

**Health Education England**

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14 November 2013

Dear Colleagues

**Ensuring a sustainable supply of pharmacy graduates - stage one proposals for consultation**

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the professional body for pharmacists in Great Britain. We are the only body that represents all sectors of pharmacy in Great Britain. The RPS leads and supports 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. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the HEFCE and HEE consultation: ensuring a sustainable supply of pharmacy graduates – stage one proposals for consultation.

The RPS has been considering approaches for managing a potential oversupply of MPharm graduates for some time now and its Education Expert Advisory Panel published a thought leadership paper on the subject this summer. In formulating the attached response the RPS has collated views and opinions from: universities, students, employers and other stakeholders. Our prime concern has been to consider the impact of each option on the quality of the pharmacy graduates produced. This is imperative so that public and patients receive expert pharmaceutical care and support to maximise the beneficial clinical outcomes from medicines.

Where our responses have been based on assumptions or a likely consequence we have endeavored to state this. We are aware that there will be other pharmacy stakeholders that will have taken a different position with their preferred option. However, we believe that in light of current evidence and in the best interests of wider society, the supply of pharmacy graduates needs to be managed and we have addressed this from a professional perspective as described above.

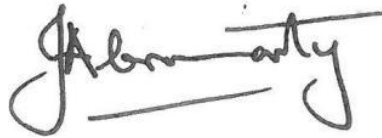
As the RPS is the professional leadership body for pharmacy in Great Britain it is important that any discussions about ensuring a sustainable supply of pharmacy graduates (and the availability of pre-registration training placements) must be considered in the context of the whole geography of Great Britain. Future policy on the supply of pharmacy graduates in England must not destabilise the pharmacy labour market or adversely affect student populations in Scotland and Wales.

We look forward to being involved in stage 2 of the consultation.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Dr. David Branford in black ink.

**Dr. David Branford**  
Chair,  
English Pharmacy Board

Handwritten signature of Professor John Cromarty in black ink.

**Professor John Cromarty**  
Chair,  
Scottish Pharmacy Board

Handwritten signature of Mrs. Mair Davies in blue ink.

**Mrs. Mair Davies**  
Chair,  
Welsh Pharmacy Board