



Consultation on the draft Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for pharmacists in Northern Ireland

23 October 2023

**If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact us at
Pharmaceutical Society NI, 73 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HL. Telephone
number 02890326927 or by email at consultations@psni.org.uk and we will do
our best to assist you.**

Contents

Section		Page
1	About the Pharmaceutical Society NI	3
	Who we are	3
2	Purpose of the Code	3
3	Why we are consulting	3
	The consultation process	4
	How can I respond to this consultation?	4
	Accessibility	5
4	Consultation questions	5

1. **About the Pharmaceutical Society NI**

The Pharmaceutical Society NI regulates pharmacists and registered pharmacies in Northern Ireland. Our primary objectives are to protect the public and patients, uphold professional standards and maintain public confidence in the pharmacy profession.

2. **Purpose of the Code**

The Pharmacy (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 imposes an obligation on the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland to “set standards relating to the conduct, ethics and performance expected of registered persons”.

The Pharmaceutical Society NI Code (Professional standards of conduct, ethics, and performance for pharmacists in Northern Ireland) (the Code) is used to guide and support pharmacists in their scope of practice, professional development and decision making. It underpins all other professional standards and guidance documents we issue. The Code also informs the public and patients on the professional conduct and behaviours they can expect from their pharmacist. It puts patients’ interests first and reinforces the concept of patient-centred professionalism and care.

The Code is regarded as governing the conduct of all pharmacists both within and outside the practice of pharmacy. Breaches of the Code could form the basis of a complaint of misconduct and an appearance before the Statutory Committee of the Pharmaceutical Society NI. The Statutory Committee can determine to remove the registration of a pharmacist or apply another appropriate sanction.

3. **Why we are consulting**

It is important we review the Code on a regular basis to ensure it is fit for purpose. Since the current Code¹ was last reviewed in 2016 there have been

¹ The 2016 Code can be accessed here: <https://www.psni.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/22504-PSNI-Code-of-Practice-Book-final.pdf>

many changes and developments within the pharmacy sector, including increased independent prescribing, greater clinical interaction with patients, new technologies and changes in healthcare demands, which have impacted the pharmacy profession.

In the new draft Code, we have taken a different approach in which pharmacists give an affirmation to provide safe, effective, and compassionate care by abiding by seven Standards. For each of the seven Standards we have listed behaviours which pharmacists must demonstrate to meet the Standards.

Much of the content of the Code is unchanged as the fundamental principles of patient care remains as relevant today as in the past. However, the emphasis and language used in the Code has changed. We have tried to make the Code more accessible and relevant to both the profession and the public and to allow for broad standards which can be applied in all situations now and in the future life of the Code.

Following input from our initial public call for evidence from October 2022 to January 2023 and discussions with stakeholders and the Code Advisory group, we have added new sections, for example, on professional judgement, accountability and patient rights. New required behaviours have been added to address the developing role of pharmacists

Following discussions with stakeholders the new draft Code was developed for pharmacists exclusively.

4. The consultation process

To date, the consultation process has involved an initial public call for evidence followed by engagement with key stakeholders and in-depth sessions with an expert Code Advisory Group representing patients and the pharmacy profession. We would now like to consult more widely with the pharmacy

profession, interested parties, patients and the public to ascertain their views on the proposed new Code.

5. **How can I respond to this consultation?**

The consultation will run for 8 weeks from 23 October until 18 December 2023. During this time, we would welcome feedback from individuals and organisations. We have published the consultation documents on our website:

<http://www.psni.org.uk/publications/consultations/>

We encourage you to complete the consultation response form and return to us either by email consultations@psni.org.uk or by post to:

**Consultation on the Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance
Pharmaceutical Society NI
73 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1HL**

We will also send the consultation documents to a range of stakeholders with an interest in the pharmacy profession. We welcome responses from everyone who has information or comments.

We are also keen to talk to anyone who wishes to discuss the draft Code. If you would find this helpful, please contact Mark Neale at mark.neale@psni.org.uk or Simon.McClenahan@psni.org.uk or telephone 02890 326927 to arrange this discussion.

After the consultation period, we will consider all responses and publish a report summarising our findings. If you wish your response to remain confidential, please indicate this in your response. We will generally respect this request, however, the information you provide may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

If you require further information about the consultation, please contact Mark Neale or Simon McClenahan at consultations@psni.org.uk or telephone 02890 326927.

6. **Accessibility**

If you are having difficulty accessing the consultation or if you need us to make adjustments to enable you to respond, please contact us and we will do our best to help.

7. **Consultation questions**

We welcome your views on the following questions:

1. Are the principles in the draft Code applicable across all areas of pharmacy practice?
2. Does the draft Code adequately outline the behaviours and conduct expected from a health professional working as a pharmacist?
3. Is there anything which is not adequately considered or covered in the draft Code?
4. Is there anything unnecessary or which should be removed from the draft Code?
5. Is there any supplementary guidance or information you would require to help your understanding of the information contained in the Code?
6. How would you suggest we can make the Code better known and understood by pharmacy trainees, pharmacists, patients and the public?
7. Do any aspects of the draft Code have equality implications for groups or individuals based on one or more of the equality categories?

We have provided a response form on our website which we encourage you to complete: <http://www.psni.org.uk/publications/consultations/>

Thank you.