



## Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

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# News release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **SCOTTISH PHARMACIES ARE BECOMING FIRST CALL FOR HEALTH ADVICE**

Increasing numbers of Scots are turning to pharmacies for health advice according to a survey published today by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB). The survey, carried out by YouGov, shows that four out of five Scots (81%) would consult their pharmacist for certain types of advice.

The findings are part of a survey conducted to find out why people consult their pharmacist and if they are aware of the range of services that pharmacists can provide. The figures show an increase in the number of people approaching pharmacists from a similar survey in 2002<sup>1</sup> which showed 72% of Scots being comfortable seeking health advice from a pharmacist.

“The results clearly reflect the changing role of community pharmacy in Scotland,” explains Sandra Melville, Chairman of the RPSGB Scottish Pharmacy Board. “People are recognising that pharmacists can provide a whole range of health services, information and advice.”

Minor ailments topped the list of reasons people consulted pharmacists with 76% of Scots taking a trip to their local pharmacy for advice on things like hay fever, coughs and colds. While 24% would go to their pharmacist for advice on giving up smoking, 18% for a weight or diet issue and 17% for advice on contraception.

Later this year will see the start of the Scottish Government’s roll out of sexual health services, offering free Chlamydia testing and treatment and free emergency contraception across all community pharmacies in Scotland. Smoking cessation services will also be rolled out as part of the expansion of pharmacy services.

“Pharmacies have undergone a major change over the last few years”, added Lyndon Braddick, Director of RPSGB in Scotland. “Just over three quarters of all community pharmacies now have private consulting rooms making it easier for people to feel comfortable talking about more personal issues. We hope to see this trend continue with the role out of sexual health and smoking services. Pharmacy has a real role to play in making healthcare more accessible in the community and ease the pressure on the NHS.”

The survey did show a difference in results between men and women with 86% of women saying they would seek advice compared to 75% of men. The RPSGB is encouraging men to follow women’s example and make a trip to their local pharmacy not just for medicines but for healthy lifestyle advice. Today, 95% of Scots live within a 20 minute walk, bus or car journey of their local pharmacy. With most open longer at more convenient hours, in fact, it’s never been easier to get advice on:

- stopping smoking;
- tackling obesity;
- long term health conditions;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- sexual health;
- self care;
- a healthy lifestyle, and
- treating minor ailments like coughs and colds, aches and pains, stomach upsets and hay fever.

The survey, carried out by YouGov, involved 892 Scots across Central Scotland, Grampian and the Borders.

**Ends**

**For media enquiries please contact  
the Scottish Directorate on 0131 556 4386**

#### **Notes to editors**

#### **Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain**

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. It also regulates pharmacy technicians on a voluntary basis, which is expected to become statutory under anticipated legislation. The primary objectives of the RPSGB are to lead, regulate, develop and represent the profession of pharmacy.

The RPSGB leads and supports the development of the profession within the context of the public benefit. This includes the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy. In addition, it promotes the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums. Following the publication in 2007 of the Government White Paper *Trust, Assurance and Safety - The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century*, the RPSGB is working towards the demerger of its regulatory and professional roles. This will see the establishment of a new General Pharmaceutical Council and a new professional body for pharmacy in 2010.

### **Survey**

Research was carried out by YouGov from 23 – 25 July 2008. The total sample size was 892. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Scottish adults (aged 18+).

1. Refers to the Scottish Consumer Council Survey 2002 on 'Consumer view of community pharmacies'. Available to download at <http://www.scotconsumer.org.uk/publications/reports/reports02/rp09phar.pdf>