

RPS Digital Pharmacy Expert Advisory Group (EAG)

Terms of reference

Creation date: April 2021, minor update July 2021

1. Overview

The RPS Digital Pharmacy Expert Advisory Group (EAG) provides a source of expertise on digital pharmacy matters which impact on patients, the public and the pharmacy profession.

The Digital Pharmacy EAG is a consultative group for the National boards of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), acting as a source of expertise and advice and providing evidenced-based leadership and opinion to inform RPS policy decisions and advice to government and other organisations. This will enable RPS to provide strong representation for digital matters, ensuring this area of practice is both recognised and supported across England, Scotland and Wales.

The main aim of the Digital Pharmacy EAG is to provide leadership and expert advice to enable RPS to be more effective at supporting professional development, practice support and advocacy in the area of digital pharmacy.

The Expert Advisory Group will constitute and continually engage with a RPS Digital Pharmacy Online Community, which will be a wider, empowered and representative network of pharmacists with digital knowledge working across all areas of pharmacy. Engagement will be two-way: for the EAG to seek and disseminate information.

2. Deliverables and Outcomes

The Digital Pharmacy EAG will:

Provide expertise:

1. Advise and provide expertise to RPS on significant digital issues affecting pharmacy, both across England, Scotland and Wales, and internationally.
2. Support RPS to respond to requests for advice, expertise, comment and engagement with Governments and other organisations including regulators, Royal Colleges, partnerships and specialist groups.
3. Provide a cohesive, strategic forum to ensure RPS is able to shape key policies and innovation in digital pharmacy.

Lead and communicate:

1. Draw on evidence to deliver system wide leadership, supporting RPS national boards on digital matters affecting pharmacy teams.
2. Communicate the work of the expert advisory group to internal and external stakeholders.
3. Lead, support the development of and encourage discussion within the RPS Digital Pharmacy Online Community.
4. Where agreed with RPS, represent RPS by providing expertise and leadership opinion aligned with RPS policy. This may include attending meetings or acting as a media spokesperson.
5. Work with other RPS groups (e.g. advisory groups, country teams and communications) to align activity and support the delivery of the RPS mission and vision.
6. Lead and encourage membership of RPS across pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists.
7. Advise the RPS Education Directorate on national curricula and continuing professional development to ensure graduates and pharmacists have the necessary skills and knowledge for successful careers in digital health and pharmacy.

Support pharmacy development:

1. Help support pharmacists and pharmacy technicians working in digital roles throughout their careers by ensuring the provision of development opportunities for networking and sharing of best practice.
2. Support RPS in the provision of learning opportunities for all pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in digital matters.
3. Help the RPS education directorate to influence curriculum and advise on competence development training programmes to ensure pharmacists have the necessary skills and knowledge in digital pharmacy for successful careers.
4. Help ensure a joined-up approach across RPS and the profession to ensure that members are kept at the forefront of healthcare.
5. Facilitate recruitment and retention of pharmacists within the digital pharmacy sector and prompt life-long membership of RPS.

3. Expert group member specifications

- Members of the RPS Digital Pharmacy EAG can include Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians with significant experience of working on digital services or projects. This is to ensure breadth and knowledge of digital pharmacy is made available to the RPS.
- Membership of the group is based on an individual's own professional experience and perspectives rather than acting as a representative of another group or organisation.

- The group will be constituted to ensure a wide breadth of relevant experience across its membership.
- RPS has ultimate responsibility for the group and the group will reflect digital pharmacy across Great Britain and the diversity of the profession
- The group will comprise a maximum of 15 members and should ideally reflect the breadth of digital healthcare, services, and practice.

All members of the group will:

- Be a member of RPS (where eligible).
- Conform to the RPS code of conduct for members of governance bodies.
- Declare any conflicts of interest, and to act in an open and transparent manner without undue influence.
- Not be an elected member of RPS National Boards (with the exception of the observers).

Ideally, the group will have representation across digital pharmacy and the three nations of Great Britain

4. Time demands and ways of working

- The Digital Pharmacy EAG will meet by a virtual platform maximum of four times a year. Additional meetings may be required according to matters arising and will be conducted virtually.
- The majority of interactions will take place between meetings by email or through RPS online networks.
- Members will declare any interests that may be a conflict to the work underway.
- All members are expected to attend at least 75% of all meetings held. Those not attending 75% of all meetings may be asked to stand down by the Chair of the Group.
- Administrative support will be provided to the group and to the group Chair to plan meetings and undertake work programmes.
- The RPS staff lead is responsible for reporting the activities and deliverables of the group to the three National Boards and the Assembly.

5. Terms of office

The term for members to sit on the Digital Pharmacy EAG is three years with a second term possible in order to stagger turnover of membership. Previous membership of the group is not a bar to reapplication at a later date. It is expected if a member no longer meets the member specification they would step down. In case of retirement, members may remain on the group for an additional year. The positions for the group members will be advertised openly and the selection process undertaken by RPS.

6. Composition

The composition of the Digital Pharmacy EAG should reflect the spectrum of pharmacy practice as well as regional and country interests. The Digital Pharmacy EAG will not exceed 15 members who will be appointed by an RPS panel. Digital Pharmacy EAG members will be appointed following an open call for nominations to RPS members.

7. Position of Chair

The position of Chair of the Digital Pharmacy EAG is held for a maximum period of three years. During the recruitment process for the Digital Pharmacy EAG, all applicants will be able to express their interest in becoming Chair. For the re-election of Chair, this will be advertised to the group and externally at the penultimate meeting of the Chair's term of office following the RPS recruitment process. A member standing for Chair should declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. It is widely accepted that professional experts will be asked to sit on various committees and groups nationally and internationally and that such external recognition would not preclude appointment to the Chair.

8. Refreshing Group membership

When vacancies occur on the Digital Pharmacy EAG, an invitation for new members to join the group will be circulated and the recruitment process followed. This will be done as need arises, or as a minimum every three years. On occasion, it may be necessary to co-opt specific expertise onto the Group.

9. Other

Appropriate RPS staff will attend meetings as required to support the work of the Digital Pharmacy EAG, including:

- Country Team Directors and / or Policy Leads
- Director of Pharmacy and Member Experience
- Directorate Administrator
- Other RPS staff, invited guests and external consultants engaged by RPS as required

10. Travel Reimbursement

Travel expenses up to the level of the standard class ticket bought on the day of travel will be reimbursed when RPS requires the Expert Advisory Group to meet in line with the RPS expenses policy. It is anticipated that, for the foreseeable future, all meetings will be held virtually.