

## **Consultation on the Fitness to Practise Adjudication for Health professionals: Assessing different mechanisms for delivery**

### **Response from the National Pharmacy Boards of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society**

#### **Introduction**

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is the professional body for pharmacists in Great Britain, until the recent formation of the General Pharmaceutical Council it was also the regulatory body for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. This response comes from its English Pharmacy Board (EPB) which is an elected body of pharmacists representing all sectors of pharmacy practice.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the only body that represents all sectors of pharmacy in Great Britain and currently has 49,000 members. There are approximately 75 pharmacists per constituency, working in hospitals, industry, academia and community pharmacies.

The RPS leads and supports the development of the pharmacy 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.

Its functions and services include:

**Leadership, representation and advocacy:** promoting the status of the pharmacy profession and ensuring that pharmacy's voice is heard by governments, the media and the public.

**Professional development, education and support:** helping pharmacists to advance their careers through accredited training courses, career advice and guidance on good practice.

**Professional networking and publications:** creating a series of communication channels to enable pharmacists to discuss areas of common interest.

#### **General comments:**

The Society is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the Fitness to Practise Adjudication for Health professionals: Assessing different mechanisms for delivery.

Professional health regulation must be designed to protect the public; this can only be achieved by adopting a consistency in the approach taken to Adjudication.

The NPB are not convinced that the establishment of a new body the **Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator** will be a more robust model of delivering this adjudication than the current system of each health regulator undertaking this role.

Pharmacy regulation is currently in a period of evolution with the expected establishment of the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) in September 2010. The intention stated by the GPhC is that

“The new arrangements will ensure that the pharmacy profession is regulated according to the same principles as other healthcare professions. These principles have been developed to improve public confidence in regulation in general”

The establishment of GPHC was a Governmental initiative designed to create a modern, responsive pharmacy regulator, providing confidence to the public and the profession in pharmacy regulation. Thus to establish another body to oversee Adjudication seems premature at best and destabilising to the development of GPHC worst.

The pharmacy profession is currently in a period of transition to a new regulatory and potential different mode of regulation it is vital for successful transition that a clear, transparent, simple process is developed to introduce another tier to the regulatory process would be disruptive and cumbersome.

The NPB have recently submitted several responses to the GPHC on the standards they will adopt and the relevant fee structure the GPHC proposed to adopt. In NPC believe that the GPhC should set a fee structure that is proportionate to deliver the stated regulatory outcomes and is fair to the fee-paying registrants. It is important to ensure that the outcome to the consultation of establishment of the **Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator** does not unduly affect the fees payable by pharmacy for the regulation of the profession.

*In answer to Q1; Should the Government proceed with its preferred Option – Option 2  
Yes or No?*

Yes. – see general response

*In answer to Question 2; Do you have any comments?*

Please see general response.