

## Geraldine McCaffrey – Statement for WPB Chair Election

The RPS represents pharmacists across all sectors, with a long, proud history of supporting the profession as our roles have developed over time. Within Wales, RPS plays a central role in bringing together the pharmacy profession around the transformations in our roles and service, required to meet the changing needs of patients and the NHS. *Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales (2019)* was created by pharmacy professionals across Wales, with leadership from the RPS team, in response to Welsh Government's strategy for Health and Social Care, *A Healthier Wales*. Over the last year, the RPS brought together our workforce across Wales to reflect on our progress so far, and move to the next steps on our journey. Our organisation will continue to play a pivotal role in delivering on the goals. This work is a key example of the successful systems leadership work of the RPS in Wales, which as Chair I will ensure we continue to build on.

The pandemic pushed forward changes in how we are able to work with our members. We now have greater opportunities for online events and engagement with members. With the appointment of the regional ambassadors, I'm keen that we use this opportunity to engage with members and non-members at all stages in their careers, both virtually and in person. As an organisation we have more to do to help pharmacists better understand the value of RPS to them, and the opportunities for them to contribute to leadership of our profession.

We are at a time of both challenge and opportunity for the pharmacy professions. The health and care needs of our communities are changing and growing. Professional roles in healthcare are expanding, within pharmacy this is supported and enabled by fundamental changes to initial education and training. There are advances in technologies that our profession must embrace for the benefit of our patients. Within RPS, our work across domains such as independent prescribing, career pathways and credentialing, personalised medicine and health inequalities are examples of how we are leading the profession in meeting these challenges and opportunities.

In this context, the UK Commission on Pharmacy Professional Leadership - instigated by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officers for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – published its report in February this year. It makes a number of recommendations on functions and a direction of travel it believes are essential for the future of pharmacy professional leadership. To achieve this, it concludes on a need to bring together the pharmacy leadership bodies and specialist interest groups across the four UK home nations. As WPB Chair I will work with our Board to engage constructively in this process, as we continue our leadership on behalf of the profession in Wales and across GB, ensuring we continue to keep the needs of our patients at the centre of our work.

My career has been predominantly in hospital pharmacy, with periods working in community pharmacy prior to qualifying and later in academia. I have held specialist clinical and team leader roles, and practiced as an independent prescriber. My current role is pharmacy lead for research and development across a large integrated Health Board. Over the last 18 months I have also been working on transformational projects within digital and pharmacogenomics. As a member of the Delivery Board for *Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales*, I've been proud to influence and see the progress towards our vision for 2030 both during and since the challenging pandemic period.

As a career-long member of RPS, I joined the Welsh Board in 2021. I was honoured to take up the role of Vice Chair in 2022 and more recently joining the Assembly. These roles have brought me closer to the workings within the organisation, and how it fulfils its role to lead and advocate for pharmacy on wider platforms. As a Welsh Board, I believe we work well as a team, valuing and respecting the views and contributions of all members, constructively debating issues, and working

seamlessly with the team of RPS staff. This culture has long been embedded within our Board under the stewardship of the previous Chairs, and one I would continue to foster. I have learnt a great deal from the leadership of Cheryl, our outgoing Chair, and am grateful for her support. I also recognise the legacy of our previous Chair, Suzanne, and that of previous Board members who have stepped down over the last few years. Going forward, I am committed to listening intently to the views and ideas of our Board members to inform in our business plans. I will present a strong voice on behalf of our Board and our members in Wales, ensuring the views and priorities from Wales are taken into account at a GB level.