

FAQs - Transforming the Pharmacy Workforce in Great Britain: the RPS Vision

Why has RPS produced a vision for the pharmacy workforce?

The RPS is incorporated by Royal Charter. As the governing document for the RPS, the Charter sets out in broad terms the Society's purpose, including 'to advance knowledge of, and education in, pharmacy and its application, thereby fostering good science and practice'.

What is the document about?

The vision describes a direction of travel for the pharmacy workforce, enabling the profession to reach its true potential and ensuring pharmacists, and the pharmacists of the future, are able to be the best they can be for patients. Our aspiration is that all patients in Great Britain have access to excellent pharmaceutical care from members of our profession.

What makes it visionary?

As a vision it sets out high level principles and aspirations for the pharmacy profession –the RPS will be working with the profession to achieve these goals.

What was the process for producing the vision?

The vision was developed by the RPS, including the national pharmacy boards for England, Scotland and Wales, and builds on thought leadership papers and other work produced by the RPS's Education Forum and other membership and partner groups.

What geography does the vision cover?

It covers the whole of Great Britain. The vision describes the view from all three nations towards pre- and post-qualification education and training of pharmacists and proposed reforms (GB-wide and individual countries).

What time period does the vision cover?

This is first time the RPS has described a vision for the pharmacy workforce. The document will continue to evolve over time as patients' needs and healthcare policies across Great Britain change.

How should the document be used?

It can be used as the basis for informing and supporting pharmacy workforce developments in each country as new and innovative policies and delivery models across the NHS, community care, social care, industry and education emerge.

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen Chief Executive: Helen Gordon

How does the document support a consistent approach to pre-qualification education and training?

The RPS believes that a needs-based, outcomes-focused approach to professional pharmacy education and training should be taken during student and pre-qualification years. This means developing models of education and training delivery to ensure that all student pharmacists across GB (UK even) enter the profession with the highest quality education and training experiences possible. Models may include a 4 year MPharm + 1 year pre-registration training or a 5-year integrated degree incorporating clinical practice.

What is a needs-based approach?

This means providing flexible support to develop pharmacists across all sectors to meet the changing demography and healthcare needs of an ageing population with increasingly complex medicine regimens within a cost constrained healthcare system.

What does this vision say about managing student numbers?

Workforce planning, including student numbers, is covered by other RPS documents e.g responses to consultations. Instead the vision describes how integral pharmacists are to improving care for patients and how pharmacists will increasingly feature in service workforce development plans across the NHS across Great Britain.

How will RPS support implementing this vision?

The RPS will identify annual priorities for the professional development, support and recognition required to achieve the RPS workforce vision across GB. The RPS will work with and influence policy makers, stakeholders and education providers on the transformation of the education and training for pharmacists to improve care and outcomes for patients.

How can I feed-back views and comments on the vision?

Comments and views on the vision are welcome as we are planning to continually develop the vision to meet the changing needs of the population and healthcare systems. Comments can be sent to workforce@rpharms.com