

## Professional Standards for Hospital Pharmacy Services: optimising patient outcomes from medicines

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### Frequently Asked Questions July 2014

#### Hospital Pharmacy Standards...tell me more?

In 2012 the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) published professional standards for hospital pharmacy services. These professional standards aim to ensure that patients receive a high quality pharmacy service across the full range of service providers, whether provided in house or outsourced. We identified 10 overarching professional standards, under which sit several 'dimensions' of practice that encompass all pharmacy services across a range of care settings.

In 2014, we are delighted to relaunch the refreshed professional standards, which have been revisited in light of the Francis review of events at Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust and the response to that review, the report of the National Advisory Group on the Safety of Patients in England (commonly referred to as the Berwick report). The standards have also been reviewed to ensure they align with other developments in pharmacy and healthcare agendas in Scotland and Wales. As part of the standards review we have also taken the opportunity to incorporate the experience of the 35 development sites from across GB that spent a year putting the standards into practice.

[Click here for a summary of the changes to the standards](#)

#### What's it all for - what do the standards aim to achieve?

These overarching standards give a broad framework that will support Chief Pharmacists, Directors of Pharmacy, and pharmacy teams to continually improve services, and shape future services and pharmacy roles to deliver **quality** patient care. They aim to give Chief Executives or Board members a framework against which they can be assured that there is professional input into medicines policies and services. Ultimately, these standards will help patients experience a consistent quality of service within and across healthcare providers that protects them from incidents of avoidable harm and enables them to get the best outcomes from their medicines.

#### How did you develop these professional standards?

The professional standards were developed by the profession and facilitated by the RPS. We worked in close partnership with the Association of Teaching Hospital Pharmacists (ATHP), the Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP) and our Partner groups; with extensive input from our pharmacy advisory group, representing a broad range of hospital pharmacy services in acute and community settings, across all three countries. Following publication of the standards in 2012, 35 development sites shared their experiences of putting the standards into practice in their own organisations, a report of their experiences including examples of innovative and effective practice and patient care can be [found here](#), and their experiences and feedback helped to further revise the standards.

The 2014 review of the standards was led by an advisory group with further input from members and other key stakeholders.

### **What is the scope of the standards?**

The ten overarching standards focus on the core principles of hospital pharmacy services i.e. professional standards for services that we would expect pharmacy teams to provide or support with leadership and expertise. These are professional standards which are developed and owned by the profession that describe good practice, systems of care or working.

### **Are the standards just for hospital pharmacy?**

No, the standards have a broad applicability as highlighted in the document, and we envisage that they will be useful for acute, mental health, private and community services providers. Aspects of the standards may also be of relevance to other organisations such as prisons, hospices and ambulance trusts.

### **Will there be any regulation of the standards from RPS?**

The RPS is not a regulator and as such we do not enforce or inspect hospitals against our standards. The professional standards are consistent with (but do not duplicate) relevant legal frameworks and core standards required by 'systems' regulators, professional regulators and insurers. Regulatory and professional standards and guidance have the same overarching purpose; to provide a framework which helps ensure good patient care and there is an expectation from regulators, including the GPhC and CQC, that pharmacy teams are aware of and use all relevant professional standards and guidance.

### **What is the Standards Handbook?**

This is a supporting Handbook, published alongside the standards that provides further useful resources, illustrative practice examples and reference to legislation where relevant. In addition, it highlights the work of national and international organisations (e.g. the International Pharmaceutical Federation and the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists) that informed the development of the RPS hospital standards. The handbook is an evolving resource, and we welcome any feedback and useful resources, tools or illustrative practice examples you may want to share with colleagues.

### **What else is happening?**

The RPS is currently working with members and stakeholders on several other work streams to support pharmacists and their teams working with hospital pharmacy services. In 2014 this will include a report to help with the development of seven day services, work around delayed or missed doses of medicines in hospitals, and working with other professional organisations including the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Physicians. We will also be looking at best practice in patient engagement to determine how best to measure patient experience of hospital pharmacy services. We are also working with NHS Benchmarking who are leading a project in 2014 to benchmark hospital pharmacy services across the UK, using the RPS Professional Standards to describe "what good looks like".

In 2013 we published [Professional Standards for Homecare Services in England](#) and in 2014 the [Handbook for Homecare Services in England](#) to support our members involved in providing or commissioning homecare services.

The RPS Professional Standards for Hospital Pharmacy Services will next be scheduled for review no later than 2016.

If you have any further questions or would like more information about the standards in general or other on-going work, please contact the RPS Support team at [support@rpharms.com](mailto:support@rpharms.com) / Direct Line: **0845 257 2570**.