



**Royal  
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# News release

**For immediate release**

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## **COUNCIL APPROVES STANDARDS FOR MANDATORY CPD**

Professional Standards and Guidance for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and the way in which non-compliance with these standards is handled were formally agreed by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain's Council today.

Mandatory CPD has been a requirement of the *Code of Ethics* since 2001; however until now there have not been any further mandatory standards. These new standards will support the Society's *Code of Ethics for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians*, and will come into effect from 1 March 2009. From this date, practising pharmacists and registered technicians will be required to make a minimum of nine CPD entries per annum.

The Society's Deputy Registrar and Director of Regulation, Wendy Harris said: "It is imperative pharmacists and pharmacy technicians keep their competencies, skills and knowledge of best practice up-to-date. By formalising the requirements for CPD, we are not only showing the profession what standards it needs to attain; we are also making a commitment to supporting pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in their on-going development throughout their careers."

Consultation on the draft professional standards and guidance and proposed non-referral to the Investigating Committee for non-compliance closed on 29 December 2008. Nearly 1,000 responses from the profession were received, with the majority expressing support for the proposals.

Key views to emerge from the consultation included:

- The feeling CPD needed to be undertaken throughout the profession, especially in the light of the fact CPD was widely practised by other comparable occupations;
- The desire to see the CPD framework strike the right balance between support and regulation; and
- The need for the issue of non-compliance with CPD to be added to the categories of cases suitable for non-referral to the Investigating Committee, subject to the threshold criteria.

Wendy Harris said while the statutory CPD assessment process would not begin until 2010 with the establishment of the General Pharmaceutical Council, the Society would continue to support and facilitate practising pharmacists and registered technicians in the recording of CPD during this period of transition.

“A system of call and review will be implemented in the summer, whereby the Society will periodically check each pharmacist’s and pharmacy technician’s CPD records. Following a successful pilot call and review between 2007 and 2008, we are now working to ensure the system is as user-friendly as possible.

“The CPD framework agreed today reflects the views of the Society and also of its members. Moving forward, it is important CPD is implemented in a way which best meets the needs of the public and the profession.”

The new professional Standards and Guidance for CPD will be uploaded on the Society website [www.rpsgb.org](http://www.rpsgb.org) and mailed to members in April.

**Ends**

**For media enquiries please contact the  
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## Notes to editors

The consultation on CPD related to the following two proposals:

### 1. Proposed Professional Standards and Guidance

- Pharmacy was among the earliest adoptors of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the UK. The Society introduced CPD in 1999 following the Pharmacy in a New Age consultation in which members expressed the view that CPD should be mandatory.
- The Pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician Order 2007 gives the Society responsibility to enforce mandatory recording of CPD for which a set of statutory CPD rules are required. The Department of Health has indicated that it intends to delay the preparation of these rules and include them in the rule making process for the General Pharmaceutical Council.
- In April 2008, the Council of the Society agreed that the requirement for practising pharmacists and registered pharmacy technicians to maintain a CPD record will be based on the *Code of Ethics for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians* until the CPD rules are made.
- The *Code of Ethics* is based on seven over-arching principles that inform the conduct, performance and practice of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. Principle 5 of the *Code of Ethics* states that registrants must undertake and maintain up-to-date evidence of CPD relevant to their field of practice.
- In order to specify the professional requirements under the principles of the *Code of Ethics* and provide guidance to registrants, the Society produces separate professional standards and guidance documents that clearly detail the mandatory professional standards (indicated by the word 'must') and guidance on good practice (indicated by the word 'should'), which registrants should follow in all normal circumstances. The consultation document outlines the mandatory professional standards and guidance on good practice relating to CPD.

### 2. Proposed non-referral to the Investigating Committee for non-compliance

- The Council of the Society agreed at its meeting in June 2008 on the types of cases that can be dealt with by way of non-referral to the Investigating Committee, the

threshold criteria to be applied for such cases and the framework for handling the cases.

- Cases against registrants which are not referred should be dealt with by way of a letter of advice sent from the Chief Inspector to the registrant where the individual admits the allegations made and accepts the advice provided. Records would be maintained for five years as part of the registrant's fitness to practise history.
- The Society is proposing to include 'failure to comply with CPD requirements' as one of the categories of cases that is suitable for non-referral to the Investigating Committee.