

RPSGB Response to the Proposed NHS Redress Measure

Supplementary submission

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. It also regulates pharmacy technicians on a voluntary basis, a role that is soon expected to become statutory under new legislation.

The RPSGB was pleased to be invited to submit written evidence on the proposed NHS Redress Measure, and our response reflects the impact of the proposed Measure on pharmacists who work across healthcare sectors and in a range of primary and secondary care settings.

The RPSGB supports the underpinning principles of the proposed Measure and we consider the aims and objectives to be consistent with the public interest. However, we have a number of comments and concerns regarding the Measure which we have outlined in our response, many of them concerning the interface between the regulatory process of the RPSGB and the Measure as outlined.

The main points of the RPSGB's response are:

- The RPSGB proposes that primary care contractors are excluded from these arrangements. The redress scheme should apply to secondary care only, and its scope should not be extended without careful evaluation of its implementation in that sector first;
- There are professional requirements set by the RPSGB which make indemnity insurance a requirement for practice as a primary care contractor. This ensures adequate redress for the public in the event of harm as a result of diagnosis, care or treatment. The RPSGB would advise that there should be careful dialogue with the main insurers in pharmacy about this issue;
- The insurance arrangements and the NHS complaints procedures deliver explanations as well as redress. Combined with inspectorate arrangements, these provide adequate safeguards within the primary care sector, and these current arrangements work well;
- Claims currently met by the insurance provider would, if the scheme is introduced for primary care contractors, be transferred to NHS Wales. This could have serious funding implications for NHS services.

The RPSGB reiterates its support for the principle of the Measure, but asks that these concerns are addressed when the Minister for Health and Social Services appears before the NHS Redress Committee this week.

The RPSGB would welcome the opportunity to play a proactive part in assisting the National Assembly in delivering public confidence and appropriate redress systems at the same time as preserving sound regulation of the profession.

For more information, please contact the RPSGB Welsh Directorate on wales@rpsgb.org or 029 2073 0310.