



## Pharmacy technician registration fee structure for 2005 announced

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has announced the fee structure that will be applied to the pharmacy technicians' register and the level of fees for 2005.

A fee will payable on registration as well as an annual retention fee to remain on the register which will fall due on 1 January each year. The fee payable on initial registration will depend upon whether or not the application requires screening. During 2005 — while registration is still voluntary — the retention fee will depend on the quarter of the year in which the application for registration is submitted to the Society.

Pharmacy technicians will be able to register with the Society as either practising or non-practising. Applicants will be expected to pay the practising fee unless they sign and return a declaration to the Society stating that they are not and will not undertake any work in, or give advice in relation to, the science of medicines or the practice of pharmacy or health care. This reflects the new structure proposed for pharmacists from January 2005.

Continuing professional development will be mandatory for all pharmacy technicians who are registered as practising.

On initial registration, a registration fee will be payable in addition to the retention fee. The registration fee will be £30 for those

whose applications do not require screening, whether they are registering under the grandparent clause or as having met the required level of training plus accredited underpinning knowledge. For all applications that require screening, the fee will be £125.

Those registering in the period January to March 2005 will pay an annual retention fee of £85 for practising technicians or £65 for non-practising technicians. Those registering later in the year will pay a reduced retention fee: April to June, £64 or £50; July to September, £43 or £35; October to December, £22 or £20.

Registered pharmacy technicians will receive *The Pharmaceutical Journal* as part of their registration package.

Janet Flint, head of support staff regulation at the Society, said: "In designing the fee structure for the technicians' register we have taken account of structures operated by other regulators of healthcare support staff and the fees levied by those bodies. We hope that the inclusion of *The Pharmaceutical Journal* as part of the package will be welcomed by pharmacy technicians, some of whom already subscribe to this publication."

Further information can be obtained from Ms Flint at the Society's headquarters (tel 020 7572 2410; e-mail: janet.flint@rpsgb.org).

### This week

#### ■ Regulation of technicians

The Council has agreed a fee structure for the registration of pharmacy technicians (p329); the new Code of Ethics for Pharmacy Technicians has been published (p329); interim fitness-to-practise procedures for pharmacy technicians have been adopted (p330); and guidance has been prepared on acceptable work experience for those registering as pharmacy technicians (p330).

#### ■ Honour for Lord Newton

Lord Newton, the Society's former Parliamentary adviser, is to be awarded an honorary fellowship of the Society (p331).

### News in brief

#### ■ MedicinesComplete subscriber

John Rylands University Library at the University of Manchester has become the first subscriber to MedicinesComplete, the new comprehensive online resource published by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Pharmaceutical Press (*PJ*, 3 July, p29). The subscription is part of a package giving online access to the complete suite of databases to all students and staff in the university's school of pharmacy.

## Code of ethics for technicians is published

A Code of Ethics for Pharmacy Technicians is published this week in a centre pull-out in this issue of *The Journal*. The code has been approved by the Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society following consultation on a draft code earlier in the year (*PJ*, 7 February, p165).

A final version of the code was presented to the Council at the **August Council meeting** by Patricia Hoare, chairman of the Council's Law and Ethics Committee. She said that the code had been amended in the light of the response to the consultation exercise.

Mrs Hoare said that the committee believed that further work was required on two issues raised in the consultation. One was about rewriting the code — and also the pharmacists' code, which it mirrored — in

plain English. The other was the need to review the section on confidentiality. Because both those issues would take time to complete, the committee recommended that the Council should accept the proposed code for implementation when voluntary registration of technicians began on the 1 January 2005. The issues of plain English and confidentiality would be addressed in preparing a subsequent update of both codes.

Asking the Council to adopt the redrafted code, Mrs Hoare pointed out that the main change was the replacement of detailed wording in Section A2 with more concise wording.

The President, Nicholas Wood, said that Section A2 was certainly more concise and did not muddy the waters with fine detail.

## Regulation of pharmacy technicians

At its meeting in London on 3 and 4 August, the Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society agreed several measures related to the future regulation of pharmacy technicians. The Council's decisions were reported briefly in *The Journal* of 14 August (p239) and are covered in more detail on this and the next page to coincide with the publication of a centre pull-out supplement on the Society's plans for a voluntary register of pharmacy technicians. The supplement gives an overview of the regulatory framework that is being put in place and also sets out in full the new Code of Ethics for Pharmacy Technicians.

The full text of a range of guidance documents on the regulation of pharmacy technicians is available through the pharmacy support staff pages of the Society's website ([www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff](http://www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff)).

## Council adopts interim fitness-to-practise procedures for technicians

The Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has adopted an interim procedure for dealing with fitness-to-practise issues involving those who join the voluntary register for pharmacy technicians next year.

The Council agreed at the **August Council meeting** that its Infringements Committee would be used as the investigating committee to consider complaints against registered technicians and also to consider registration applications from technicians who have previous criminal convictions. In the event of a case against a technician, the Association of Pharmacy Technicians would be invited to nominate one or more technicians to give expert advice.

It was also agreed that until relevant powers are introduced through an Order under Section 60 of the Health Act 1999, any cases referred by the Infringements Committee to a disciplinary committee would be put on hold. However, should any case be considered serious enough to warrant immediate attention, an interim disciplinary committee would be established under relevant provision of the Society's Charter and Byelaws, membership of which would include one or more pharmacy technicians nominated by the APT.

The proposed procedure was introduced to the Council by Janet Flint (secretary to the steering group for the regulation of pharmacy technicians), who pointed out that the Council had already approved policies relating to fitness to practise for technicians once registration becomes mandatory. The proposed

interim procedure was just to cover the period of voluntary registration, which was why it used the existing Infringements Committee, assisted by one or two invited technicians.

Patricia Hoare asked for clarification on whether the technicians invited to the Infringements Committee to give expert advice would have voting rights.

The President, Nicholas Wood, said they would not.

Douglas Simpson said that technicians were to serve on the new Council and they had played a full part in drawing up the new code of ethics for technicians. Was it appropriate for them only to have an advisory role when a technician came before the Infringement Committee? Would technicians play a full part in decisions under the future permanent machinery?

Mrs Hoare said that under the future machinery disciplinary committees would be drawn from a panel that would involve a breadth of people, including technicians.

Janet Flint, head of support staff regulation, said that in a case concerning a technician, it was likely that the membership of the disciplinary and investigating committees would comprise technicians and lay people drawn from the panel, but there may be a case where it would be appropriate to have pharmacists on the committee as well.

Nicola Gray, commenting on the proposal to put cases on hold until Section 60 powers were in place, said that she was concerned about the human rights issue of reasonable

response time and delay. Would the delay be reasonable?

The Secretary and Registrar, Ann Lewis, said that developing rules for discipline under the new legislation would have high priority. It was not envisaged that the time scale would be unreasonable.

Ms Flint said that the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine had adopted similar processes when new professions started to be regulated, and a number of cases were put on hold. The Society would not be setting a precedent.

The President said that the point would be noted in the minutes.

Phyllida Entwistle suggested that, in the unlikely event of something happening early in 2005, the APT should be asked to nominate two people with a view to them observing the Infringements Committee at least once before the new year.

The Secretary and Registrar said that they could perhaps also attend the committee members' training sessions in advance.

Bob Michell asked what would happen in the event of a complaint involving both a pharmacist and a pharmacy technician. Would the pharmacist's case be held over as well?

The President said that the office would consider that point.

Answering suggestions that the points raised should be incorporated into the interim procedures, the Secretary and Registrar said that they could be included as points of information.

## Guidance on acceptable work experience for technician registration

The Council of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has approved guidance for pharmacy technicians on what is acceptable work experience for those seeking to join the voluntary register of pharmacy technicians in 2005.

The guidance document was presented to the **August Council meeting** by Gerald Alexander. The first section of the document explains that the transitional ("grandparent" clause) arrangements for registration include a straightforward procedure for those with evidence of both an acceptable qualification and work experience that meets agreed criteria. Where the work experience does not meet the specified minimum number of hours worked or has not been under the supervision, direction or guidance of a pharmacist, the applicant will need to provide further information for consideration by professional assessors. The guidance explains this screening process.

The document's second section lists a range of job roles considered acceptable for registration purposes. As well as work in a community or hospital pharmacy, the list includes work in primary care organisations, in industry, in wholesaling, in the armed forces, in health information, in pharmacy educa-

tion, in pharmacy organisations, in pharmacy journalism or for dispensing GPs.

The third section gives specific guidance for those who have relevant work experience but do not meet the criteria for the minimum number of hours worked. The fourth section gives guidance for those who meet the criteria for hours worked but whose work experience does not meet the Society's requirements. A final section answers some frequently asked questions.

When the Council considered the document, Linda Stone commented that it did not include a mechanism for appeal should the assessors determine that somebody does not satisfy the requirements. The Government would expect to see an appeal mechanism.

Janet Flint, head of support staff regulation, said that once the Society had statutory powers there would be a route of appeal. She would be looking at a draft process for the voluntary register.

Clive Jackson said that two further roles might be worth adding to the scenario. One was working in GP practices other than dispensing practices. The other was working for a national organisation that was not a phar-

macy organisation, such as the National Patient Safety Agency, which employs two pharmacy technicians.

Ms Flint said that, with a little rewording, the paragraph about working for dispensing GPs could accommodate the first category. In the case of non-pharmacy organisations, she would advise that the screening process should decide whether the work experience offered by such an organisation was relevant.

Asked for clarification on the grandparent clause criteria for hours worked, Ms Flint said that the Council had already agreed a minimum of 28 hours a week for two of the previous four years, or 14 hours a week for four of the previous eight years.

The guidance document can be downloaded from the pharmacy support staff section of the Society's website ([www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff](http://www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff)).

The Council went on to approve a document of guidance for pharmacists on the technician registration application process and on the pharmacist's responsibilities when countersigning a pharmacy technician's registration form. This guidance is to be placed on the Society's website in due course.

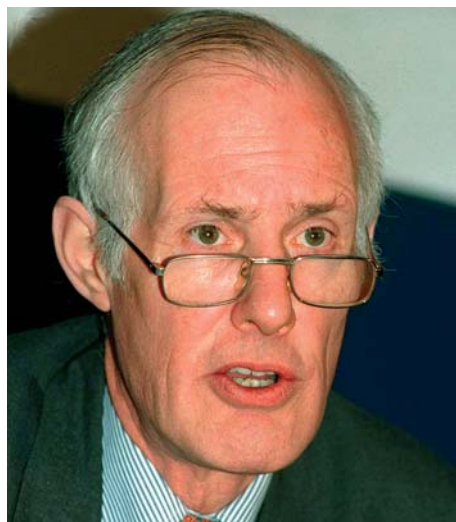
## Honorary fellowship for Lord Newton reflects contribution to Society

Lord Newton of Braintree has accepted honorary fellowship of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society.

Lord Newton was the Society's parliamentary adviser from 1997 to 2002. Recently, he was a member of the Council's Corporate Governance Steering Group and of its Modernisation Steering Group. He is vice-chairman of the All Party Pharmacy Group in Parliament. He is also chairman of the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust.

Lord Newton's Parliamentary career began when he was elected as Conservative MP for Braintree in 1974. He went on to serve in a number of ministerial posts including that of Minister for Health from 1984 to 1988. He was Leader of the House of Commons from 1992 until 1997, when he lost his seat. He was raised to the peerage in the same year.

The Society's President, Nicholas Wood, said: "Lord Newton has made an outstanding



**Lord Newton: former Parliamentary adviser to the Society**

contribution to health and public life at the highest level. He has been a great friend to the Society and the profession, offering invaluable advice, particularly when we were establishing our own public affairs programme. We are delighted that he is to join the very exclusive roll of Honorary Fellows of the Society and we are looking forward to presenting this to him in person."

Under the Society's 1953 Charter, scientists who have distinguished themselves in any branch of knowledge embraced in the Society's educational objects may be elected as honorary fellows by the Council, as may persons eminent in national life. The honour is rarely given and after 50 years the total awarded has still not reached 20.

Lord Newton was elected an honorary fellow at the Council's June meeting. He will be presented with his certificate of honorary fellowship at a forthcoming Council meeting.

## Reminder to pharmacists about the 31 December cut-off date for declaration of competence forms for dispensing/pharmacy assistants

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has issued a reminder to pharmacists about the 31 December cut-off date for submitting declaration of competence forms for each member of staff in current employment who falls within the minimum competence requirement "grandparent" clause.

From 1 January 2005 pharmacists will have a professional obligation to ensure that dispensing/pharmacy assistants are competent in the areas in which they work to a minimum standard equivalent to the new pharmacy services level 2 qualification of the Scottish or National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQ) or are undertaking training towards achieving such competence. The policy covers dispensing/pharmacy assistants working

under the supervision of a pharmacist in the community, hospital or other pharmacy sector.

The transitional arrangements, known as the grandparent clause, will allow existing staff to continue working without the need for a new qualification after 1 January 2005 provided they demonstrate their competence to a satisfactory minimum standard. Supervising pharmacists must complete a declaration of competence form for each member of staff whom they wish to declare as exempt from further training. Any employee who has not been declared exempt from further training under the grandparent clause arrangements will, from 1 January 2005, be required to undertake an accredited course.

Further information on the regulation of dispensing/pharmacy assistants, including copies of the declaration of competence form, a list of approved courses (mapped for equivalence under the grandparent clause arrangements), frequently-asked questions and case studies, can be obtained from the Society's website ([www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff](http://www.rpsgb.org/pharmacysupportstaff)). Copies of the declaration of competence form can also be requested from the Society's Registration Section (telephone 020 7572 2577 or e-mail: [gp2@rpsgb.org](mailto:gp2@rpsgb.org)).

Further information is also available from Sadia Khan at the Society's headquarters on (tel 020 7572 2537; e-mail [sadia.khan@rpsgb.org](mailto:sadia.khan@rpsgb.org)).

## 'Medicines, ethics and practice': September list of amendments

In the first issue of each month, *The Journal* updates the guidance on the legal status of medicines published in the 28th edition (July 2004) of 'Medicines, ethics and practice: A guide

for pharmacists'. The amendments are given in **bold** type when added to the list and repeated each month in light type. A product's legal status can be obtained by consulting first the latest

amendment list and then the guide. The abbreviations used in the list are explained in the key to annotations in the body of the guide (p29 and p75).

### Human medicines

Abilify tablets POM  
**Acnecin tablets POM**  
 Amlodipine maleate POM  
**Cardioplen XL tablets POM**  
**Care heartburn relief tablets P**  
**Co-cyprindiol tablets POM**

Co-diovan tablets POM  
 Dandraxol dandruff shampoo GSL  
**Denzapine tablets POM**  
 Erbitux POM  
 Gyno-pevaryl preps entry should read: Gyno-Pevaryl preparations POM  
 Imigran Radis tablets POM

Ketoconazole entry: "(see Nizoral products)" should read "(see Dandraxol and Nizoral products)"  
 Levemir preparations POM  
 Lyrica capsules POM  
**NiQuitin CQ lozenges entry should read: NiQuitin CQ lozenges GSL**

Numark heartburn relief tablets POM  
 Strattera capsules POM  
 Striant tablets POM  
 Subgam POM  
 Telzir tablets POM  
 UniChem heartburn relief tablets P  
 Vaniqa cream POM

**Vantage heartburn relief tablets P**

**Vesicare tablets POM**  
 Vfend powder for oral suspension POM  
 Zocor Heart-Pro tablets P  
**Zovirax cold sore cream entry should read: Zovirax cold sore cream GSL**

## 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](http://www.pjonline.com/notices)).

### Statutory Committee inquiries

The Statutory Committee will meet at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1, at 9.30am on Monday 20 September, Tuesday 21 September, Wednesday 22 September and Thursday 23 September 2004 to hear the following inquiries:

#### Monday 20 September

1. An inquiry into the case of a pharmacist convicted of indecent assault on a female.
2. The committee will resume consideration of an application for restoration by a person whose name was removed from the register.
3. An inquiry into the case of a pharmacist convicted twice of drink-driving and once of failing to stop following an accident, driving while disqualified and driving without insurance, and an inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society which alleges that a dispensing error and failure to give an adequate explanation of the error to the patient's daughter, amounts to misconduct.

#### Tuesday 21 September

4. An inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against a pharmacist which alleges that acting as a superintendent pharmacist in circumstances where one is not sufficiently competent in the use and understanding of the English language and failure to understand the responsibilities of a superintendent pharmacist and/or those of a pharmacist providing professional services and/or to discharge them, amounts to misconduct; and an inquiry into the case of the company that employed the superintendent pharmacist to consider an allegation that appointing and continuing to

employ as its superintendent someone who was not sufficiently competent in the use and understanding of the English language and who failed to understand the responsibilities of a superintendent pharmacist and/or those of a pharmacist providing professional services and/or to discharge them, may render the company liable to disqualification.

#### Wednesday 22 September and Thursday 23 September

5. The committee will resume consideration of an Inquiry into a complaint by the Council of the Society against two pharmacists which alleges that entering, occupying or taking possession of, or otherwise seeking to interfere with, administrative receivers' possession of premises and/or property at the premises and interfering with any business or activity of administrative receivers may amount to misconduct.

#### David Gomez

Secretary to the  
Statutory Committee

## 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](http://www.pjonline.com/diary))

#### Tuesday 7 September

**Brighton** "Continuing professional development and all that". Postgraduate Medical Centre, Brighton General Hospital, Elm Grove. 7.30pm.

**Dudley and Stourbridge** "The National Patient Safety Agency: its work and relevance to pharmacy" by Shirley Procter-O'Toole (NPSA patient safety manager, Birmingham and the Black Country). Dudley Clinical Education Centre, 1st Floor, Block C, Russells Hall Hospital. Welcome reception for preregistration trainees and tutors 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

**Sheffield** "Continuing professional development" by a Royal Pharmaceutical Society CPD facilitator. Charnwood Hotel, 10 Sharrow Lane, Sheffield. Light buffet 7pm, meeting 7.30pm.

## The Diary

Announcements of branch and regional meetings for the Diary column should reach *The Journal* by 1pm on the Tuesday before publication. Branch programme cards are welcome at the beginning of the season, provided that branches subsequently notify *The Journal* in good time about any programme changes and any essential meeting information that was not available when the card was printed.

#### Wednesday 8 September

**Buckinghamshire** "The changing face of hospital pharmacy". Duke of Edinburgh Seminar Room, Postgraduate Medical Centre, Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

**Central Lancashire** "Getting ready for the Future: new roles and opportunities". Barton Grange Hotel, Preston. Buffet. 7 for 7.30pm. Joint meeting with pharmacy development group.

**Ipswich and Suffolk** "Public health issues: how pharmacists should be getting involved" by Brian Keeble and David Evans (Suffolk Public Health Network). Ipswich Hospital Postgraduate Centre. Buffet 7.30pm, meeting 8pm.

#### Thursday 9 September

**Bolton** "Oral signs of drug abuse" Education Centre, Royal Bolton Hospital, Farnworth. 7.30 for 8pm.

## PERSONAL

This column is intended for announcements of births, engagements, marriages, anniversaries, etc. The charge for an insertion is £20 for up to 25 words, and £8 for every additional 10 or fewer words. Personal cheques only (payable to *The Pharmaceutical Journal*) should be sent with the notice to the Editor, The Pharmaceutical Journal, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN. The sender's address and membership number, if applicable, should be on the reverse of the cheque.

### Births

**Zaman** Dr Mustafa A. Zaman (King's College, University of London, 1998 and 2004) and Mrs Iram Zaman (Wise College, University of Punjab, 1999) are delighted to announce the birth of their son Murtaza Ibrahim on 30 July 2004, a brother for Sumayya.