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Pharmacy bodies join together to support pharmacy sector to learn from failures of care at Gosport

The General Pharmaceutical Council, Royal Pharmaceutical Society and Association of Pharmacy Technicians in the UK have joined together to publish a reflection and learning resource to support everyone across the pharmacy to learn the lessons from the Gosport Independent Panel report.

The report, published in June 2018, found that at least 450 patients died having been inappropriately prescribed opioids between 1989 and 2000. This continued despite a number of the nursing staff having raised concerns about the care being provided. The report found no evidence that pharmacists in the hospital raised concerns.

To support further reflection and learning, the GPhC, RPS and APTUK are calling on pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy owners in all sectors to share and discuss the presentation which:

- Brings together the key pharmacy themes from the Gosport Independent Panel report
- Looks at current pharmacy practice and how things have changed
- Recaps on the expectations on pharmacy professionals (pharmacists and pharmacy technicians) and systems
- Highlights key resources and other materials

The slides emphasise that pharmacy practice has improved significantly since these incidents took place, including through strengthened professional requirements, the introduction of the duty of candour, improved oversight of controlled drugs, and closer working across the multi-disciplinary team. It is important to reflect and learn from what happened to make sure that these failures in care are never repeated.

Ahead of the publication of the slides Nigel Clarke, Chair of the GPhC, said:

“The conclusions of the Gosport Independent Panel’s report are shocking, and we all need to make sure we learn from the devastating accounts of the families of patients who were failed by their health and care professionals, and by the wider system. Pharmacy practice has now moved on significantly since the terrible events at Gosport took place; all professionals are expected now to speak out under the duty of candour when there are issues or things have gone wrong, and we underline the importance of learning and reflection.

“We would urge everyone across pharmacy to consider the presentation and discuss what this means for their practice with other professionals, students and support staff. Pharmacy professionals should also consider using this resource for their reflective accounts or peer discussions as part of revalidation. The lessons learnt from Gosport are very relevant to the three standards that all pharmacy professionals must reflect on in the coming year; communicating effectively, behaving professionally and demonstrating leadership.”

Ash Soni, President, Royal Pharmaceutical Society said:

“The lesson for everyone is to encourage and support a culture of patient safety in all care settings. We are pleased to have joined together with the GPhC and APTUK to develop this set of slides to support everyone across pharmacy to learn these lessons. We hosted an event in December which supported the development of these slides and our Hospital Expert Advisory Group, has also published a [discussion paper](#) with areas for action.”

Tess Fenn, Past President of APTUK said:

“Since the significant failures at Gosport Memorial Hospital, the role of the pharmacy technician has evolved exponentially. Pharmacy technicians are now an important component of front line pharmacy care and are often the first point of contact for patients and the public in both hospitals and community settings. As the role of the pharmacy team continues to expand, these slides should be used across all settings and will serve as a useful learning tool to ensure the harrowing events are never repeated.”

[Download a copy of the learning resource.](#)

[General](#)

About the General Pharmaceutical Council

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the independent regulator of more than 55,000 pharmacists, 23,000 pharmacy technicians and 14,000 pharmacy premises in England, Scotland and Wales. We work to assure and improve the standards of care for people using pharmacy services.

Our role is to protect the public and give them assurance that they will receive safe and effective care when using pharmacy services. We set standards for pharmacy professionals and pharmacies to enter and remain on our register.

We ask pharmacy professionals and pharmacies for evidence that they are continuing to meet our standards, and this includes inspecting pharmacies. We act to protect the public and to uphold public confidence in pharmacy if there are concerns about a pharmacy professional or pharmacy on our register. Through our work we help to promote professionalism, support continuous improvement and assure the quality and safety of pharmacy.

Further information about the GPhC can be found at www.pharmacyregulation.org

[About the Royal Pharmaceutical Society](#)

We are the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the professional membership body for pharmacists and pharmacy.

Our mission is to put pharmacy at the forefront of healthcare.

Our vision is to become the world leader in the safe and effective use of medicines.

Since RPS was founded in 1841 we have championed the profession, and are internationally renowned as publishers of medicines information.

We promote pharmacy in the media and government, lead the way in medicines information, and support pharmacists in their education and development.

People join RPS, partner with RPS, and follow our campaigns because we do everything we can to champion pharmacy.

About the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK

The Association of Pharmacy Technicians United Kingdom (APTUK) is the national professional leadership body for pharmacy technicians working in all pharmacy sectors across all countries in the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

APTUK, through strong, influential representative leadership, supports person centred professionalism by encouraging in our membership, the attitudes and behaviours associated with outstanding healthcare professionals.

We work on behalf of pharmacy technicians securing and advocating the pharmacy technician profession and advancing the professions education and scope of practice.

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