

Boots Pharmacists News

February
2019

It's now up to you – voting starts soon

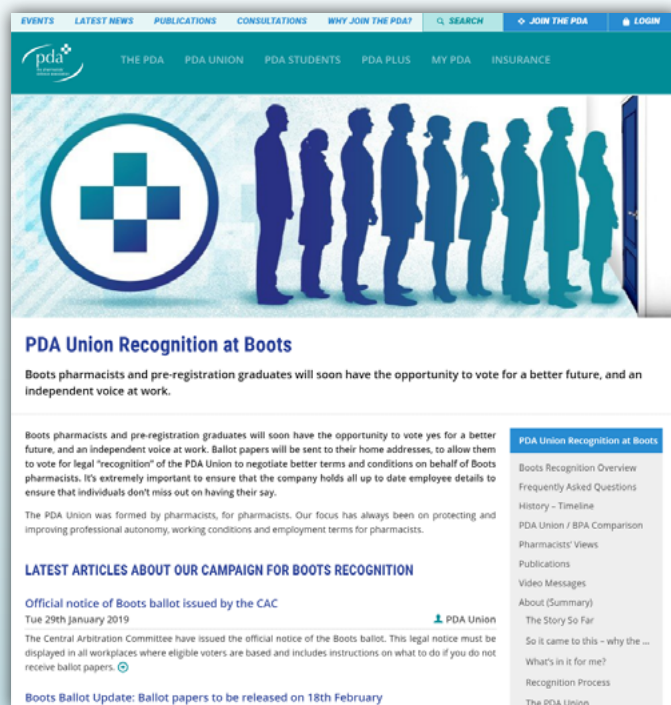


With our professional support, pharmacists at Boots have been working towards securing independent trade union recognition for more than eight years. In 2018, over 2,800 pharmacists won a ballot to reach this point, but there is still one final step to take.

The responsibility for achieving the outcome that thousands of pharmacists want, is now in the hands of all of you who are currently employed at the company. Only store/relief pharmacists and pre-registration pharmacists at levels 5,6 and 7 who are currently employed by Boots Management Services Ltd can vote in the ballot.

Please don't leave it to others to secure positive change. Your vote is essential because if less than 40% of eligible votes are returned in favour of "YES" then the process will fail and nothing will change.

Ballot papers will be posted to your home address on 18 February 2019 and must be received by Kanto Elect no later than noon on 11 March 2019.



LET'S STAY CONNECTED

Eligible pharmacists should already have received several publications from us to their home address explaining the benefits of independent trade union recognition, but if you have any remaining questions or want any additional information, we would be delighted to hear from you.

You can visit our website: www.pdaurecognition.co.uk; follow or contact us on your choice of social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn)



Videos

Our videos will be made available on the [website](#) for you to view. They are also on our Facebook and YouTube pages and on our website. The latest videos feature two of our national team:

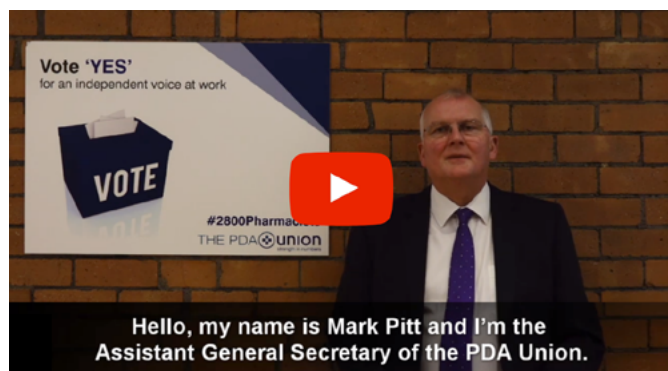
Mark Pitt

Mark Pitt, Assistant General Secretary of the PDA Union discusses in the video how union recognition at Boots will benefit you at work. Mark describes how if at least 2,800 pharmacists and pre-registration pharmacists at Boots vote 'YES' in the upcoming PDA Union recognition ballot, pharmacists will secure the right to negotiate over topics such as pay, hours, and ensuring adequate rest breaks for pharmacists.

Mark goes on to say, once recognised at Boots, we also plan to work with senior management to develop fair pay policies and investigate whether an ethnicity pay gap exists amongst pharmacists. As well as protecting and enhancing pharmacist employment terms and conditions, trade union recognition brings valuable other benefits, such as enhanced health and safety protection at work. With an independent voice for pharmacists we can finally tackle the opportunities, challenges and concerns in the workplace in a way that fully respects the views of pharmacists.

Watch the full video here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqdzd-W0AVI>



Diane Leicester-Hallam

Diane Leicester-Hallam, Director of Member Services at the PDA, recently joined the PDA after working for nine years at Pharmacist Support – the professions independent charity. Diane talks about her current role at the PDA and her work to further improve member services. Diane also urges Boots pharmacists and pre-registration trainees to read more about the PDA Union recognition ballot, talk to colleagues, their family and friends, and ensure pharmacists make a fully informed decision that's right for them and their colleagues, to improve working conditions and job satisfaction.

Don't let this opportunity pass you by, engage with us if you would like further information, be informed, and make the right choice for a better future.

Watch the full video here.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boI_BWrk8Jk

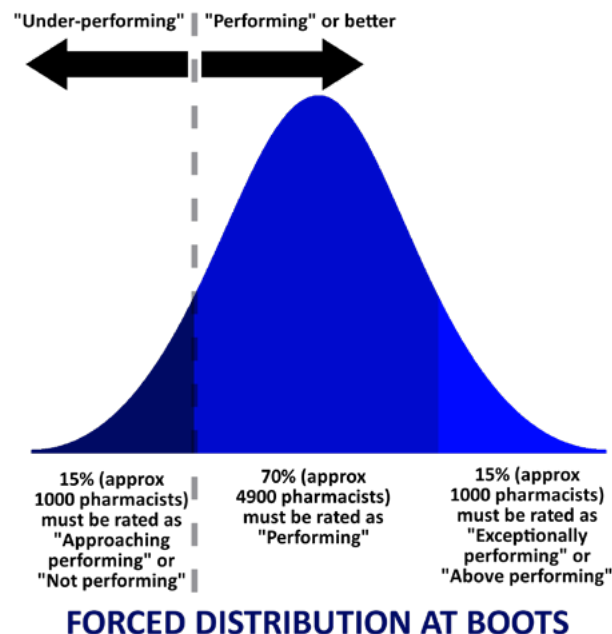


“If at least 2,800 of the 7,000 pharmacists and pre-reg's working in Boots vote YES, they will gain an independent voice through the PDA Union.”

Pharmacists talk about the impact of “forced distribution” performance management

Forced distribution is one of the key things pharmacists want to tackle once recognition is secured and after we published an article about Boots’ performance management system we’ve heard more from pharmacists about the impact of this system.

These pharmacists have told us they don’t want to be identified by management so we have agreed to keep their names anonymous. This is a sample of what we’ve heard:



"In regards to its pay structure and market based pay it should be ashamed. It should be ashamed for its performance review where no person I have spoken to has any idea what it means to be above performing and where the pharmacy advisors, the people on the front lines get no bonus at all unless they are above performing.

Nobody knows what exactly they need to do to be "above performing". Even if you hit all your targets and are green on the scorecard despite those targets being an increase you are performing."

"I've been a victim of this for 2 years in a row now!"

"My current line manager has been very supportive but has openly admitted that there is a bell curve and that if there aren't enough "not performing" results then so-called "calibration meetings" are held to redistribute people into those bottom spots. It seems that everyone must take a turn."

A further pharmacist, who has recently left Boots, said this about the company's approach to performance management:

"I worked under this regime and it is a terrible way to work. The constant threat of a 'non-performing' rating is so demotivating and demoralising and it sometimes felt like a personality contest. I challenged it many times (probably another reason I would never win a corporate personality contest) and was told that even if all targets were met/exceeded you could still be classed as non performing so what's the point!"

You can read the previous story, and find out what prompted these comments, here:

<https://www.the-pda.org/boots-ballot-2019-performance-1/>

Safer Pharmacies Charter



Keeping patients safe is key to the role of every pharmacist. But less than safe working conditions risk harm to patients as well as damaging consequences for pharmacists – such as impacting on their physical or mental health.

PDA Union members have produced a charter of seven commitments to improve safety and care for patients, through better working conditions in UK pharmacy practice. This charter defines basic standards to help ensure safe practice wherever pharmacists work.

The commitments in the charter should be standard practice whenever and wherever pharmacy services are provided. We actively encourage other interested parties to endorse the charter and those who own or manage pharmacies to adopt the charter and ensure the commitments are fulfilled in their pharmacies.

We've enclosed the charter with this communication.

PUT 22 FEBRUARY IN YOUR DIARY



If you consider that you are eligible to vote and have not received a ballot paper by 22 February 2019, please contact the CAC Case Manager, Linda Lehan, by email at llehan@cac.gov.uk giving your full name and address. If you have recently changed your address and you have not informed your employer you should do so as soon as possible to ensure you receive your ballot paper on time.