

# **Report of the Branch and Regional Secretaries' Meeting**

**Held on Friday 17 October 2008**

45 Branch and Regional Secretaries attended the meeting.

Mr Jeremy Holmes, Chief Executive and Registrar chaired the meeting.

In attendance were: Mr Martin Astbury, Vice-President  
Mr Richard Daniszewski, Vice-Chair of the English Pharmacy Board  
Mr John Gentle, Council Sponsor for the Branch and Regional Network  
Mr Alistair Jack, Vice-Chair of the Scottish Pharmacy Board  
Mr Peter Jones, Vice-Chair of the Welsh Pharmacy Board  
Ms Amanda King, Membership Manager  
Mr David Pruce, Director of Policy and Communications  
Mr Patrick Stubbs, Head of Marketing and Membership Services  
Ms Kate Thatcher, Communications and Membership Assistant  
Ms Clair Walker, Membership Officer

## **1. Welcome and Chairman's introduction**

The Chairman, Jeremy Holmes, Chief Executive and Registrar of the Society welcomed everyone and thanked Branch and Regional Secretaries for their continued support.

The Chairman gave a presentation highlighting key Society activities in 2008, including:

- myRPSGB
- Media campaigns
- Launch of Internet pharmacy logo
- BPC
- Policy successes
- Pharmacy 2020

A copy of the presentation can be found on the rpsgb website.

## **2. Report of the last meeting**

The report of the last meeting of Branch and Regional Secretaries, held in October 2007 was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **3. Branch Representatives' Meeting 2008**

The report of the Council on resolutions passed at the meeting had recently been sent to Branch Secretaries. The Council had agreed the responses to the motions at their meeting in October and there would be a formal update on each motion at the BRM in May 2009.

## **4. Best practice session**

John Gentle, introduced a session in which Helen Bradbury, Secretary of the Leeds and District Branch, Steve Garner, Secretary of the Nottingham Branch and Sherwood Region and Shilpa Gohil, Secretary of the West Metropolitan Branch and Chiltern Region shared best practice with colleagues.

Helen talked about collaborating with other pharmacy groups in the area and how it had increased attendance and become of great value to the pharmacists locally.

Steve spoke of the advantages of linking closely with the school of pharmacy at Nottingham University. The Nottingham Branch website is an enhanced version based on the Society's template. The website provides a useful tool for pharmacists in the local area. The Branch make good use of the University's facilities and the students are willing to help at meetings. Nottingham is also trialling a new emailing system for Branch Secretaries to contact Members.

Shilpa Gohil talked about the parliamentary lobbying that the Chiltern Region had been engaged with and showed the possibilities of influencing MPs locally.

John Gentle thanked all of the Secretaries present at the meeting for all of their hard work.

Jeremy Holmes took this opportunity to announce that the Society intends to formally recognise the outstanding work done by volunteers in England, Scotland and Wales. This will be an award (including prizes and a certificate) presented to a 'Local Champion of the year'. It is planned to be launched at the BRM in May 2009 with the award being presented at BPC 2009. He asked that suggestions on how it should be judged and any other ideas that Branch Secretaries may have be sent to [b&ra@rpsgb.org](mailto:b&ra@rpsgb.org)

## **5. The National Pharmacy Boards**

Richard Daniszewski, Vice-Chair of the English Pharmacy Board gave an update on the work of the English Board. Before he began, he wanted to thank Mr Barry Clarke who is a member of the Doncaster Branch Committee and has recently being awarded a long-serving certificate for all of his hard work and enthusiasm over the years and has now been on the register for 50 years. Peter Jones, Vice-Chair of the Welsh Pharmacy Board gave an update on the work of the Welsh Pharmacy Board and Alistair Jack, Vice-Chair of the Scottish Pharmacy Board updated the meeting on activities in Scotland.

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

## **6. Professional Leadership: The BRSM speaks...**

Jeremy Holmes then introduced an interactive session on the new Professional Body. Attendees were asked to come up with one 'big idea' that is the most important for them as pharmacists and what they think the Professional Body should provide/do/be. The team with the winning big idea based on a 'market stall' session were asked to share this with Nigel Clarke in the afternoon session.

The 'big ideas' included:

- *Engagement – public, personal and political*
- *100% vertically integrated body providing education and support while accepting feedback and criticism*
- *Promote the advancing practice of pharmacy*
- *To be the one body that will represent pharmacy and speak for pharmacy*
- *Helping pharmacists achieve excellence*

The idea with the most votes was:

- *The new Professional Body should be recognised by Government, other professionals, the public AND pharmacists as the credible and authoritative voice on pharmaceutical matters at all levels.*

## 7. Discussion Forum

Jeremy Holmes, Chief Executive and Registrar chaired an open discussion forum.

Question 1 - What can be done about email inconsistencies when emailing members?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the individual member to update their email address either by informing registration or updating their address on Myrpsgb if their circumstances change.

Question 2 - Is there now a case for making all communications with members electronic?

Answer: Although the Society has approx 33,000 email addresses, it is still too early to stop sending hard copy publications as this would exclude a large percentage of the Membership.

Question 3 - Has the Society considered setting up separate Society email addresses for Secretaries?

Answer: This was previously considered for all members. One problem with this is that it makes it much easier for spam emails to get through and some people would not be happy with having an additional email address. This is something that may be reviewed in the future for Branch Secretaries only.

Question 4 - Some clarity on the template for websites was requested and what is permitted.

Answer: There are a huge variety of websites and the guidelines are open to interpretation. The websites are being looked into and Patrick Stubbs, Head of Marketing and Membership Services, added that the creation of electronic options and engaging with local networks will be key things for the new professional body.

Question 5 - The size of some Society emails was considered to be too large for some Secretaries with dial up and can the file size be reduced?

Answer: Advice for how Secretaries can minimise this problem will be issued in the near future.

Question 6 - Is it possible for Secretaries to delete and update addresses on the email system?

Answer: Registration are able to delete the addresses if they have a valid reason for being bounced back e.g. someone no longer working at a particular address. If it is just a case of a bounce back and no specific reason, registration will not remove them until the member has updated their details.

Question 7 - Can members receive a special community pharmacist publication as well as *Hospital Pharmacist*?

Answer: There is a publication called *Retail Round-up* that is printed 10 times in a year and is sent out in the PJ to all those who are registered as a community pharmacist. If members would like a copy, please contact Gareth Malsen at PJ [gareth.malsen@rpsqb.org](mailto:gareth.malsen@rpsqb.org)

Question 8 - What will the membership status be of pharmacists who have retired from the register in the new professional body?

Answer: This group will be eligible to be part of the membership of the new Professional Body and Nigel Clarke will give an update.

Question 9 - Will the delay in the section 60 have implications for the start date of the new Professional body?

Answer: We are pressing on with our plans as we need to be fit for purpose and ready to open our doors in 2010.

## **8. Demerger update**

Jeremy Holmes, Chief Executive and Registrar gave an update on the progress of the Society demerger.

## **9. The General Pharmaceutical Council**

Wendy Harris, Deputy Registrar and Director of Regulation gave an update on the plans for the new regulator for pharmacy.

A question and answer session followed the presentation. A copy of the presentation is attached.

## **10. The role of TransCom**

Nigel Clarke, Chairman of TransCom gave an update on the Transitional Committee (TransCom) process and talked to members about their needs from a new professional body. He talked about the five areas that had been highlighted by the Membership services working group. These were professional support, professional development and education, leadership, representation and advocacy, networking and other possible services that had been identified such as benevolent fund and the museum.

Nigel also spoke about the future of the Branch and Regional network and reported that it was agreed that the Locality Practice Boards could encompass the branch structure. There needs to be flexibility and responding to the local network requirement on a case-by-case basis. Local networks should be focused on supporting local pharmacists in their practice. He also reported back from the Governance working group to look at the new structure of the new professional body.

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

## **11. Update on Rx Factor**

Jeremy Holmes gave an update on recent pr successes and introduced the winners of the Rx competition.

## **12. Final remarks by Chairman**