



**Royal  
Pharmaceutical  
Society**  
of Great Britain

## **Law and Ethics Bulletin**

### **The Society's new powers under The Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians Order 2007 in relation to health cases**

On 30 March 2007, three new statutory committees (Investigating, Disciplinary and Health) were established under the Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians Order 2007 ("2007 Order").

The procedures under which the Committees operate are set out in the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (Fitness to Practise and Disqualification etc.) Rules 2007.

The Committees are now in a position to consider and make appropriate orders, including in circumstances where a pharmacist's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of adverse physical or mental health.

Historically, and under the 2007 Order, one of the main objectives of the Society is to protect and ensure the safety of the public. If a pharmacist's fitness to practise is in doubt the Society has an obligation to investigate such concerns.

Under the 2007 Order, the Society may act if there are current concerns about a pharmacist's fitness to practise by reason of adverse physical or mental health. The new powers in health cases are not intended to be punitive but are to protect the public and where appropriate to facilitate the rehabilitation of the individual.

The 2007 Order allows for Interim Orders to be applied in serious cases. An Interim Order may place interim conditions on a practitioner's registration, or interim suspension of the practitioner's name from the register. Under the 2007 Order there are three grounds on which an interim order may be imposed. These are that the order must be necessary for the protection of the public, otherwise in the public interest or in the interests of the practitioner. The power to impose Interim Orders is vested in both the Disciplinary and Health Committees.

In order to protect the public, pharmacists are reminded the Code of Ethics states that pharmacists and registered pharmacy technicians must "raise

concerns if policies, systems, working conditions, or the actions, professional performance or health of others may compromise patient care or public safety. Take appropriate action if something goes wrong or if others report concerns to you.”

Support is available to pharmacists via the Listening Friends Scheme (020 7572 2442), the Benevolent Fund (01327 264739) and the Pharmacists' Health Support Programme (01327 264531). Further information about these support services can be found on the Society's website:

[www.rpsgb.org/societyfunctions](http://www.rpsgb.org/societyfunctions).

Additional information on the new Health Committee can be found at:

[www.rpsgb.org/protectingthepublic](http://www.rpsgb.org/protectingthepublic).