

Using standards to help provide safe and effective care for members of the public – February 2019

Introduction

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the regulatory body for pharmacy in Great Britain. It regulates pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and registered pharmacies, by setting and enforcing standards for them which are designed to protect the public. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), is the professional body for pharmacy, and develops professional standards for pharmacists; its vision is to become the world leader in the safe and effective use of medicines.

Although the GPhC and the RPS have different roles with regards to pharmacy, they both work to create frameworks which protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the public by upholding standards and public trust in pharmacy.

Regulatory and professional standards

The regulatory standards produced by the GPhC for pharmacy professionals and pharmacies are statements of what people have the right to expect when they use pharmacy services. They also reflect what pharmacy professionals expect of themselves when delivering high standards of care. All standards set by the GPhC work to improve the quality and safety of services provided to patients and the public. Regulatory standards must be met by all pharmacy professionals and owners of registered pharmacies, otherwise their registration may be at risk.

The professional standards produced by the RPS provide a framework to support pharmacists and their teams, working in a variety of settings and roles, to develop their professional practice, improve services, shape future services, and deliver high quality patient care. While professional standards are not mandatory they are developed and owned by the profession, and set out what constitutes 'good' in terms of practice, systems of care, and working practices. Pharmacy professionals that are following professional standards set by the RPS can have confidence that they are meeting the regulatory standards set by the GPhC.

What does this mean for members of the public?

All pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy owners are expected to be aware of and use all relevant standards, both regulatory and professional, to support them in their work. Following the standards will help them to deliver patient-centred care and good quality outcomes, and ensure that members of the public receive safe and effective care.