



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society**
of Great Britain



***National Treatment Agency
for Substance Misuse***

News release

11 November 2003

PHARMACY PROFESSION AND NATIONAL TREATMENT AGENCY JOIN FORCES ON CARE

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA) in a move to improve pharmaceutical services for patients or clients with drug misuse problems.

The NTA is the special health authority established in 2001 to oversee the increase of availability, capacity and effectiveness of treatment for drug misuse in England. The Society is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in Great Britain.

The President of the Society, Dr Gill Hawksworth MBE, said: "The Society and the NTA both share a common aim of ensuring that patients or clients involved with substance misuse receive the best possible pharmaceutical service. We hope to achieve this by ensuring that the highest standards are maintained in the provision of pharmaceutical services and by encouraging the development of new services for delivery by pharmacists."

The two organisations have agreed a blueprint for working together that will help achieve their common objectives. Representatives from the Society and NTA will meet regularly to keep each other informed of their respective work plans and they will share draft documents relating to each other's commissioning strategies.

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The Society will assist the NTA with any secondments of pharmacists it wishes to make and the two bodies will work jointly to develop practice-based research focused on understanding and improving drug treatment services offered by pharmacists.

Additionally, the two bodies will set up a pharmacy network of lead professionals in the area of substance misuse to ensure there are firm regional links in place.

Ms Annette Dale-Perera, Director of Quality at the NTA, said: “This agreement is an important development for the National Treatment Agency, and for the drug treatment field generally. Pharmacists have a vital role to play in providing accessible, local treatment to drug misusers. We believe that, by working closely with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, we can provide individual pharmacists with the support and guidance they need to provide an effective, safe service.”

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For further information please contact Natalie Sticklen or Carl Rees in the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain's public relations unit on 020 7572 2335/6 or Iris Steen in the Communications Department of the NTA on 020 7972 2274

Notes to editors

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) is the regulatory and professional body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. The primary objective of the Society is to lead, regulate and develop the pharmacy profession. For more information please see www.rpsgb.org.uk

The National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA) is a special health authority, created by the Government in 2001 to improve the availability, capacity and effectiveness of treatment for drug misuse in England. In other words, to ensure that

there is more treatment, better treatment and fairer treatment available to all those who need it.

For more information please see www.nta.nhs.uk