

Your Representation, Your Support, Your Say: A New Direction for Community Pharmacy Representation and Support

Community pharmacy contractors and LPCs attended two events in May 2021 to tell the Review Steering Group (RSG) what they thought about the RSG Programme Design Principles and RSG Draft Programme Plan to take forward work to improve contractor representation and support.

Read on to find out how your feedback has helped shape the development of the final programme design principles and timeline of activity which was presented at the pharmacy sector wide event on Monday 14th June. Firstly, a recap on what the design principles are and the proposed timeline of activity.

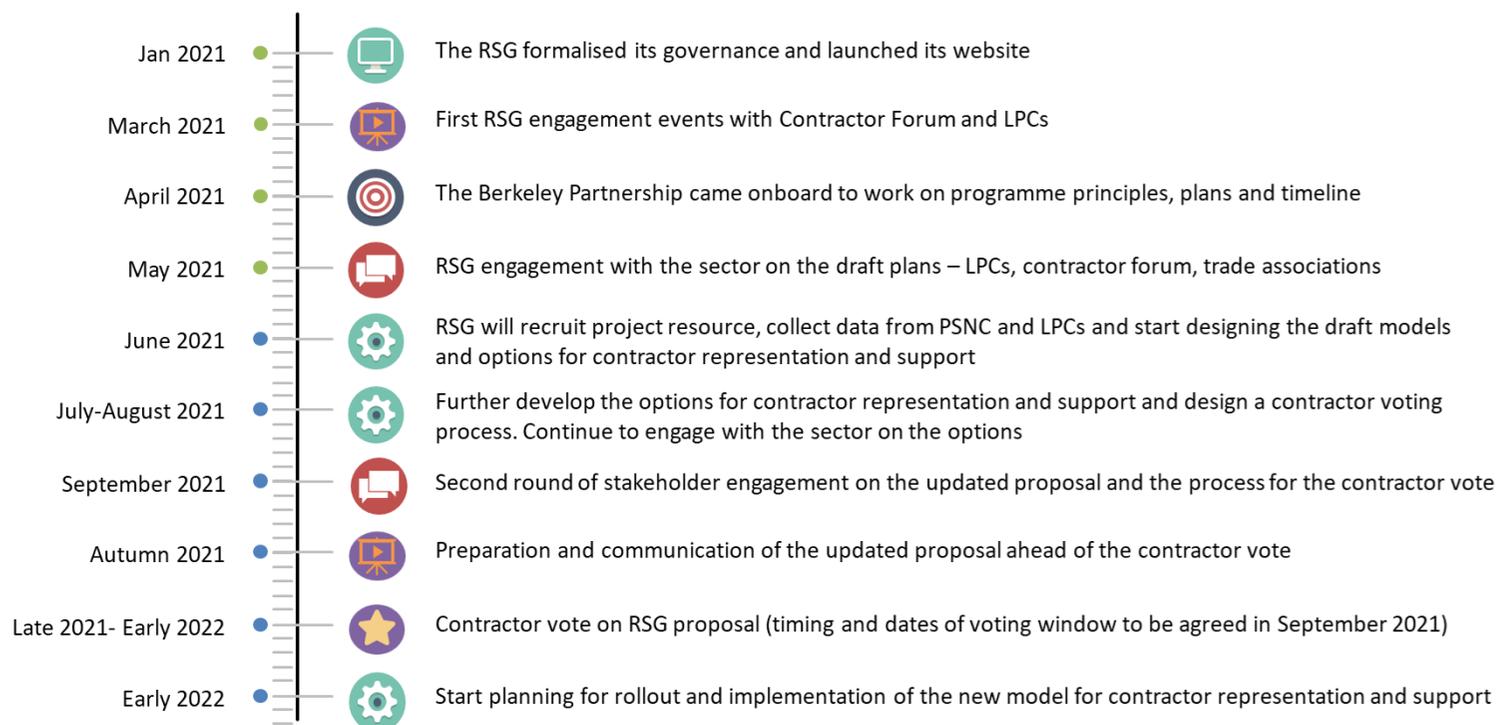
What are the RSG Programme Design Principles?

The RSG's programme 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 the 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**

A full set of RSG Programme Design Principles can be found on slide 14 [here](#).

Programme Timeline:



What you fed back to us about the RSG’s work and how we have responded

Communications and Engagement

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a lack of awareness about the RSG and its work amongst contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We produced an ‘At a Glance Guide’ to our work and emailed this to all contractors and LPCs via an RSG email (to receive these emails, make sure you are signed up at: psnc.org.uk/email) We are taking this into account when producing our communications and engagement plan for the rest of this year. We plan to use multiple communications routes and channels to reach contractors including via the trade associations and using digital events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You were concerned with the lack of engagement from independent contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have set up a Contractor Forum which will act as a source of expertise and sounding board for ideas and proposals for the RSG. To join this forum, please email review@pharmacy-review.org
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was not enough time for in depth discussion in the breakout groups in the March engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The length of time for breakout sessions events was extended in the May engagement events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would have been helpful to have sight of questions before the engagement events to think about these in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We sent you the presentation in advance of the May events to consider and reflect on as well as the questions that we were asking you to consider. We will aim to continue to do this and to give you more reading time next time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted more detail on what the RSG has done so far 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is now more information about the RSG’s work on our website. Our communications are increasing in frequency with RSG emails, and we have also produced an ‘At a Glance Guide’ to our work, and updated FAQs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was not enough time to answer a number of questions at the March events and you wanted questions asked in the chat function by contractors to be answered after the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We produced an FAQs document following the March engagement events and following the May engagement events which were emailed to attendees and published on the RSG website

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening meetings were not accessible to all and you said at the May events that you wanted materials further in advance of meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will take this into account with timings of future engagement events and look to send any pre-reads further in advance of the meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted bite sized pieces of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We produced the ‘At a Glance Guide’ explaining what the RSG is, what it has done so far, what happens next and what all this means for PSNC and LPCs. We will continue to produce similar types of materials where appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted less detailed and complex slides and these to be in plain language following the May engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The slides for the pharmacy sector wide webinar on 14th June were less detailed and language was reviewed

RSG Process and Ways of Working

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted a timeline of RSG activities in March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the May events, we prepared a draft timeline of activities for 2021/2022 and following feedback these were updated for the pharmacy sector event on 14th June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted clearer information about how contractors and LPCs will feed into the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSG’s timeline of activity highlights when the RSG will be engaging with contractors and LPCs. The Contractor Forum will continue to be used as a source of expertise and a sounding board for ideas and proposals for the RSG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It wasn’t clear that the programme covers the national and local organisations (PSNC & LPCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure this is repeated in all future communications and engagement materials and events. It is made clear in our ‘At a Glance Guide’ and is also included in our FAQs We are committed to looking at the whole infrastructure of both PSNC and LPCs which is enshrined into the programme design principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted to know who is the project team with the programme manager that is currently being recruited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will publish a programme structure once the programme manager is in place

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSG work needs to reflect what is happening in the wider NHS – the ICS structures and PCNs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSG members will be reflecting on NHS changes as proposals are developed and recognise the NHS landscape is critical to how the proposals are developed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Wright review was written pre-Covid pandemic and you said that Covid has changed the way many things work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSG will take into account how life has changed for the pharmacy sector due to the Covid pandemic, when developing the proposals for contractors to vote on

RSG Timelines and the Contractor Voting Process

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timelines seem very tight and slippage may be likely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timeline was produced as a guide and we will take into consideration changes to the NHS and comments on timing of the vote itself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not a good time to hold the final contractor vote on the RSG proposal in December as this is a busy period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSG will take this into consideration when planning the timing of the vote
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not clear who will decide what will be voted on; what the process will be; what will be voted on; will it be once vote or for a number of principles; how will the final vote be carried out; what percentage will be required to pass any proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSG will be working through these and other issues over the summer, including developing the options for contractor representation and support and designing a contractor voting process. The RSG will continue to engage with the sector on the options. The RSG will issue clear information for contractors about the process for voting, once this has all been worked through
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You want to know how outcomes will be developed and performance monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be developed as part of the proposed new model for contractor representation and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wanted to know when the roll out for changes will be complete given that they are due to commence in February 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will include this as part of the implementation planning phase and share with contractors at the earliest opportunity

What you told us you liked about the May engagement events

Speakers were very knowledgeable and well informed, they presented their plans clearly.

Webinars provide a good opportunity for people to feed in.

Informative and well presented in a clear, concise manner. I liked the slide sharing before the event.

It gave everyone the opportunity to feed in their concerns especially in the breakout session.

It was good to be updated on the progress and have an outline of the engagement process.

Smaller breakout groups gave everyone the chance to contribute.

No travelling involved and a chance for all to contribute.

Plan and timeline were very detailed and comprehensive.

What you told us you liked about the work of the RSG

Happy with the levels of RSG engagement with contractors and LPCs.

Feels open and transparent

A lot of emphasis on contractors making the final decision, which is right.

The engagement on the RSG's early thinking approach is a really good way to be doing this.

More information and reassurance given to independent contractors that the RSG will listen to our views and take all feedback into consideration.

A lot of really good work about engagement.

The RSG has done a pretty good job to be fair and it's got to be down to the individual contractors now – they have to have a bit of onus on them to engage.

There was transparency from RSG on full stakeholder engagement. It was really helpful to share the timelines on contractor voting.

Nature of engagement with stakeholders seems right.

Next Steps

We need to design options for representation that address the issues identified by Professor Wright and the sector. 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.

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.

Immediate Next Steps

We look forward to the second round of engagement with contractors and LPCs on the updated proposal and the process for the contractor vote. Look out for invitations to these events in the coming weeks.