



# Foreword

**For personal use only. Not to be reproduced without permission of the editor (permissions@pharmj.org.uk)**

**T**he way health care is delivered in Great Britain is going through significant change and pharmacists have an important role to play in helping to ensure that the NHS of the future provides patients with the best care available.

Public expectations and Government plans for the future of the health services are creating a huge agenda for change. As traditional barriers are broken down so new opportunities are emerging to help tomorrow's pharmacists develop and shape their careers.

For new pharmacists embarking on a career in pharmacy, this is without question an exciting time full of opportunities to take the role of pharmacy forward and for pharmacists to use their full range of skills in providing new and improved services to the public.

Whether they are practising in the community, in a hospital or working in the pharmaceutical industry, pharmacists are key players in shaping the future of health care. An increasing number of medicines are being reclassified from prescription-only to pharmacy medicine status, further strengthening the support that pharmacists can offer to help patients manage minor ailments and chronic conditions.

The Government has launched a public health White Paper and a strategy for supporting people with long-term

conditions in England in which pharmacists have a key role. The new community pharmacy contracts in Scotland, Wales and England will give pharmacists the opportunity to provide services that meet the real needs of patients. Pharmacists will come out from behind the dispensing counter to interact with the public on a much larger scale than before.

In hospitals, pharmacists are also moving centre stage. Robots are already being used to dispense medicines, freeing pharmacists to engage with patients on the wards. Hospital pharmacists are already specialising in conditions such as diabetes or heart failure.

All pharmacists have the health and well-being of patients at the heart of their practice. Today, patients rightly expect much more of a say in their treatment and pharmacists and other health professionals work in therapeutic partnerships with patients playing a crucial role.

The pace of change in today's health services brings with it opportunities as traditional barriers are broken down. The new generation of young pharmacists will enjoy many new and exciting career developments during the course of their professional lives.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your degree and preregistration year and I look forward to welcoming you into the profession. ✎

Nicholas Wood  
is President of  
the Royal Pharmaceutical  
Society of Great Britain