

**Future of Pharmacy Regulation in Northern Ireland**

**Consultation Response Questionnaire**

**Prepared by:**

**Resources and Performance Management Group**

**Work Force Projects**

**Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety**

**Room D1**

**Castle Buildings,**

**Stormont Estate,**

**Belfast BT4 3SQ**

**Phone: (028) 90523 172**

**Email:** **pharmacyregulation@dhsspsni.gov.uk**

**Website: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk**

**Consultation Response Questionnaire**

## Background

The regulatory and professional leadership functions of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland are currently performed by one organisation, the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (the Society).  This dual role is counter to modern thinking across the UK on what constitutes effective and efficient regulation of healthcare professionals. The accompanying document sets out the case for change and seeks views on the proposed options for future pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland. This questionnaire should therefore be read in conjunction with the full consultation.

The questionnaire can be completed by an individual health professional, stakeholder or member of the public or it can be completed on behalf of a group or organisation.

The questionnaire provides an opportunity to answer questions relating to specific proposals and/or to provide general comments on the proposals. It also provides an opportunity for respondents to give additional feedback relating to any equality or human rights implications of the proposals as well as the regulatory impact on business of the proposals suggested.

## Responding to the consultation

# How to respond

You can respond to the consultation document by e-mail, letter or fax using the accompanying questionnaire on the Department’s website ([www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/consultations)).

If this document is not in a format that suits your needs, please contact us and we can discuss alternative arrangements.

Before you submit your response, please read Annex A of the consultation questionnaire about the effect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on the confidentiality of responses to public consultation exercises.

Responses should be sent to:

E-mail:  pharmacyregulation@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Written: Workforce Projects Branch

DHSSPS

Room D1

Castle Buildings

Stormont Estate

Belfast, BT4 3SQ

Tel:             (028) 90523 172

Fax: (028) 90 523 425

**The closing date for responses is 5pm on the 14 June 2016**

## Personal details

I am responding: as an individual

 on behalf of an organisation

 (please tick a box)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Job Title: |  |
| Organisation: |  |
| Address: |  |
|  |  |
| Tel: |  |
| Fax: |  |
| E-mail: |  |

# PART A

**The Department’s proposal**

**Q1. Do you agree that the regulation and professional leadership functions should be completely separated and undertaken in future by two distinct and separate bodies?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Initial Regulatory Impact Assessment**

**Q2: Please review the Initial Regulatory Impact Assessment and detail any further costs and benefits (both monetary and non-monetary) which you think the Department should consider. Please provide supporting evidence where appropriate.**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Analysis of options**

**Q3. In your view, are there any other viable options which have not been considered? Please provide supporting rationale for your proposal.**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Option One - The Society continues to function as both the regulator and professional leadership body**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree with the Department’s view that retention of regulation and professional leadership functions in the same body is not an acceptable option?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Capacity and resilience of a future Northern Ireland arrangement**

**Q5. To what extent do you AGREE that a lack of sufficient capacity and financial resilience will be a concern for a stand-alone Northern Ireland based regulator of a relatively small number of registrants?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Legislative considerations**

**Q6. To what extent do you AGREE that a stand–alone Northern Ireland based regulator for a relatively small number of professionals gives rise to value for money considerations in the use of public funds?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Legislative considerations**

**Q7. Please detail any other factors in relation to a Northern Ireland based regulatory arrangement which you think the Department should consider?**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Consistent UK-wide standards**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree that public confidence and assurance in the regulation of pharmacy would be enhanced through consistent UK-wide standards?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Improved efficiency of the regulatory function**

**Q9.**

1. **To what extent do you agree that enhanced efficiencies exist within larger regulatory bodies?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

1. **How might these impact on the delivery of more cost efficient and effective regulation which better protects the public? Please provide your views.**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Other issues to consider - Local influence on policy**

**Q10. To what extent do you AGREE that Northern Ireland could maintain sufficient influence on a UK-wide pharmacy regulator’s policy in order to adequately address local need?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Other issues to consider - Local influence on policy**

**Q11. Please detail any other factors in relation to a UK-wide regulatory arrangement which you think the Department should consider?**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Overview of the options**

**Q12. In your view which is the best future model to deliver modernised and strengthened statutory regulation of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland:**

* **A Northern Ireland based arrangement?**
* **Part of a UK-wide regulatory arrangement?**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Overview of the options**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree that a UK-wide arrangement for pharmacy regulation would be best delivered by General Pharmaceutical Council?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Overview of the options**

**Q14. Do you have any other comments you wish to make in relation to the options?**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Professional Leadership**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree that a separate leadership body, working independently from the regulator, strengthens the professional leadership arrangements for pharmacy?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Professional Leadership**

**Q16. Do you have any views on how best the pharmacy profession might establish strong, sustainable professional leadership in Northern Ireland?**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

# Part B

## Equality Implications

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Department to “have due regard” to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without.  The Department is also required to “have regard” to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The Department has also carried out an equality screening exercise to determine if any of these recommendations are likely to have a differential impact on equality of opportunity for any of the Section 75 groups. At this stage, it is considered that a full Equality Impact Assessment will not be required.

We invite you to consider the recommendations from a section 75 perspective by considering and answering the question below.

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Q1. Are the actions/proposals set out in this consultation document likely to have an adverse impact on any of the nine equality groups identified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998?**

**Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree**

**Disagree Strongly disagree**

|  |
| --- |
| Comments: |

**Please return your response questionnaire.**

**Responses must be received no later than 5pm on the 14 June 2016**

**Thank you for your comments.**

# Annex A

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – CONFIDENTIALITY OF CONSULTATIONS

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. **Before** you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor’s Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

* The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department’s functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
* The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties “in confidence” which is not confidential in nature;
* Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner’s Office (or see web site at: [**http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/**](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/)).

Produced by:

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety,

Castle Buildings, Belfast BT4 3SQ

Telephone (028) 90523 172

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

22 March 2016