



Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Helping pharmacists achieve excellence

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Dear Mr Durkin

The Chief Medical Officer's report on medical expert witnesses: public consultation on proposals for change

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, which is expected to become statutory under new legislation soon. The primary objectives of the RPSGB are to lead, regulate, develop and represent the profession of pharmacy.

The RPSGB welcomes the opportunity to respond to the CMO's proposals for reforming the delivery of medical expert evidence in family law cases. Although we are not aware that pharmacists currently act as expert witnesses in the family courts, it is possible that the proposed changes to the system will lead to an increased role for pharmacists as members of multi-disciplinary teams. We would welcome such a development since pharmacists, in their capacity as experts on medicines use and management could make valuable contributions to the evidence given in some case.

However, if other professional groups are to become more involved in the delivery of expert evidence, alongside medical doctors, it is important that systems for accreditation and instruction of experts take account of their professional background and expertise.

The RPSGB will follow the implementation of the CMO's proposals with interest, with a view to identifying new professional requirements for pharmacists relating to the delivery of expert evidence, should they arise.

Yours sincerely

Douglas Simpson
Chairman of the Law and Ethics Committee