



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society**
of Great Britain

Pharmacy 2020: How you see your future

The responses to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Pharmacy 2020 consultation have now been analysed. In this four-page pull-out supplement, the President of the Society, Hemant Patel, summarises the findings

Last autumn we asked you to complete the Pharmacy 2020 consultation document, giving us your views on how you would like to see the profession develop by that time. Over 2,000 of you took part in the 2020 consultation and your responses make fascinating reading. Here is what you told us you would like to see happening.

We had an enthusiastic response to our questionnaire on the future of the profession, with over 2,000 of you responding to tell us what you would like to see pharmacy doing



by 2020. The consultation comprised four main questions:

1. What functions do you expect to do more or less of in 2020?
2. In your opinion, what three things need to happen to deliver the aspirations of the profession?
3. In your opinion, what three things should the national pharmacy bodies do now to create the future for pharmacy?
4. In your opinion, what three things should you do now to create the future for pharmacy that you want?

All the data from answers to Question 1 were collated and statistical data produced. For Questions 2 to 4 we analysed your responses for patterns and trends and extracted common

themes. By putting all this together we can now form a clearer picture of your aspirations for the future of your profession.

We will use your views to form the next important phase of Pharmacy 2020 — determining the most important aspects we need to focus on and building a strategy to make things happen.

Who filled out our questionnaire?

More than 2,000 pharmacists from all sectors of the profession took part in the consultation,

We received responses from pharmacy students, technicians, members of the public and patient groups, as well as both pharmacy and non-pharmacy bodies.



The President: We will use your views in determining the most important aspects to focus on and building a strategy to make things happen

What your job description will look like in 2020

In **Question 1**, we asked you to tell us what job functions you would expect to be doing more or less of in 2020, ranging from administration and paperwork to dispensing and prescribing, health screening and health promotion and working with other health care professionals.

The top three things you felt you would be doing more of in the future were:

- **Giving advice and patient counselling:** 90.6 per cent of you said you would do more of this and only 0.5 per cent said less.
- **Advising other health care professionals:** 89.7 per cent of you believed you would be giving more of this advice; just 0.8 per cent thought you would do less of it.
- **Health promotion:** 88.9 per cent of you said you would be doing health promotion by 2020.

Other key areas you said might become increasingly important included continuing professional development (CPD), with 61.6 per cent believing you would do more of this; 83.1 per cent thought you would be delegating more routine tasks to other staff.

Most of you believed that the clinical side of your job would have more emphasis in the future, with 83.1 per cent saying you would do more prescribing, 73.6 per cent believing you will carry out more medicines use reviews and 79.5 per cent thinking you will be

involved in more public health intervention work, such as running smoking cessation clinics. Specialist pharmacy services also look set to play a more important role — 87.5 per cent said you would be doing more of these.

You are keen to shake off the pharmacist's isolated image, with 84.3 per cent saying you would work more with the primary and secondary health care team, 86.3 per cent believing you would work more closely with other health professionals such as GPs and nurses and 56.9 per cent saying you would work more with the social services team.

... and what you will be doing less of

You had equally strong views on what you expect to be doing less of in your jobs by 2020 — in essence, throwing off the “shopkeeper” image and taking on a more professional and clinical persona.

The top thing you expect to do less of in future is dispensing, with 74.8 per cent of you saying would be doing less by 2020.

Some 63.8 per cent of you say that you expect to do less shopkeeping by 2020. You also expect that the products you see on pharmacy shelves will change too — 62.6 per cent of you think you will be selling fewer non-pharmaceutical products such as toiletries.

You believe you will spend more of your day using the skills you were trained for — 61.0 per cent of you thought you would spend less time on routine tasks.



Turning the aspirations you have expressed into reality

In **Question 2** we asked you what three things needed to happen to deliver the aspirations of the profession. A number of common themes emerged.

Team working

You believed that working more closely in the pharmacy with your staff and outside with other allied professionals was key if pharmacists are to achieve their hopes for 2020.

“The relationship between pharmacists and medical practitioners needs to embrace a shared commitment to make full use of pharmacists’ expertise to ensure the achievement of optimum patient care.”

“Pharmacists need to be serious about working outside of their current common practice areas and to engage effectively with medical practitioners, other health care professionals, health care organisations and government to ensure a collaborative approach to meet patient needs.”

Blowing our own trumpet

A resounding concern many of you voiced was that pharmacy is not telling others loudly or clearly enough about our skills. We need more public relations work to promote pharmacy to other health care professionals and the public, you believe. Many also mentioned that pharmacists are invisible in the media and that in a television-dominated age we do not exist if people do not see us on the box.

“We need the profession to be recognised by the public as a healthcare profession across all sectors of pharmacy — community, primary care, hospital, prisons, etc.”

“Pharmacy needs a higher profile. Pharmacists need to be seen by the public as someone who plays a key role in their healthcare team and not just someone who dispenses pills and potions.”

“We also need to publicise ourselves more — appear in the general media and give our own opinions on public health matters. We live in a time where one has to be visible to be recognised.”

The age of information technology

Many of you believe that greater use of IT is key to improving transfer of primary and secondary care data, and access to patient medical records was highlighted as desirable for the future to improve our service to patients. You also mentioned wider use of automated dispensing to free the pharmacists’ time as well as improve patient safety.

“I want to see less manual dispensing and [the] utilisation of robots and ACTs to improve patient safety and free pharmacists to take on the additional work load.”

Dispensing volumes will increase with an ever increasing elderly population — unless the efficiency changes are made then pharmacists will not be able to leave the dispensing bench.”

Investing in staff

Highly trained staff are key to the future of pharmacy, you told us. In order for pharmacists to concentrate more time on their wider roles as health professionals, you told us you need to delegate more routine tasks. But to maintain excellent standards of patient care you need pharmacy bodies to help with the involvement of technicians and also the regulation of staffing levels.

A suggestion that appeared several times was that of employing two pharmacists in community pharmacies at all times to deliver their health advisory role effectively.

“Community pharmacies need to employ two pharmacists. One to carry out the traditional role of supervising dispensary activities, counter-prescribing, etc, and a second to carry out all the extended advanced clinical services which pharmacies could offer.”

CPD is key

Many pharmacists told us how vital they believed training and education were for our future. However, several of you thought finding the time to allocate to CPD was a problem.

“We need protected time paid for during the day to undertake CPD. Going to a local pharmaceutical meeting for four hours after work and getting home at 11.30pm is not conducive to me giving my best. You don’t see GPs doing CPD meetings at night.”

The community pharmacy contract

There is a widespread feeling that the community pharmacy contract is an important step in giving pharmacists a more important role in the health care arena by 2020. But you are concerned that remuneration will continue to be an obstacle to wider uptake of enhanced services.

“Pharmacy needs to be fairly remunerated for the services delivered, without this remuneration being viewed as taken from general medical services income.”

Wider uptake of prescribing

Many of you said that increased prescribing by pharmacists was the way forward for the profession.

“Pharmacists need to be given greater responsibility. Considering we are supposed to be the ‘leading experts in medicines’ we have only recently been more involved in prescribing. If we encourage the take up of training like prescribing courses we can push the profession forward.”



Most respondents predicted that pharmacists will in future have a greater involvement in p with more being contracted to provide services such as smoking cessation clinics



What pharmacy bodies can do to help

In **Question 3** we asked what national pharmacy bodies should do to create the future for pharmacy. Here is what you thought:

Singing from the same hymn sheet

You felt the various bodies needed to work together and put across the same message with one clear voice.

“More collaboration is needed between the various organisations to produce a co-ordinated approach. Currently there is too much ‘noise’.”

Several respondents thought that an effective organisation equivalent to the British Medical Association would give more political clout to pharmacy.

“In order for pharmacy to negotiate effectively and with impact with the Department of Health, the industry needs to unite. This is the biggest undoing of the pharmacy profession.”

Promote pharmacy talents

The role of our national bodies, you believe, should be to publicise the skills of pharmacists to the public, the Government and other health care professionals. In order to achieve your goals for 2020, many believed we should be doing more to raise the pharmacy media profile.

“Start to be more vocal in expressing how pharmacists can contribute to health care. e.g nurses’ bodies are often quoted in all sorts of programmes on radio but rarely do we hear that pharmacists have a point of view or an ability to do something.”

Improve education

The training of undergraduates and the pre-registration year was seen by many as key to shaping the future of pharmacy. Suggested improvements to the degree course included giving more emphasis to hands-on experience. Others thought that schools of pharmacy could build links with, or even merge with, medical schools. Suggestions on course content included integrating prescribing in the undergraduate course and making the focus more clinical and less scientific.

Enhanced services

These are the future, said many of you, but we need to widen the uptake of these services by pharmacists.

“There’s plenty of talk in pharmacy media about the new pharmacy contract allowing pharmacists to provide enhanced services and prescribe. However, walk into any pharmacy today and less than 5 per cent of all UK pharmacies will be actively achieving this. We must determine barriers to this and remove them to allow pharmacy to flourish.”



Most respondents predicted that in future they will spend more time giving advice to patients and counselling them on their prescription medicines



Greater use of information technology was seen as key to improving the transfer of primary and secondary care data in the future, as was access to patients’ medical records



Highly trained staff are the key to the future of pharmacy

How you can shape the future of pharmacy

In **Question 4** we asked what three things you should do now to create the future for pharmacy. Here is what you said:

Become more professional

One of the strongest themes to emerge was your desire to become more professional, with an increased clinical role.

“As a locum I need to continue to develop and extend my range of skills and qualifications, so that I will be able to work competently in any pharmacy regardless of the range of extended and advanced services they offer.”

Reducing sales of non-pharmaceutical products was a way several suggested would give them a more professional image.

Spend more time with patients

Talking to patients more and improving the quality of service you give them is an important way you have suggested of achieving your vision for 2020.

Integrate

In order to achieve your aspirations for 2020, many of you recognised the importance of working closer with other health professionals as well as local primary care trusts.

“Continue joined up working with non-pharmacists to manage opportunities for patient care and for pharmacy service development. Record and report these developments to the appropriate primary/secondary care senior managers and other pharmacists.”

“Through engaging in programmes of integration within primary care, and being at the forefront of service development, the profession can show that it can react to change in a positive way that improves health outcomes for patients.”

Adopt new roles

Many of you are keen to adopt new pharmacy roles and believe it will help shape your future for the better. Moving away from dispensing towards prescribing and health care advice is the direction many of you plan to head.

“Get all community pharmacists involved in the provision of a minor ailment service, such as the one in Scotland.”

“Embrace changes, rise to the challenge, don't be afraid to take on new roles to replace the ones (dispensing and manufacturing on premises) that we are relinquishing.”

What next?

These are exciting times for the profession, and the Pharmacy 2020 steering group will now focus on developing a vision for the future that is both aspirational and realistic. We must ensure that pharmacy plays a major role in health care that is both medicines focused and patient-centred.

You have told us what you want for the future of the profession. Over the summer, we will be modelling scenarios for the future of pharmacy to help develop a strategy to achieve the profession's ambitions. A vision document will be launched in the autumn outlining the strategy. Achieving the profession's ambitions will become the core work of the Society as a professional leadership body.

