

English Pharmacy Board 16 April 2008

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Welsh Pharmacy Board - Annual Student Engagement Event

Purpose

To gain rapport, via face to face contact, with the potential members of the leadership body prior to their registration.

Recommendations

- The Society and any future leadership body should engage with its future members at an early stage, to introduce their leadership function and the benefits of membership. This engagement should be via various methods, one of which should be an annual meeting with pharmacy student at their School of Pharmacy.

Background

Student engagement with the Society, and its workings, is paramount to the future membership of any leadership body. Prior to registration, students have little acquired history to prejudice their judgement on joining a leadership body, either in a positive or negative light. At present students gain their perceptions of the Society and its functions through Law and Ethics lectures, career literature, attendance at BPC and through contact with pharmacists through work experience. These experiences may not portray the Society to its full potential and fail to express the full extent the Society functions.

Welsh Pharmacy Board - Student Evening

In October 2007, the Welsh Pharmacy Board undertook a series of road shows to engage with members across Wales. The Board used the opportunity to discuss the future of the profession in light on the Pharmacy 2020 consultation along with current events in pharmacy and the workings of the Welsh Board. Alongside these events the Board decided that to gain full involvement in the Pharmacy 2020 debate they should also engage with the student population to see where they saw their professional careers developing. To facilitate this, it was agreed with representatives of the Welsh Pharmacy Students Association to hold an evening at the Welsh School of Pharmacy to debate current issues. The format for the evening was:

- Ice breaker – quiz on Pharmacy.
- An introduction to the Welsh Pharmacy Board, the Society its roles and functions, current issues effecting pharmacy.
- Discussion on current day in the life of a community pharmacist, hospital pharmacist and primary care pharmacist and a look at how this could change in 2020.
- Discussion on the barriers and enablers both individually and professionally to pharmacy development.

The students were provided with a light buffet and wine in appreciation of their attendance.

Feedback from Evening

58 students attended the event from all years of the degree course. A few had experience of the Society and its workings from their work placements and research prior to their pre registration interview. Others had no previous contact with pharmacy organisations and were unaware of the Society's function as a professional leadership body. The overall feedback from the students was very good, and they left with a better understanding of the profession and its leadership role. Additionally, the Welsh Board members and staff who attended were seen in a positive light and gained more understanding of some of the preconceptions that students have on entering the profession.

The students felt that the Autumn term was most appropriate, it was probably most appropriate for second and third year students prior to their pre-registration interview, but final year students could benefit from knowledge of the current workings of the Society and any forthcoming practice changes.

Recommendations

- The leadership body should consider membership recruitment and retention for pharmacy students as separate anomaly.
- Early engagement with pharmacy students will help to promote the ethos the Society wishes portray. By taking the lead in engagement with this audience the Society will have more control over the messages it wishes to deliver.
- Face to face engagement via annual meetings with pharmacy students will help get key messages and engagement across to future members. These can then be underpinned with other methods of engagement using feedback to tailor the how and when.

Risk implications

The risk of not engaging:

- Failure to build a rapport with future membership may lead to decrease in membership numbers.
- Failure to fully appraise students of the benefits of the Society and its roles and functions may lead to a 'why should I join?' attitude which then has to be overcome. Conversely, fully informed students will ensure a 'when' not 'if' attitude to membership.

Risk of engaging

- None

Resource implications

Catering for 70 students (buffet and wine)	£400
Attendance fees for 2 Board members	£100
Hire of venue	usually no charge at university premises

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