

## IPU Secretary General elected President of PGEU 61% go to pharmacists first

By Zach Kelly

MR Darragh O'Loughlin, Secretary General of the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU), has been elected President of the



Mr Darragh O'Loughlin, Secretary General, IPU

Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) for 2015. Mr O'Loughlin has been Secretary General of the IPU since 2013 and previously served on the Board of the Health Information and Quality Authority and the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

"I am greatly honoured to have been elected to the PGEU Presidency at this important time," said Mr O'Loughlin. "Pharmacists provide an essential, accessible healthcare service to the public in every part of Europe. With my European colleagues, I look forward to building on the excellent work of my predecessors to ensure that pharmacists' expertise, skills and contribution to healthcare are recognised and valued at both national and European levels."

By Zach Kelly

RESEARCH has shown that 61 per cent of patients are attending their local pharmacist for advice on both chronic and minor ailments before visiting their GP, while 73 per cent of interventions resulted in treatment from the pharmacist.

The research, carried out by the Haven Pharmacy co-operative, also revealed that cardiovascular illness is fourth on the list of the most common chronic conditions treated. The most common minor ailment treated was coughs and colds with respiratory symptoms.

"We are becoming the first port of call for patients' health matters and this is growing, not just for minor ailments, but in helping to better manage chronic conditions such as cardiovascular illness, asthma and diabetes," commented Mr Daragh Connolly, Vice President of the Irish Pharmacy Union and Chairman of Haven

Pharmacy.

"It is a big responsibility which we are more than qualified to deliver but we need the support to provide better health screenings in our pharmacies and an overall improved health service at community level."

The research was conducted in 43 local community pharmacies across Ireland, with 1,100 interventions studied. These were broken down as 43 per cent for chronic ailments and 57 per cent for minor conditions.

"One of the most significant statistics in the research is the number of patients coming to us about cardiovascular ailments, whether this is related to blood pressure or cholesterol or a related symptom," commented Mr Connolly. "Cardiovascular disease accounts for 33 per cent of deaths in Ireland and the pharmacist can play a significant role in prevention and detection through more education and more screenings."

## Irish pharmacist to take up leading European role

By Pat Kelly

MS Joan Peppard, Chief Pharmacist at the Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore, has been selected as President-Elect of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP).

Hospital Pharmacists Association of Ireland (HPAI) President Ms Deirdre Lynch commented: "Having an Irish pharmacist at the helm of the EAHP shows that Europe appreciates the patient care provided by Irish hospital pharmacists. Our commitment to work for better patient care for all patients is demonstrated in Joan's record.

"The HPAI and EAHP look forward to working together to bring about the full achievement of the European State-

ments of Hospital Pharmacy in Ireland."

Following her appointment, Ms Peppard said: "A robust set of hospital pharmacy practise standards for Europe has been arranged by the EAHP. These standards should be met across European health systems to ensure safe, effective and optimal use of medicines, in collaboration with multi-disciplinary teams."

Ms Peppard has previously held the post of Director of Professional Development for the EAHP and in 2006, proposed the establishment of a clinical skills course for hospital pharmacists and has served in a leadership capacity on a number of key committees in Ireland at local, regional and national level.



Ms Joan Peppard

Impact of cutbacks the 'biggest challenge' for pharmacists

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"As part of our preparations for the Pharmacist Awards, we wanted to feel the pulse of the pharmacy sector," commented Mr David Graham of Helix Health. "We interact with pharmacists every day in a variety of settings, including in hospitals and communities throughout Ireland... the findings of this survey confirm what we have been hearing anecdotally. Pharmacists have certainly borne their fair share of pressure as a result of recent Government cutbacks."

The Helix Health Pharmacist Awards are designed to acknowledge the work and dedication of pharmacists and raise much-needed money for the Pharmacy Benevolent Fund. "From looking at the results of our survey, it is clear that the Fund is needed now more than ever," added Mr Graham.

The categories for this year's ceremony include: Excellence in Hospital Pharmacy Award; Young Pharmacist of the Year Award; Community Pharmacy Team Leader of the Year Award; Practice-Based Research Award; Professional Excellence Award; Pharmacist Contribution to the Community Award; Excellence in Community Practice Award; and the Liz Herbert Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Patient-Nominated Award accepts nominations from members of the public, while pharmacists and members of the wider pharmaceutical community are being encouraged to complete the online form at [www.pharmacistawards.com](http://www.pharmacistawards.com).

Closing date for entries is 30 July.

## PSI elects a new President and Vice President

By Pat Kelly

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) has elected Ms Leonie Clarke and Dr Ann Frankish as its new President and Vice President, respectively.

Ms Clarke has served on the Council of the Society since 2010. As well as running her own pharmaceutical consultancy organisation which focuses primarily on medicines legislation compliance, corporate governance and quality management, she has qualifications in legal studies, accounting and finance.

Ms Clarke began her career as Assis-



Ms Leonie Clarke, PSI

tant Registrar at the PSI in 1991.

Dr Frankish previously served on the PSI Council and held the posts of President and Vice-President prior to the introduction of the Pharmacy Act 2007, which laid the basis for the current regulatory system.

Dr Frankish has recently retired from the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, where she served as Chief Pharmacist for 26 years, and she has recently taken up a role in industry.

During a long career in pharmacy, she has worked in a variety of settings including academia, community and hospital pharmacy.