keyll Darree. Hot buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Reading "Diabetes" by Omar Ali (pharmacist, National Obesity Forum). Royal Berkshire Hospital, Trust Education Centre. 7.30 for 8pm.

Slough "Coronary heart disease update" by George Kassianos (GP, Bracknell). John Lister Postgraduate Centre (Entrance 4), Wexham Park Hospital. Buffet 7.15pm, meeting 8pm.

Teesside "Prescribing issues in Paediatrics" by Andrew Fall (consultant paediatrician, James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough). Parkmore Hotel, Eaglescliffe. Buffet. 7.30 for 8pm.

Wednesday 18 October

South Cheshire "Drugs in heart failure" by John Somauroo (consultant cardiologist, Countess of Chester Hospital). Fourways Hotel, Delamere. 7.30 for 8pm.

South Staffordshire "Risk in the pharmacy" by Pharmacists Defence Association speaker. Longford House, Cannock, 7 for 7.30pm.

South East Metropolitan

"Pharmacists with special interests" by Beth Taylor (national development lead). Clarendon Hotel, Montpelier Row, London SE3. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Wigan "Cardiac risk associated with phosphodiesterases" by Eric Curless. Brocket Arms, Wigan. Buffet 6.45pm, meeting 7.30pm.

Thursday 19 October

Chelmsford "Topic of the day" by Hemant Patel (President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society). Holiday Inn, Brentwood. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Dudley and Stourbridge "Epilepsy" by Roland Etti (consultant neurologist, Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust). Dudley Clinical Education Centre, First Floor, Block C, Russells Hall Hospital. 8pm.

Ipswich and Suffolk "Current treatment of rheumatoid arthritis" by David O'Reilly (consultant rheumatologist) and Ruth Slack (rheumatology nurse specialist). Lecture Theatre, Postgraduate Centre, West Suffolk Hospital. 7.30 for 8pm.

Weald of Kent "A day in the life of a cardiology prescribing pharmacist" by Helen Williams (cardiology prescribing pharmacist, Kings College Hospital). Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Pembury. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8.15pm.

Wirral "Supplementary and independent prescribing: the way ahead" by Ian Cubbin. Postgraduate Education Centre, Clatterbridge Hospital. Refreshments 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

Wednesday 25 October

Bristol "The Society and current issues" by Brian Curwain (member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Council). BAWA, Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol. 7.30 for 8pm.

Thursday 26 October

Ayrshire Golden jubilee dinner. Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon. 7.30 for 8pm.



Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

London headquarters

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