



# Foreword

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**F**or pharmacists, this is an exciting time: the expectations of the public and the Government's plans for the future of the NHS are creating a huge agenda for change. Changes in the way that we work, the way we are rewarded and the way that we are regulated are all part of the new agenda. You, who are the future of pharmacy in Great Britain, now face many new opportunities to develop and shape your careers, as well as the wider pharmacy profession.

Pharmacy will play a crucial role in helping ensure that the NHS of tomorrow provides a service where patients receive the best care available. Pharmacists now have a golden opportunity to do things differently and better, for the patients we serve and for the profession of which we are so proud.

As a regulatory and professional body, a key role of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society is to protect the public by setting and ensuring the highest standards for the practice of pharmacy. It follows that, when you become a member of the Society, your overriding concern will be the welfare of patients and you take on certain responsibilities to your patients that you must exercise with care and thought.

New clinical responsibilities, such as prescribing, will increase the challenges

and opportunities we face as pharmacists. Patients and clients are questioning and challenging professional opinion more frequently and barriers between the different professions are being broken down. Working and learning together within interdisciplinary teams is key to achieving the best care and service for patients. In this new environment, you will have the responsibility for ensuring that others in the health care team benefit from your skills. This gives you the opportunity to make the most of the skills and knowledge you acquire.

Clinical governance within the health service demands higher standards and greater accountability from all those who work within it. Your commitment to pharmacy and to learning throughout your professional life will be essential to deliver this. The science underpinning your degree will give you the flexibility to move in a variety of directions, allowing you to make a unique contribution wherever you choose to work.

This is a big step along the road of the profession of pharmacy. As a preregistration tutor myself for many years I know that your own tutor will work with you and take a keen interest in your progress. I hope you enjoy the rest of your degree and preregistration year and I look forward to welcoming you into the profession. ✎