



Strategic plan
2017-20

General Pharmaceutical Council
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Strategic plan presented to Parliament and the Scottish Parliament Pursuant to Paragraph 8 of Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Order 2010

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Foreword

Patients and the public will always have the right to expect safe and effective care from pharmacy. As the pharmacy regulator we are committed to regulating in a way that supports this and enables it to happen. Our strategic plan sets out how we will continue to achieve this over the next three years.

We have produced this version of our strategy at a time of significant uncertainty: in pharmacy, in healthcare and in the wider political background to our work. There are growing expectations on everyone working within health and care – including pharmacy – to provide better quality experiences and outcomes to patients and the public. And in that context, the valuable contribution pharmacy can make to the health and wellbeing of people in Great Britain has been recognised by governments in all three countries.

It is for elected governments across Great Britain to decide how pharmacy should be structured and how it should be funded. It is for providers of care within the NHS, those providing services to the NHS, and independent providers to decide how to deliver care. It is for us as the regulator to set out the standards expected of pharmacy professionals and pharmacies, and to say how we will work – in partnership with others – to uphold those standards.



It is therefore important that we explain how we see our role as the regulator and the impact we can have on the health, safety and wellbeing of people using pharmacy services. We need to continue to explain:

- our regulatory aims and approach
- how regulation can support individuals and providers in focusing on outcomes for patients and users of pharmacy services
- what proportionate, efficient and effective regulation means to us, and
- how we will work with others to deliver this

At its heart, our strategy has not changed. But we have decided to set out our approach in simpler and clearer terms. We can sum up what we want to achieve for patients and the public in two words: 'assurance' and 'improvement'. Firstly, we want to **provide assurance** to patients and the public about the standards of practice and quality of services they will receive from pharmacy professionals and pharmacies, now and in the future. Secondly, we want to play our part in **improving** the quality of pharmacy practice – so that patients and the public can receive better care and advice, which will in turn improve their health and wellbeing.



Nigel Clarke
Chair



Duncan Rudkin
Chief Executive
and Registrar

What we do

People receive safe, effective care and have trust in pharmacy because of the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of people working in pharmacy.

We have an important part to play. We:

- promote professionalism within pharmacy
- assure the quality of pharmacy, including its safety
- support improvement in pharmacy

We have a number of ways in which we do this. These include:

- registering and listing publicly the pharmacy professionals and pharmacies that provide care to patients and the public
- setting and promoting the standards required to enter and remain on our register
- receiving assurances, in a number of ways, that pharmacy professionals and pharmacies continue to uphold our standards – and acting appropriately when they do not
- sharing with others what we learn through our work
- investigating concerns about the people or pharmacies we register and taking proportionate action to protect the public and promote our standards



Our strategic aim

Support and improve the delivery of safe, effective care and uphold trust in pharmacy by ensuring:

1. the pharmacy team have the necessary knowledge, attitudes and behaviours

The pharmacy team are equipped to work flexibly alongside other health and care professionals to respond with confidence to the changing needs of people and populations needing care. As a result, the best use is made of the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of every member of the pharmacy team to deliver pharmacy services and improve them. That improvement will partly be brought about by the work we do including support for the continuous learning and development of the whole pharmacy team.

2. registered pharmacies deliver safe, effective care and services

We focus on outcomes for patients, rather than on bureaucratic rules and enforcement. We will keep improving the way we regulate pharmacy so that we make the best use of our powers and systems to assure and improve the quality of pharmacy practice. We will adapt the way in which we regulate, being truly flexible, proportionate and responsive, and use the best available evidence to support our work.

3. pharmacy regulation is efficient and effective

We continue to develop and improve the skills and knowledge of our staff, and the systems they use, so that we are delivering regulation that is both efficient and effective. Our regulatory operations will increasingly use data and intelligence. We will look to develop more effective partnerships with other regulatory agencies, providers and commissioners of care as well as with representative bodies. And we will modernise our own internal systems so that they are better able to serve the needs of registrants and the public and deliver proportionate regulation.

Our strategic approach

The strategic aim we have set ourselves, and the level of ambition we have committed to, means that we need to work differently. We need to move away from abstract concepts of 'professional' and 'system' regulation to instead regulate in the most proportionate and effective way possible. We will focus on the key operating principles below.

Promote professionalism

We believe the professional knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the people working in pharmacy offer the best assurance to people using pharmacy services. Our most effective role is in helping to promote an environment in which professionalism can flourish, and that the standards expected of pharmacy reflect this.

Be person-centred

At the heart of everything we do is the recognition that everyone is an individual, and has differing needs which we must understand and take account of in our work. This applies to everyone – including people using pharmacy services, people working in pharmacy, people working in the wider health and care sector and people in our own organisation.

Focus on outcomes

We will continue to focus on the outcomes we want to achieve on behalf of the people using pharmacy services. This will mean we can give the people working in pharmacy the flexibility to innovate and adapt in a way that improves quality.

Promote learning and improvement

We will work to continuously improve the quality of pharmacy. We will collect information from our work, and the work of others, so that we can share learning and promote improvement. And we will make sure that we also improve ourselves and work in the most efficient and effective ways.

Collaborate

We are one part of a wider system that ensures people receive safe and effective care from pharmacy, and ensures that public trust in pharmacy is maintained. If we are to be successful, we must work alongside the people using pharmacy, the leaders of pharmacy, other regulators, and the wider health and care sector.

Recognise the contribution of the whole pharmacy team

People receive safe and effective care when the skills, knowledge and contributions of everyone in the pharmacy team are used to their best effect. We will work in a way that recognises the whole pharmacy team's role in quality and improvement.

This strategy is our commitment to work with the people using pharmacy services, people working in pharmacy, and others, to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of people in Great Britain.



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