

PHARMACY REPRESENTATION

REVIEW STEERING GROUP



At a glance guide May 2021

The Pharmacy Review Steering Group (RSG) is working to bring about change so that community pharmacy contractors get the maximum benefits from their Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs) and from the national negotiator PSNC.

Read on to find out about the RSG's work, why it matters, and what it means for pharmacy owners in England.



What is the RSG?

In 2019/20, following instigation by PSNC, both PSNC and the LPCs were the subjects of an independent review of their activities by pharmacy academic Professor David Wright. Professor Wright was looking for ways to get better outcomes for pharmacy owners in England from their representative bodies. His task was to find ways to ensure that the national network structure of LPCs and PSNC worked as efficiently and effectively as possible and was fit for the future.

In late 2020 the RSG was set up to take forward the findings of Professor Wright's review. RSG members were appointed by AIM, CCA and independent representatives, and the Group's role is to steer and commission a programme of work following that review. Through that work, the Group will develop proposals for change, ensuring that those proposals are feasible and will bring benefits for contractors.

Read the '[Independent Review of Community Pharmacy Contractor Representation and Support: Providing best value for contractors](#)'.

Why does this matter to pharmacy owners?

Pharmacy owners receive a wide range of important services and support from LPCs and from PSNC – PSNC represents pharmacies in national negotiations on pharmacy funding and services, providing guidance to help pharmacies provide NHS services; and LPCs represent pharmacies in negotiations on local services, also providing resources to help contractors. Given these critical roles, and the monies that contractors pay for them, it is important that LPCs and PSNC are both working as effectively as possible: this will mean the best possible support for contractors, as well as the best outcomes on pharmacy funding and services.



RSG Programme Design Principles

Design principles are guiding thoughts to help decision-making in a change process. They ensure that everyone is aligned on the outcomes, understands their role and that the decision-making governance is clear. The RSG has set out some key programme design principles including:

The vision for the future national and local representative bodies should be developed strategically, with a focus on the long term, and unconstrained by today's ways of working

The ongoing total annual **cost to contractors (the levy)** across the entire network for NHS community pharmacy representation and support **will not increase**

The programme will focus on ensuring the future model for representation and support **delivers the best value to contractors**

The programme is committed to making necessary changes **across the whole infrastructure of PSNC and LPCs**

All contractors should have **access to the same types of support** at national and local level (irrespective of contractor type) and contractors across the network should pay an equitable levy

National and local bodies providing representation and support to NHS community pharmacy **will be held to account in an open and transparent way**

The full list of the RSG's programme design principles will be announced to contractors at the RSG event on June 14.

What did the Wright Review find?

Professor Wright carried out extensive research across the sector, including surveying contractors and LPCs. His conclusion was that contractor satisfaction with both LPCs and with PSNC could be significantly improved. His findings highlighted the need:

1. for independent governance of both LPCs and PSNC
2. to reduce variation within LPCs, improve efficiency and focus their activities
3. to improve PSNC performance with respect to negotiation outcomes
4. to develop a new national vision and strategy for community pharmacy
5. to listen better to contractors so their voices are better heard at all levels
6. to appropriately resource PSNC to enable staff to better support negotiations and LPCs

What has the RSG done so far?

So far, the Group has adopted terms of reference; launched the RSG website; held a programme scoping workshop; agreed matters in relation to governance/ways of working; set up a Contractor Forum; held engagements event in March for contractors and LPCs; appointed programme management advisors (The Berkeley Partnership); worked on the change programme principles, workplan and a high-level timeline; and consulted on those plans with a range of stakeholders including CCA, AIM, NPA, LPCs and the Contractor Forum.

What will happen next?

We need to design options for representation that address the issues identified by Professor Wright. The summer will see a very busy period of work for the RSG with four main tasks to complete:

New models for representation: We need to draft options for central and local representation that we can review and discuss with contractors. This may involve structural changes for LPCs and for PSNC and will be a complex and challenging piece of work. We will engage and work collaboratively with the RSG's key stakeholders to develop these options and prepare a proposed model for contractors to vote on.

Contractor vote protocol: We must decide how the contractor voting system will work, and how contractors will receive the information they need to vote.



RSG Timeline

The RSG has set out a draft timeline for its next activities, recognising that many factors, including stakeholder feedback, could affect this

- January 2021:** RSG governance finalised and website launched.
- March 2021:** First RSG engagement events with Contractor Forum and LPCs.
- April 2021:** Berkeley Partnership working on programme principles, plans and timeline.
- May 2021:** RSG engagement with the sector on the draft plans.
- June 2021:** RSG to recruit project resource, collect data from PSNC and LPCs and start designing options for contractor support.
- Summer 2021:** Further develop options for contractor support and design a contractor voting process. Engage with the sector on options.
- September 2021:** Second round of stakeholder engagement on the updated proposal and the process for the contractor vote.
- Autumn 2021:** Preparation and communications ahead of the contractor vote by the end of the year.
- December 2021:** Contractor vote on RSG proposal (timing and dates of voting window to be agreed further to contractor feedback).
- Early 2022:** Start planning rollout of the plans.

Funding models: We need to consider contractor levies and how they will work in any newly designed local and national support network structure.

Engagement: Throughout all of these tasks, engagement with contractors, PSNC, LPCs and contractor trade associations, and wider sector representatives will be critical. Ahead of any contractor vote, the RSG will need to very clearly set out its proposals and explain why the changes would be beneficial for pharmacy owners.

How long will it take the RSG to do all this work?

The RSG is hoping to complete its plans for change and put those to contractors for consideration and vote by the end of 2021. Early 2022 would then see planning for implementation and roll-out of the plans and any new structures for LPCs and PSNC.

What does all this mean for PSNC and the LPCs?

Professor Wright identified the need for significant changes in the ways that LPCs and PSNC work. This year, LPCs and PSNC will have lots of opportunities to share their views on what should happen, and from the start of 2022 the RSG expects them to turn their focus on implementing whatever plan contractors have identified as the way forward.

Get involved

Visit our website: The RSG website has a wealth of information about the work of the RSG including minutes of our meetings, FAQs and updates <https://pharmacy-review.org/>

Sign up for an event: The next RSG event is on Monday 14 June, 7.30 – 8.45pm

Join our Contractor Forum: The RSG has set up a forum of contractors with whom it will more regularly engage. We want to hear your views on the future of LPC and PSNC support and get feedback on our draft plans. Email review@pharmacy-review.org to join

LPCs, share your feedback: LPCs are currently being consulted on our draft plans. Please send us any further feedback by COP June 7.