

Parliamentary launch of new strategic plan

18 June 2025

Event report

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) launched its new strategic plan at an event held in the House of Commons, attended by over 60 guests including parliamentarians and representatives from stakeholder organisations.

Chair of the APPG on Pharmacy, Steve Race MP, hosted the Parliamentary event. Stephen Kinnock MP, Minister of State for Care, addressed attendees on the role of pharmacy in helping the health and social care system deliver high-quality care. This short event report summarises the presentations given at the event.

Welcome from Steve Race MP, Chair of the APPG on Pharmacy

In his opening remarks, Steve Race MP:

- welcomed the overarching aims of the GPhC's new strategy to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, to protect patients and the public, and to build a skilled, agile and inclusive organisation.
- spoke about the vital role that pharmacies and pharmacy teams play in providing health and care services within local communities, and shared his own direct experience of working for a major pharmacy business during the pandemic.
- referenced the challenges facing pharmacy services, pharmacy teams and patients, including medicines shortages. He highlighted the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Pharmacy, to support pharmacies, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to address these challenges.
- highlighted the work of the Government to support the pharmacy sector, including the recent significant investment in the updated community pharmacy contractual framework.
- emphasised pharmacy's key role in supporting the government's plans to shift care from hospital to community, from analogue to digital, and from sickness to prevention.

Welcome and introduction from Gisela Abbam, Chair of the GPhC

In her opening remarks, Gisela:

- thanked Steve Race MP for generously hosting the GPhC's Parliamentary reception, and his work to support and champion pharmacy, and patient care, including through his role as Chair of the APPG on Pharmacy.
- introduced the GPhC's new strategy, and set out how it delineates a clear path forward to help the GPhC to achieve its vision of safe and effective pharmacy care at the heart of healthier communities.
- discussed the rapid evolution in how care is delivered and in the role of the pharmacy professions.
- emphasised that the role of the GPhC is crucial in ensuring that regulation keeps pace with these changes, providing a clear framework that empowers pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and safeguards patient care and public confidence.
- set out how greater collaboration with governments, other healthcare regulators and other organisations across pharmacy and healthcare is one of the central themes of this strategy, to improve health outcomes for everyone.
- highlighted that the UK Government has emphasised that pharmacy will play a key role in its ambitions to significantly reform the NHS, which will be set out in the 10 Year Health Plan.

Address from Stephen Kinnock MP, Minister of State for Care

In his address, the Minister:

- emphasised that pharmacies and pharmacy professionals are key to achieving the Government's ambitions to delivering more care in the community, and that they are already playing a critical role in providing healthcare in communities, including in the most deprived areas.
- highlighted how the Government has already invested in pharmacy through the additional investment in the updated community pharmacy contractual framework and by commissioning an increasing range of clinical services, but knows there is more work to do to ensure that the sector is fit for the future.
- referenced the significant progress that is being made in updating legislation and removing red tape, including introducing legislation to enable pharmacies to use hub and spoke models of dispensing, and to enable pharmacy technicians to be able to supply medicines under Patient Group Directions.
- outlined that the new legislation on pharmacy supervision will shortly be brought forward, which will give pharmacies in the community, hospitals, care homes, and other settings, greater flexibility in how they deploy their staff, and ensure that pharmacists and pharmacy technicians can use their full skill-set in the service of their patients and the NHS.
- emphasised that the Government cannot make changes to legislation without the support of the GPhC, as the GPhC plays an important role in helping the Government to realise its ambitions, by developing clear professional standards, and regulating to ensure pharmacy practice, as it develops, is safe and effective.

- highlighted that the GPhC has already updated the initial education and training standards for pharmacists and developed standards for Chief Pharmacists, and will shortly consult on new standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians. And looking forward, the GPhC will play a pivotal role in developing new standards for Responsible Pharmacists and Superintendent Pharmacists, and will also work with the professional bodies to ensure that there is guidance in place to underpin the legislative changes.
- set out the Government's commitment to work with the GPhC and the sector as a whole, to map out pharmacy's contribution to delivering the three big shifts in care planned for the next 10 years, to make the NHS fit for the future and to provide the medicines and the services that every patient that needs, to the high standards that they deserve.

Overview of the GPhC strategic plan 2025-30 from Duncan Rudkin, Chief Executive:

In his address, Duncan:

- highlighted how the GPhC will uphold safety, quality and public trust in pharmacy, and build on the progress already made, by focusing on three strategic aims:
 1. Empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to provide trusted, safe and effective pharmacy care.
 2. Protect patients and the public by working with healthcare regulators and other organisations.
 3. Build a skilled, agile and inclusive organisation to regulate effectively and efficiently.
- explained that the strategic plan sets out an honest appraisal of where the GPhC is now, where it wants to be, and how this will be measured. This includes reducing the length of time it takes to resolve Fitness to Practise cases and improving the organisation's financial stability.
- shared that the GPhC will soon publish its delivery plan 2025-30, which sets out in more detail the programmes of work that will be delivered to achieve the strategic aims and outcomes set out in this strategic plan.
- referenced that the UK Government will shortly be introducing new legislation which will more effectively empower both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to deliver care for the public, and asked the MPs in attendance for their support with these changes to legislation.

Remarks from Alan Clamp, Chief Executive, the Professional Standards Authority

In his address, Alan:

- outlined the role of the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) in overseeing the ten health professional regulators and the Accredited Registers of health and care practitioners.
- explained that the PSA is currently reviewing its Standards of Good Regulation for the 10 statutory regulators to ensure they remain relevant to the challenges faced. These are the standards which the PSA uses to hold the organisations they oversee to account and are key to driving improvements.

- emphasised the PSA's commitment to working closely with the ten health professional regulators to make sure that patients and the public are protected.

Remarks from members of the GPhC's Patient and Public Voice forum

Gisela explained the important role of the GPhC's Patient and Public Voice forum in informing and influencing the organisation's work, by sharing their experiences and views of using pharmacy and other health services. Gisela then introduced two members of the forum; Lily Islam and Janet Waters.

In her remarks, Lily:

- outlined how pharmacies and pharmacy teams play a really important role in helping her and her family members to support their health and wellbeing. She highlighted how pharmacy staff try to deliver a tailored service, but there can often be gaps and inconsistencies between different health services, which can cause her and her family real challenges when accessing care.
- explained that this is why she wanted to get involved in the GPhC's Patient and Public Voice forum and that she has welcomed the opportunity to give her views on what the GPhC is doing, including this new strategy.

In her remarks, Janet:

- highlighted how members of the forum have all seen the significant pressures that pharmacy teams are under, and challenges with things like medicines and staffing shortages, but have also seen some really useful new services being offered such as Pharmacy First.
- discussed how members of the forum have often raised with the GPhC that the healthcare that they and their families receive isn't joined up sufficiently across different health and care services, and different professionals. The Forum therefore really welcome the focus on the GPhC working with other organisations and regulators to try and make sure there aren't those gaps, so people can have a better experience and be better protected.
- encouraged attendees to come and speak to the members of the forum attending the event, to learn more about their experiences.

The GPhC's new strategic plan 2025-30 is available on the GPhC website [in English](#) and [in Welsh](#).