

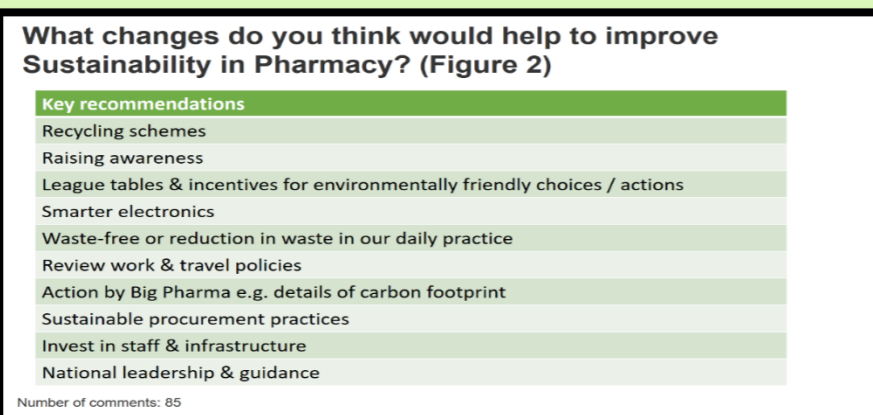


# The United Kingdom Country Report for EAHP General Assembly, 2022



## Sustainability in Pharmacy Practice

The NHS is the largest UK public sector contributor to carbon emissions (25% pre-COVID) which is 5.4% of total UK emissions. We (you, me, and all our patients) are on course for a global temperature rise which will see millions of people displaced, injured or dying through rising sea levels, starvation and disease by the end of this century. The head of the UK environment agency has warned that in less than years, (by 2035), water shortages in the UK will pose a threat to life. The health costs are projected to be extraordinary. Pharmacy as a department, as well as medicines and medicinal products, create waste and pollution. The COVID pandemic and the relentless consumption of personal protective equipment (PPE) has escalated this issue. The Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP) were keen to discover our members views on Sustainability, and our role in the future. We conducted a baseline questionnaire with our members in the summer of 2021. With a small response rate of 2.27% (108/4755), 94% (n=100) of respondents believed that there were aspects of pharmacy practice which were wasteful, with respondents choosing a range of areas where pharmacy practice could be more sustainable (Figure 1).



79% (n=85) respondents added their suggestions to the question "What changes would improve sustainability in Pharmacy?" (Figure 2) including national leadership, recycling schemes for e.g. inhalers and PPE, as well as a review of work and travel policies. A local champion in your department was also a common suggestion.

Survey respondents believe that aspects of pharmacy practice are not sustainable, however most do not feel empowered to make change. There is a need for national guidance to support changes in practice, and for local champions and leadership at all levels to ensure that sustainability can be sustainable. Since this survey was completed, the GHP have appointed a Chair and Vice Chair for Sustainability. We are working with colleagues across the UK, Europe and globally to improve practice in pharmacy and medicines use, from undergraduate pharmacy training right through to postgraduate training. The RPS and a number of pharmacy bodies have also declared a climate emergency and some committed to divestment from fossil fuels.

As a committee, we have all committed to improve our awareness, and have all completed the first module of the SSE Sustainability course on carbon literacy this year, making pledges to improve our workplaces and localities awareness of the impact of our profession on our environment and the global climate crisis.



Our Chair and Vice Chair of Sustainability, alongside RPS colleagues, have been active at national conferences, raising awareness of Sustainable Pharmacy Practice. The GHP is also running a free virtual conference on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022 if any colleagues would like to attend. Want to get involved? Get in touch on Twitter @GHPPharmacy or via email to [sustainability@ghp.org.uk](mailto:sustainability@ghp.org.uk).

## Equality, Diversion and Inclusion (EDI) in Pharmacy Practice

GHP members have a powerful voice, with the weight of over 6,000 members behind them, as well as 1.4million in our parent union, Unite. One of our core goals in GHP is to support individual members in the workplace and as an organisation, the GHP are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and being inclusive in our work. We are also committed to supporting our members and ensuring that they work in an environment where the values of inclusion are truly honoured, lived and upheld by all. We believe that the diversity of our profession is an enormous strength and should be celebrated.

We must all work together to ensure that each of us are considered and heard equally. It is EVERYONE's role to be inclusive and to make inclusion part of your everyday practice. We support the UK Inclusive Pharmacy Practice plan (IPP) and we have published our own 10 point action plan in March 2021 (<https://www.ghp.org.uk/inclusion/>). We appointed a Chair and two Vice Chairs of Equality and Diversity and we have also published an Inclusivity checklist to support our members in being more inclusive in the workplace. We have recently participated in a webinar on racism as well as a number of national round table discussions on Inclusion and Diversity, representing our members' experiences and seeking a path for the future.

## GHP is 100 years old in 2023!

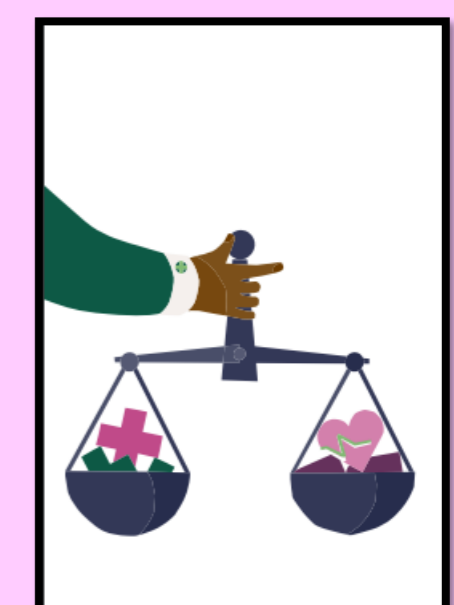
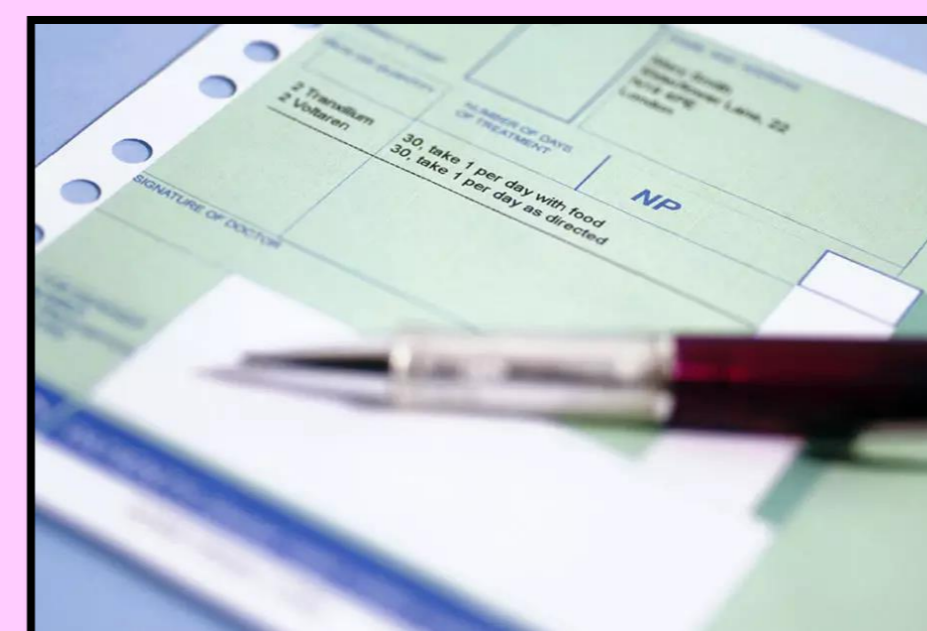
We are delighted to announce that the GHP will be celebrating our centenary in 2023. We are currently organising a history of our key work streams; terms and conditions, education and training amongst others. We are also planning a calendar of events to run throughout the year, and we invite you, our European colleagues, to join us in our celebrations both in person and virtually.

Here's to the next 100 years!



## Reform of Initial Education and Training for UK Pharmacists

Pharmacy undergraduates across the UK study for a Masters of Pharmacy (MPharm) degree for four years at university followed by a year of foundation year training in a range of practice areas including community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, industry and General Practitioner (GP/family doctors) practices or a combination of these. In autumn 2020, amidst the worst of the COVID pandemic, the 4 countries' Chief Pharmaceutical Officers in the UK decided that there was a need to alter the undergraduate training for pharmacists to meet the health challenges, with the intention that pharmacists should enter the profession with the ability to prescribe. This represents the biggest change to undergraduate pharmacy training in the UK in two generations.



This decision came largely as a result of the incredible work of the pharmacy profession in all sectors during the pandemic, and is in recognition of the under-utilization of some of the skills of the pharmacy workforce currently. This is not entirely an unexpected move. In 2018, the General Pharmaceutical Council consulted on the need to embed prescribing in the MPharm so that pharmacists would graduate as prescribers, and this was broadly welcomed by the profession, albeit with provisos that investment in training and infrastructure were essential. The existing training pathway to become a prescriber in the UK requires a qualified pharmacist to work for at least 2 years post registration, and to have demonstrated competence in the area in which they hope to prescribe.

The Reform of Initial Education and Training will require a complete rewrite of existing undergraduate training to facilitate a 300% increase in experiential learning in years 1 to 4 in a wide variety of clinical areas for every undergraduate pharmacy student. The undergraduate pharmacy courses are also required to increase the teaching of clinical examination and consultation skills alongside their increased emphasis on applied therapeutics, prescribing and clinical leadership to enable pharmacists to register as prescribers after 5 years. During Year 5, foundation trainee pharmacists will be supported by Educational Supervisors from the pharmacy workforce where they are employed, who will support them towards achieving their prescribing qualification.

The first pharmacist prescribers will enter the workforce in 2026. This additional responsibility to prescribe is a huge challenge for the whole pharmacy workforce in the UK. The GHP and RPS have been working closely with the Chief Pharmaceutical Officers of all 4 countries across the UK, to represent the views of practising pharmacists across the UK and to develop a way forward which will be sustainable for staff and which will develop the profession.

