

Jeremy Holmes' speech at BRSM 2008 (17.10.08)

[Slide 1 – Front slide]

1. WELCOME AND CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Good morning, and welcome to the Branch and Regional Secretaries' meeting. Would you be kind enough to check that all mobile phones are switched off before we begin please.

I would like to thank you for joining me today and I think we've got a very full and interesting agenda. We're going to update you on the key areas of activity the Society is engaged in.

But, this meeting is primarily about sharing ideas and views and I hope that you will feel free to contribute to all the debates that will take place today.

I am pleased to tell you that we are joined by Martin Astbury, Vice-President, John Gentle, one of the Council sponsors for the Branch and Regional network, Richard Daniszewski, Vice-Chair of the English Pharmacy Board, Peter Jones, Vice-Chair of the Welsh Pharmacy Board and Alistair Jack, Vice-Chair of the Scottish Pharmacy Board. We also have with us David Pruce, the Society's Director of Policy and Communications, Lyndon Braddick, Director for Scotland, Patrick Stubbs, Head of Marketing and Membership Services and Amanda King, Membership Manager. Patrick's team is responsible for managing the day-to-day administration of the Branch and Regional network. Wendy Harris, our Deputy Registrar and Director of Regulation will join us for the session on the General Pharmaceutical Council and other members of staff, including Bernard Kelly, Director of Finance and Resources, will be joining us over lunch and for the discussion forum.

Please feel free to approach any of us with any burning questions that you might wish to ask.

[Slide 2 – Agenda for the Day]

This morning John Gentle will invite three of our Branch Secretaries to present their ideas on Branch best practice – ideas that you might wish to adopt to promote your own Branch programmes in the future.

Following on from that Richard Daniszewski, member of the English Pharmacy Board will give you an update on the national pharmacy boards and answer any questions you might wish to ask.

We will then be breaking into groups for a session on professional leadership and you will have the chance to discuss the new professional body.

Lunch will be at 1 p.m. and the afternoon session will begin at 2 p.m.

The first session after lunch will be a short discussion session on topical issues, followed by an update on the demerger, the new professional body, the General Pharmaceutical Council and the role of TransCom. Wendy Harris, our Deputy Registrar and Director of Regulation will talk about the GPhC, and we will be joined by Nigel Clarke, the Chairman of TransCom, to talk about the development of the new professional body. The final session will include an update on the Rx Factor competition that we launched here last May. We aim to finish the meeting at 4.00 p.m. and anyone wishing to finish the day with a guided tour around the Society's museum should join Briony Hudson, our Curator, whom you will find at the back of the conference hall.

[Slide 3 – RPSGB Key Areas]

KEY ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

I would now like to take this opportunity to talk to you briefly about some of our key streams of work during the year, starting with information on the branch pages of myRPSGB. (Hope you're all registered)

[Slides 4 – myRPSGB - my Branch]

The myBranch page provides information on which Branch and region a member is assigned to, together with contact details of the branch secretary. An option to change branches is also included and this is directly linked to the Society's main database.

[Slides 5 - myRPSGB – myBranch Secretary]

The Branch Secretary email facility allows Branch Secretaries to create emails which can be sent to all their members. This uses the Society's email system rather than them having to use their own ISPs and encounter the problems of limits to the numbers of emails they can send in one batch. Emails can also be created in advance and scheduled for a specific date.

[Slides 6 - myRPSGB – myBranch Secretary]

The email facility has a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor to create the message and there are a number of options available for personalisation of the message. The system doesn't currently allow for the attachment of documents and branch secretaries are advised to provide links in the message to documents on the branch websites. The system is currently undergoing testing with the Nottinghamshire branch and Steve Garner from the Nottingham Branch will say more about this when he talks to you later on.

[Slides 7 - myRPSGB – myBranch]

We are currently looking at other possible additions and improvements to the Branch pages. These include:

- Adding branch calendars and a list of venues used by each branch

- Developing online forms for branch administration procedures, such as meeting feedback.
- Providing the ability for the creation of more “attractive” branch newsletters via third party tools.

Additionally, we are developing a facility to enable members to update their own personal information.

[Slide 8 – myLibrary]

myLibrary

Another exciting web-based information service is myLibrary, which is available to all pharmacists wherever they are in Great Britain. Since its launch by the RPS Library in February this year an average of nearly 500 members access the resource each month. myLibrary was developed to provide pharmacists with information on pharmacy (its practice, research, science and history) and more broadly on the medical and health sciences. It will be a key resource in supporting pharmacists in their CPD and evidence-based practice.

The resource provides access to over 1,700 fulltext journals, including key medical titles like the Lancet, and titles specific to pharmacy. It also includes several journal indexes such as the Information Pharmacist's own RPS ePIC database and the world-renowned Medline. Just this month 16 ebook titles have been added to the collection with the purchase of StatRef!. These titles include key reference works such as the latest editions of the Handbook on injectable drugs, the Oxford textbook of medicine and Goodman & Gilman's The pharmacological basis of therapeutics.

myLibrary will continue to be developed in the future as further ebooks are added, the number of fulltext journals is increased and the Library provides more support and guidance in the use of the resources available.

[Slide 9 – Your Society]

Your Society

Your Society was launched in January of this year and is designed to keep members abreast of developments at the Society as its regulatory role is taken over by the General Pharmaceutical Council and it develops its professional leadership role. I am very keen to understand member's views on this and other aspects of what we're doing and would like to encourage you to send these to me at positivefeedback@rpsgb.org.

[Slide 10 – Museum]

Museum

What about the Museum? As the result of a £49,000 Heritage Lottery Fund grant, the Museum is implementing a major audience development programme to engage pharmacy students and lecturers, primary and secondary school pupils, and London-based adults in its collections and activities. So far the scheme, led by a dedicated Audience Development Officer for 18 months, has ranged from adding Pharmacy Debate Packs for secondary schools to the Society's website to carrying out a

baseline survey of Schools of Pharmacy to find out what support was needed to enable increased pharmacy history teaching. As a result, the number of users of the Museum's services has risen by 13% so far in 2008. We have to cherish our heritage but we also need to look forward.

[Slide 11 – 20:20]

2020

In the Pharmacy 2020 project we have set out some of the drivers for change in the profession over the next few years; we have consulted the profession on where it wants to be and the project is now moving to its final phase. In this we will be looking at how we move from where we are now to what we want in 2020. We will be publishing more on this early in the New Year – so watch this space.

We now come to the outward face of pharmacy – our Public Relations and Public Affairs.

[Slide 12 – Making News]

Public Relations

Our public relations team have really upped their game over the past year and I hope you noticed that the Society and pharmacy are getting more media coverage. The team are actively looking to increase the pharmacy coverage on TV, radio and in the national press. We have run a number of campaigns targeting the media with positive messages about pharmacy and pharmacists. In two of these we used celebrities to endorse the messages – Melinda Messenger for Hayfever, as reported at the BRM in May, and Judith Chalmers for travel health. Increasingly we will be using the RxFactor winners to lead these stories – I will be telling you more about the RxFactor a little later in the day.

The team also respond to stories in the press whether they are positive about pharmacy or negative stories – and there are a number of stories that you will never read because the team have successfully defended pharmacy before a potentially “bad news” story is written.

[Slide 13 – Which? Article]

Which Report

That brings me on to the recent Which report. It was important for us to balance out the negative comments in the report and we put up a number of Society spokespeople for interviews with the national media. We had a good response to this and had spokespeople on BBC Breakfast, BBC News, a number of radio stations as well as the national newspapers.

I think that they did particularly well in defending pharmacy and putting the Which report into context.

A key part of our work is to raise awareness and understanding among the public, patients and opinion formers of the role that pharmacists play in delivering healthcare.

We do this by working with the national, regional and specialist media to secure positive and accurate stories and coverage.

The PR team also supports communications for the English Pharmacy Board and produces its quarterly electronic newsletter *Pharmacy Now*.

[Slide 14 - BPC]

British Pharmaceutical Conference – BPC

Last month, we had another very successful BPC with an overall increase in attendees. A cheaper Sunday rate meant that Sunday, in particular, was really buzzing. There were a lot of interesting and informative sessions throughout BPC. I would like to thank those of you who attended on behalf of your branch. If you haven't been, you really should try it in 2009. The DVD of some of the highlights of BPC has been sent out with the PJ last week.

The PR team worked to ensure that BPC 2008 received as much positive media coverage as possible. 17 press releases on topics from anti-ageing basil to inappropriate prescribing in nursing homes were issued to the national, regional, consumer and trade media. Widespread coverage was secured in a number of national print newspapers, including the front page of The Daily Telegraph and a further 12 articles in other nationals including The Independent, The Observer, Daily Mail, Daily Express and The Sun. In total the Society secured over 90 individual pieces of coverage across national, regional and specialist media. If you'd like to take a look at the coverage and other news stories the Society has been involved with please go to www.digitalnewsagency.com (username and password: rpsgb1).

[Slide 15 – Pharmacy in England – White Paper]

Policy work

In terms of our policy influence, this has been a landmark year. In England, we have had the publication of the White Paper – Pharmacy in England. Richard Daniszewski will be discussing that later today. The White Paper is what we have been waiting for. It is a challenge from Government - and we simply must rise to meet that challenge. The Society, along with the CCA, NPA, PSNC and AIMp have agreed to work collaboratively for the benefit of Community Pharmacy in England - to ensure that the opportunities contained in the White Paper become a reality.

[Slide 16 – Review of the NHS in England]

When Lord Darzi was tasked by the Prime Minister with conducting a Review of the NHS in England, we helped to shape his report. And when the Health Select Committee launched an inquiry into his recommendations, who did it turn to for an expert view? - it came to pharmacy – to your Society. We did what the Society does best – and what the new professional leadership body must focus on.

[Slide 17 – Practice Tools]

Practice

Promoting practice and good practice is an important part of that. The Practice Team have continued to work towards its main aim which is to support pharmacists and support staff in delivering high quality services. The development and publication of 'practice guidance' helps to achieve this aim. Published practice guidance documents to date have supported:

- Reclassification of medicines
- Changes in legislation
- Service developments
- Development of the profession
- Promoting good practice, for example, in addressing minor ailments and self-care.

The practice team also develops responses to relevant consultations and contributes to the promotion and understanding of the pharmacy profession with their input into public relations, policy and public affairs.

Major achievements this year include the further development of Pharmacists with a special interest. We worked nationally to develop the accreditation process and a number of speciality specific competency frameworks. We have also provided advice and guidance on pseudoephedrine and cough and cold remedies for children under 2, which were topics that had national media coverage; and we are working closely with the National Clinical Assessment Service to provide a service to identify and support poorly performing pharmacists.

[Slide 18 – leading across boundaries]

Leading Across Boundaries

The Society's Leading Across Boundaries Programme has had some great success this year, you may have seen the recent article in the PJ about the Central Lancashire PCT programme, featured in the white paper *Pharmacy in England*. Participants have developed their leadership skills and those of the network, developed a service specification for a community pharmacy based weight management programme fully integrated into the re written PCT obesity pathway, and obtained recurrent funding and the enthusiastic support of Directors and managers, at the PCT and Strategic Health Authority. The Service appears as a key part of the PCTs 5 year World Class Commissioning Strategy and in the local Darzi strategy Healthier Horizons. Possibly more importantly it has resulted in a new service being provided by 24 pharmacies so far within 7 months from the start of the LAB programme!

As well as Central Lancashire, other LAB initiatives appear in the White Paper. The Trafford PCT patient discharge initiative, began as an LAB project in 2006, is about to roll out to a further 60 community pharmacies. Continuing financing was also secured for the Shropshire Central PCT medicines management initiative by local LAB participants, who also gained places on local Darzi groups.

A copy of the PJ article can be found in your packs, together with a form to complete and leave for our Head of Professional Leadership Anne Adams, who is keen to come

and talk to you and get Leading Across Boundaries programmes up and running in your area.

[Slide 19 – Professional Ethics]

Professional Ethics

I would like to draw your attention to two key areas of ethical work that you and your members can become involved in:

Ethical Dilemmas: For the last six months we have been publishing an ethical dilemma in Your Society, for the membership to participate in. Once you have logged into myRPSGB and chosen your option, you will receive automatic comprehensive feedback about the types of things you need to think about. Please highlight this initiative to your branch attendees. In addition, our Head of Ethics is also happy to receive suggested dilemmas for future publication. So get involved!

[Slide 20 – Professional Ethics]

Responsible Pharmacist

The Responsible Pharmacist Regulations are expected to be laid in the near future. They were expected in early October but have been delayed. The Society is currently pursuing two work streams in this area. Firstly we have convened a steering group to consider the content of professional standards and regulatory guidance for responsible pharmacists. This document will supplement the Code of Ethics and will detail the 'must do's' and 'should do's' for responsible pharmacists. The content of these regulatory standards will be subject to an eight week consultation at the beginning of 2009. I would encourage you all to participate in this consultation. We intend to publish the regulatory standards 3 months in advance of the regulations coming into effect. Secondly, we are looking at what other support the profession will need in relation to these changes. Some branches have already had our Head of Ethics visit them to detail the changes, where we are currently and where we will end up. Well in advance of the implementation of RP we will be engaging in a multi-channel information campaign to ensure that the requirements for RP reach all pharmacists. We hope that you will see branch meetings as one of those channels. You may want to set aside all or part of a meeting in the spring to what is a really important topic. More information will come to you early in the new year.

[Slide 21 – Internet Pharmacy]

Internet Pharmacy

The internet pharmacy logo was launched in January 2008 and is intended to aid members of the public in identifying bona fide registered pharmacy premises offering professional services. A list of sites displaying the logo, currently 81, is available on the Society's website and a dedicated website www.internetpharmacylogo.org displays information for pharmacists and members of the public and patients.

[Slide 22 - PPI]

PPI

Talking of patients, the Society continues to implement the patient and public involvement strategy, agreed by Council in December 2006. Significant messages arising from the strategy include the Society's need to involve patients and the public in its regulatory and professional development roles and ensuring that everyone can easily obtain the information they need from the Society.

The major areas of involvement are:

- The adoption of post nominals for pharmacist prescribers
- Development of a public information leaflet about the role of the RPSGB
- Development of a guide to being involved with the Society
- Diabetic patient pathway mapping
- NHS Top Up payments
- RPSGB homoeopathy policy development

Areas of work for the future highlight that the patient and public view is at the very heart of important policy development and include:

- A joint NPSA/PPI consultation around the extension of the role of the National Clinical Assessment Service to include pharmacists
- An ABPI/RPSGB joint project on promoting the role of the pharmacist
- 'Simulated patient' project
- Reviewing the role of the Patient Liaison Group and considering the development of a PPI network
- Development of guidance on reimbursement for PPI
- Interim/Ongoing strategy for the development of PPI within the new GPhC
- Interim/Ongoing strategy for the development of PPI within the new professional body.

The main focus of the drive to implement the strategy has been the public liaison group which brings the patient's perspective to the development of public involvement at the Society. The group is also tasked with encouraging greater patient and public-centred policy making and monitoring our progress and performance in accordance with the strategy and work plan.

[Slide 23 – Pharmacycareers.org.uk]

Careers

The Society continues its commitment to promoting a career in pharmacy to school leavers, and it is heartening to know that pharmacy continues to be a popular profession with students across the UK. Indeed, there has been a steady stream of new schools appearing since 2000 to cater for this interest.

Currently, there are 25 Schools of Pharmacy, including new schools in Hertfordshire, Keele, Medway, Kingston, Reading, Wolverhampton, and Central Lancashire with the University of Huddersfield admitting students for the first time this September.

We receive on average 9,000 visits to our pharmacy careers' website each month and members of staff attended a large UCAS event where one of our recently qualified pharmacists and Huddersfield Branch Secretary, James Wood, ran 2 very successful workshops for potential pharmacists. James is with us today and I am sure he will be happy to talk to you about it during the lunch break.

The figures on this slide will give you some indication of the interest in pharmacy as a career: (see slide)

[Slide 24 – Publications]

RPS PUBLISHING (including Medicines complete)

For RPS Publishing, 2008 has seen continued growth in our global publishing activity, with 27 new titles published. These have been on a diverse range of topics in support of pharmacy education, practice and science.

While acknowledging our heritage, with the publication of a reproduction of William Martindale's Extra Pharmacopoeia to celebrate the 125th anniversary of its first publication, much of the emphasis of our activities has been on the future. Our global presence has been enhanced by building new relationships that have seen many of our titles translated into Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese as well as European languages such as Italian and Spanish.

[Slide 25 – Medicines Complete]

Much of our investment has been in enhancing our digital publishing programme for both our books, journals and magazines. Licensing partnerships have been established which will see all RPSP titles become available as e-books. In addition, the RPSP online platform, MedicinesComplete, has seen considerable increase in the number of users from academia, industry as well as community and hospital practice. RPSP secured an agreement to have it provided to every community pharmacy in Scotland. To compliment the regularly updated RPSP content additional internationally acclaimed titles from other publishers such as Trissel's Handbook on Injectable Drugs and the Merck Index have been added to the suite of databases.

[Slide 26 – PJ Online]

PJ Online

A new and very exciting version of PJ Online was launched by PJ Publications in July to bring the website in line with current internet developments.

The name of the game these days is user-generated content, so now, as well as reading content that is updated five days a week, rather than once a week, registered users can comment on it and use other interactive parts of the site, like the discussion forums. There is even an element of social/professional networking, for those who want to use it.

A new feature, which is about to be launched, will mean that groups of users who share common interests, such as speciality areas of practice, will be able to form their own online groups as a means of improving the exchange of ideas.

[Slide 27 – PJ Online]

The overall aim (which we know is a paradigm shift for PJ Online and many of its established users) is to develop new online resources to meet the needs of a new audience, rather than to use the internet as an electronic filing system.

I know that Mike Thompson, PJ Online's editor, is keen to hear what users want from PJ Online, because he will never say "right, that's the job done" and will always be looking for ways to make PJ Online an indispensable tool for pharmacists who want to achieve the highest levels of competence. Please go online if you haven't already

[Slide 28 - Pharmacist Support]

Pharmacist Support

At BPC in September, the Benevolent Fund unveiled a new name and brand identity for the Charity. The Trustees and Staff worked closely with members across Great Britain to undertake a radical review of the Charity and provide a fresh new image which modernises and promotes the Charity. The Benevolent Fund is now known as Pharmacist Support and the Trustees and staff ask your support to promote the Charity. We have now changed all email addresses and contact numbers and these can be seen on the slide.

David Qualter, the manager of Pharmacy Support, will be contacting Branch Secretaries in the near future seeking nominations from members to become a 'Pharmacist Supporter' for that Branch. This person would act as a discreet link between the charity and any member who may wish more details of the fund.

"Benevolence" was one of the objects of the original 1843 charter of what is now the Society. The Benevolent Fund was established by the Society and registered as a charity in 1963. With the transfer of our regulatory functions to the new General Pharmaceutical Council, I am looking forward to the new professional body continuing the tradition of benevolent support for its members. So the Fund's relaunch as *Pharmacist Support* and its strategy to increase the level of access to its services are planned to work in concert with the professional body's wide range of other support for pharmacists in the twenty-first century.

For more details of Pharmacist Support, please visit the web-site and see the range of services and the work of the Charity. It will also help you sign-post any member to the fund, as and when required.

Reminders

I would like to finish this update with a few reminders:

[Slide 29 – Member input and feedback]

The first reminder is the second PJ "Have your say" survey, which is intended to find out the kind of support pharmacists want from their new professional body at a local level and how that support should be delivered. This is an online survey and can be found on the PJ website www.pjonline.com. The closing date is October 27, so you have just 10 days left to help shape the local structure of the new professional body. Paper copies of the survey are also available in the foyer.

Secondly, a mailbox has been set up to enable the Society to receive direct feedback from members, the address of which is positivefeedback@rpsgb.org. I look forward to your comments.