



Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare
27 Sussex Place
London
NW1 4RG

23 January 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare - Service Standards on Confidentiality

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the professional body for pharmacists in Great Britain. We represent all sectors of pharmacy in Great Britain and we lead and support the development of the pharmacy profession including the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy. In addition, we promote the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums.

As healthcare professionals, pharmacists are required to adhere to legal and ethical obligations of confidentiality, and also expected to work within standards of conduct, ethics and performance set by the pharmacy regulators, the General Pharmaceutical Council. Guidance on confidentiality can be found on their website at: <http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/get-involved/taking-view/confidentiality-draft-guidance>.

Pharmacy has always contributed a core role in public health services for sexual and reproductive health throughout Great Britain by providing accessible community pharmacy locations with convenient opening hours in local communities, and comprehensive pharmaceutical services in hospital wards or outpatient clinics. Examples of how pharmacists involved in sexual health and reproductive health services are:

- Community pharmacists providing a range of comprehensive sexual health services (such as STI screening) including NHS care in line with local and national funding. They also provide advice and supply medicines and other sexual health products directly to the public. Community pharmacists additionally supply emergency hormonal contraception to patients under Patient Group Directions (PGDs) and as a Pharmacy medicine - the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has produced professional guidance on the supply of emergency hormonal contraception for our members.
- Clinical pharmacists (some at Consultant level) are employed by HIV services providing specialist advice to clinicians and patients on all aspects of drug therapy, and monitor drug treatment for patients. Clinical pharmacists may also be independent or supplementary prescribers, with direct responsibility for case loads and patient management.
- Medicines management support and advice within primary and secondary care; preparing PGDs, formularies and medicines policies e.g. community contraceptive services and local GUM services

We therefore suggest that pharmacists' roles in sexual health and reproductive health services are highlighted within the service standards on confidentiality and reference is made to the pharmacy regulators where the functions of professional regulators and specific guidance from the regulators are discussed.

We hope these comments are useful.

Thank you for contacting the Royal Pharmaceutical Society.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Chang', with a large, stylized initial 'H'.

Helen Chang
Senior Professional Support Pharmacist, RPS Support Manager