

**Joint Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP),
Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (APTUK) and
Hospital Pharmacists Group of The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (HPG RPSGB)
Statement in support of the Voluntary Registration of Pharmacy Technicians**

What does registration mean?

Regulation of healthcare professionals encapsulates all of the systems that combine to assure the competence of healthcare professionals: education, registration, training, continuing professional development (CPD) and revalidation, as well as disciplinary matters. Most of the current direction on regulation is found in the Kennedy Report,¹ which identifies that for each professional group there should be one body charged with overseeing all aspects relating to the regulation of professional life, and that The Council for the Regulation of Healthcare Professionals (now Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence) should be charged with overall coordination of these various bodies.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) states that the regulatory framework for pharmacy technicians will mean that registered pharmacy technicians will need to comply with their code of ethics, undertake CPD in order to stay on the register, and can use the protected title of Registered Pharmacy Technician. They will be subject to fitness to practice procedures in the same way as pharmacists. Therefore, patients, the public, the individual pharmacy technician and employers all benefit.

Why Register?

GHP, APTUK and HPG encourage pharmacy technicians to register with the RPSGB at the earliest opportunity since:²

- * Registration supports clinical governance, by setting standards of practice and conduct.
- * Registration supports CPD, and subsequently raises standards of practice.
- * Registration will improve employment opportunities, particularly where technicians are undertaking extended roles.
- * Registration protects the public, employers and other technicians from 'rogue' practitioners.
- * Only registered technicians will be able to use the title 'Pharmacy Technician' once registration becomes a statutory requirement.
- * Only registered technicians can vote for the technician representatives on the Council of RPSGB.

Pharmacy technicians are advised to access and familiarise themselves with the registration process and paperwork as soon as practicable. This process may take a while to complete.

Following a precedent set by other newly regulated professions, it is possible that the date of statutory registration could directly follow the Section 60 order expected sometime during 2005, with the grandparent period operating for 2 years after the mandatory date. This provides another reason for pharmacy technicians to start their application early.

About the organisations

The Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists is a section of the Amicus Union. Full Members are pharmacists employed by a UK Health Authority, Health Board, NHS Trust, Primary Care Trust, or similar institution; or pre-registration pharmacy graduates undergoing a period of practical training in accordance with the regulations of the RPSGB or PSNI at a hospital, health centre, or similar institution.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is the regulatory and representative professional body for pharmacists in Great Britain. Pharmacists are members of RPSGB. Pharmacy Technicians will become 'registrants' of the Society, which will act as their regulatory body. The Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK is the professional representative body for pharmacy technicians throughout the UK.³

The Hospital Pharmacists Group is open to all pharmacists working in the National Health Service, private or armed forces hospitals and employed by, or acting as consultants to, health authorities, health boards or health trusts. Its core activities include providing members with information about service developments and examples of good practice, and to advising the RPSGB Council on aspects of hospital pharmacy and developments in health care affecting hospital pharmacists.

1. Accessed from <http://www.bristol-inquiry.org.uk>

2. Accessed from <http://www.hpc-uk.org/registrants/benefits.htm>

3. RPSGB/APTUK Joint Statement, 'Clarity on Roles of Organisations', May 2004.