

## THE BRANCH AND REGIONAL NETWORK

Society Branches form a network for pharmacists in the places where they live and work. The Society's 130 Branches provide a local focus for professional and educational matters, with regular meetings on a wide range of practice, scientific and current affairs topics. The Branches offer a way for pharmacists to meet their fellow professionals in a relaxed setting. They help develop local leaders, support pharmacists in their CPD and encourage the development of life-long learning. The 11 Regions in England act as a link between the Branches and the Society's Council and co-ordinate larger scale public relations activities. To find out about your local Branch contact the membership unit on 020 7572 2331 or via e-mail [b&ra@rpsgb.org](mailto:b&ra@rpsgb.org).

## KEEPING IN CONTACT

To fulfil its many roles, the Society needs to be able to communicate with its members and it is important for pharmacists to ensure they can be reached by supplying up-to-date contact details. Any change of address can be made in writing by post (see address later in this leaflet) or via e-mail to the registration section ([registration@rpsgb.org](mailto:registration@rpsgb.org)) or telephone 020 7572 2322. myRPSGB is a password protected area of the website, enabling you to pay annual fees online. Look out for new myRPSGB services – such as the ability to change your address online.

## RETENTION FEES

Retention fee forms are distributed in December with fees due annually on 1 January.

Fees can be paid quickly and conveniently online using major credit and debit cards through the Society's website [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org). Direct debit is a payment option but mandates must be set up in the autumn for collection of the full fee in January.

## HELP IN TIMES OF NEED

At times of stress, illness or other hardship, the Society, through its **Benevolent Fund** charity, provides its members with a range of support.

The **Listening Friends' Scheme** offers free advice to pharmacists suffering from stress. To obtain help, the first step is to call the automatic answering service on 020 7572 2442. Callers will be asked to leave their name, contact telephone number and a convenient time to call. A listening friend will then call back, normally on the evening of the same day or within 24 hours.

The **Pharmacist Health Support Programme** provides help to pharmacists who experience problems with alcohol or drugs of addiction, or who have other problems that may impair their fitness to practise. The programme was established by the Society but is run independently. The independent national co-ordinator can be contacted on 01926 315 138. The programme also helps the immediate families of pharmacists.

For more information about these services visit the website [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org).

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

The staff of the Society are committed to offering a high quality service. Occasionally, things can go wrong and the standard of service delivered may not meet expectations. The Society wants to know if this happens and why. Comments and suggestions received will help put things right and allow the Society to take action to raise the standards and prevent a recurrence of the problem.

For details of the formal complaints procedure, please see our website [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org).

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# helping pharmacists achieve excellence



Royal  
Pharmaceutical  
Society  
of Great Britain

## Welcome

Welcome to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (the Society), the professional and regulatory body for the pharmacy profession.

The Society has a long history of commitment to professionalism and support for excellence. Membership of the Society shows that you are part of a profession with nationally recognised standards of practice, which you have made a commitment to meet. This is an exciting time to embark on a career in pharmacy with so many new opportunities emerging.

### THE ROLE OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. It also regulates pharmacy technicians on a voluntary basis, which is expected to become statutory under anticipated legislation.

The primary objectives of the Society are to lead, regulate, develop and represent the profession of pharmacy.

The Society leads and supports the development of the profession within the context of the public benefit. This includes the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy. In addition, it promotes the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums.

The Society has responsibility for a wide range of functions that combine to assure competence and fitness to practise.

These include:

- Controlled entry into the profession
- Education

- Registration
- Setting and enforcing professional standards
- Promoting good practice
- Providing support for improvement
- Dealing with poor performance
- Dealing with misconduct and removal from the register.

### THE COUNCIL

The Society's governing Council comprises 17 elected pharmacists (including one from each of the three home countries) and two elected pharmacy technicians, together with one pharmacist appointed by those universities in Great Britain that award the Master of Pharmacy degree and 10 lay members.

The Society has a Royal Charter, which, along with legislation, provides the framework for the organisation's remit and governance.

### WORKING ACROSS ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES

Since the introduction of political devolution in 1999 in the UK, the Society has sought to shape and influence policy relating to three administrations, the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. In response to these changes the Society has established a Scottish Pharmacy Board, based in Edinburgh and a Welsh Pharmacy Board, based in Cardiff, which replace the former Scottish and Welsh Executives. An English Pharmacy Board, based in London, has also been established to ensure that the Society is in a position to effectively liaise with each country's Department of Health.

### PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

To maintain public confidence and trust, the Society will always thoroughly investigate complaints about a pharmacist or pharmacy. For more information about the Society's complaints procedure visit [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org).

### SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

The Society is a key source of information that supports the profession of pharmacy. Members are able to use the library facilities in both London and Edinburgh or access the online library catalogue at <http://olib.rpsgb.org>.

The Society provides advice and help on aspects of practice, pharmacy law and ethics, and scientific and technical matters. Another key source of information is *The Pharmaceutical Journal* and other journals published by the Society.

The Society produces a range of world class publications including textbooks for students and practitioners, and major reference works such as *Martindale: The complete drug reference*. In conjunction with the British Medical Association it also publishes the *British National Formulary (BNF)*. A full catalogue can be accessed via the Society's website at [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org).

### GUIDING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

An important role of the Society is to support pharmacists' practice by developing standards, frameworks and guidance. Audit is one way of learning from and improving the way in which pharmacists care for their patients. The Society has a number of audit templates available on its website ([www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org)) for pharmacists to use in their practice.

Members can also access professional support material on a range of topics through the Society's website e.g. guidance on legal issues, practice guidance on bowel cancer, guidance on clinical governance and stop smoking services.

The Society also supports a range of groups and activities that reflect the breadth of areas in which pharmacists work.

In community and hospital pharmacy, the Society's team of inspectors carries out routine inspections of registered premises. The inspectors also offer advice and guidance to pharmacists on good professional practice in important areas such as clinical governance and risk management.

The annual British Pharmaceutical Conference and Exhibition (BPC) organised by the Society brings together the science and practice elements of the pharmacy profession. The conference also provides career opportunities by hosting the BPC-PJ Careers Forum where organisations offer advice on career development. The conference provides a unique opportunity for learning and networking. For more information see the link at [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org).

### CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As health professionals, pharmacists must show a commitment to life-long learning. Pharmacists have a professional responsibility to keep up-to-date with changes in pharmacy practice, the law relating to pharmacy and the latest knowledge and technology applicable to pharmacy. Throughout their careers, pharmacists must maintain competence and effectiveness in their practice.

To support pharmacists' learning, the Society runs a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme based on a cycle of reflection, planning, action and evaluation. Pharmacists are required to keep records of their CPD – either in paper form or electronically – and to submit these to the Society on request.

CPD is also mandatory for pharmacy technicians who are registered as practising.

For more information take a look at the dedicated CPD website [www.uptodate.org.uk](http://www.uptodate.org.uk) or contact the CPD team on 020 7572 2540 or via e-mail [cpd@rpsgb.org](mailto:cpd@rpsgb.org).

