



PDA Update in Boots

June 2022



Welcome to your June 2022 PDA Update in Boots

Keeping you informed of all the union activities within Boots

In this issue:

- Boots member pay event
- JNB (Joint Negotiating Body) Update
- JCC (Joint Consultative Committee) Update
- Reps in depth
- Best wishes to Trainees sitting the June 2022 Assessment
- Reps in depth
- Health and Safety update: Mental Health Awareness

We encourage you to share this newsletter with your Boots colleagues that are not yet members of the PDA.

Boots member pay event

By Paul Flynn, National Officer for Scotland, and Co-ordinator of the PDA Reps Network in Boots

On the evening of Monday 20 June, over 100 PDA members and pharmacists in Boots came together with their workplace union representatives and some PDA staff to hear about and discuss their views around this year's Pay claim.

The meeting was chaired by Gordon Finlayson, National Rep for Scotland, and after a succinct but detailed scene setting and introduction from Paul Moloney, National Officer and the PDA's Lead negotiator, became a dynamic and engaging conversation.



Subjects that were covered in the meeting were wide ranging and included what members would consider a reasonable pay settlement, worries around loyalty and experience not getting recognition, and questions from the membership about what actions could be taken were the pay offer not to match expectations.

90% of respondents to a poll of those attending were positive about what they had heard about the PDA's position on the Pay Claim at the meeting.

If you missed the chance to attend but have thoughts or contributions you would like to make, please contact your local PDA rep who can ensure they are shared appropriately.

We hope you will join us in our next planned members event in August the subject of which is mental wellbeing and the fallacy of resilience. You will be made aware of how and when to register closer to the time.

The JNB (Joint Negotiating Body) Update

By Gordon Finlayson, PDA National Rep for Scotland & Northern Ireland

When Boots signed a recognition agreement with the PDA back in 2019, it resulted in something that had never happened before. For the first time in the

history of the company, the salary and conditions of pharmacists employed by Boots were now negotiable.

What does this mean for pharmacists?

Simply put, the company can no longer unilaterally impose a pay award; instead, senior company managers and union representatives engage in pay negotiations to seek to reach an agreement.



The negotiations that take place over the summer are undertaken through the JNB (The Joint Negotiating Body). Pharmacists within the Bargaining Unit are represented by three National Reps and two of the team from the PDA in Birmingham. The group is supported by Paul Moloney, PDA Union National Officer, who has extensive experience in negotiating with employers in many different sectors, including health.

The meetings with the company this year commence in August following the submission of a pay claim.

We are all aware of recent economic factors that have resulted in a sudden and dramatic increase in all measures of inflation, and I am sure this will be an important factor in this year's negotiations.

The team and I are in the early stages of putting together a claim to submit to the company. We are here to represent pharmacist and trainee pharmacist union members at Boots and would like to encourage your involvement in the process. We discussed all things pay during our member evening meeting on Monday 20 June, but if you have any other ideas, thoughts or comments please get in touch.

If you have any comments or would like any more information, please drop me an email at gordon.finlayson@pda-union.org.

JCC (Joint Consultative Committee) Update

By Richard Evans, PDA Regional Rep for Northern Ireland

The latest JCC meeting was held in D80 in Nottingham for the first time in two years. The agenda had been mutually agreed with a large input from the PDA.

The day started off with a business update from Boots and the PDA, followed by a Health and Safety update highlighting a process which had been agreed for undertaking accident investigations where members had been affected. The Reps Network had undertaken new Health and Safety training and Mental health awareness training coming shortly to enable them to deal effectively with a large array of workplace issues.



A Learning and Development update included the news of the new IP course open to

Director of the PDA, Paul Day, presented the top line PDA member HSE survey responses from over 500 pharmacists working in Boots. This was followed by a discussion on what the causes of stress in the workplace were and some ways of reducing it; including more line manager communication, attention to correct breaks, clarification about what whistleblowing means, workload distribution, supporting a culture of openness, and being realistic about what can be achieved through targets.

PDA members and reps have been involved in developing potential solutions to address the issues of stress within their employers as part of the PDA 'It's Time' campaign. If you would like to get involved, please contact your local PDA Rep.

A report on Diversity, Ethnicity and Inclusion was also shared which included data gathering, attracting, and retaining a diverse workforce and an embrace of different perspectives to drive innovation.

We look forward to the next JCC in July and would ask our members if there are any issues that they would like the reps to add to the next agenda to get in touch with them.

Learn more

- [PDA's 2021 Safer Pharmacies Survey shows an unacceptable decline in working conditions](#)
 - [Mental Health Awareness Week: 9 - 15 May 2022](#)
 - [It's Time to Address Stress](#)
 - [Safer Pharmacies Charter](#)
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Reps in depth

By Mithul Shah, PDA Regional Rep for Central London and Greater London North

As a community pharmacist for over 15 years predominantly working for Boots in Central London, I understand the daily pressures that Boots pharmacists face in a busy corporate working environment.

Over the years, I have seen and experienced the various challenges and struggles of community pharmacists, due to the ever-changing demands from patients and unrealistic pressures from employers. The landmark recognition achieved by the PDA Union within Boots, provided the perfect platform to enable me to actively represent PDA members, pharmacists in Boots in improving working conditions, getting fair and unbiased treatment at work, and increased work-related benefits including improved salaries.



After comprehensive training for the new role with PDA Education, I gained knowledge and acquired confidence in dealing with company disciplinary, grievance and redundancy procedures and have represented members to achieve a positive result for them. As a regional PDA rep, I am a part of a strong network of like-minded individuals across the country and represent Boots pharmacist views at the JCC (Joint Consultative Committee), which are shared with senior management. Together we strive to unravel solutions to issues that are being confronted in the pharmacy and how we can implement them earlier to benefit all.

In my personal opinion, PDA membership is an absolute 'no-brainer' for any pharmacist. The membership gives you a voice at work and representation should you need it. It also includes PDA Plus which gives extra benefits making it a valuable package and more significantly, gives you the peace of mind when you know that you've got an extremely reliable and professional organisation whose primary objective is to ensure that you and our profession are the only ones that matter. If you're not yet a PDA member, join today.

[JOIN THE PDA HERE](#)

Best wishes to Trainees sitting the June 2022 Assessment

By Richard Evans, PDA Regional Rep for Northern Ireland & Tom Graves, Regional Rep for Merseyside and West Midlands

As part of our continued commitment to support all PDA members including trainees working in Boots, PDA Education is offering a revision programme to help you to prepare for the upcoming assessment.

This free programme is designed to support your revision for the GPhC/PSNI assessment on 29 June 2022. The programme is only available to PDA members and PDA membership is free to trainee pharmacists. If you are not yet a member of the PDA then we would encourage you to [join now](#) and register for last minute access to the programme.

The material has been put together by pharmacists, reviewed by pharmacists and comprises of practice questions, calculations and two mock exams.

We wish you every success with the exam but would take this opportunity to remind you to familiarise yourself with how to [nullify your exam attempt](#) should you not feel capable of sitting the exam on the day, or if you need to at any point during the exam.

If you are unsuccessful in the exam, we urge you to get in touch with your PDA rep in Boots as soon as possible

Learn more

- [Joining the PDA – Boots Leaflet](#)
 - [Understanding when to withdraw and when to nullify for the June 2022 assessment](#)
 - [Revision programme for those sitting the June 2022 assessment](#)
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Reps in depth

By Darren Ayres, Regional Rep for Greater London South

Having spent 5 years working for a bank and coming to the realisation I really didn't like it, I decided to leave. That was in 1993. I took myself to college and did an access course in life sciences. In 1998 I qualified as a pharmacist, and I currently work as an Anticoagulation Pharmacist/Relief.



I have worked for Boots since I qualified in various roles, and I can honestly say I have enjoyed my time working there, which has mainly been due to the great people I have worked with.

In 2021, I decided to join the PDA and give up my membership of the Boots Pharmacist Association. Why did I do this? On my travels and speaking with colleagues, all I heard was positive feedback about the PDA and the great work it does. The PDA is there to represent the views of its members from all sectors of the profession.

In February 2022, an opportunity arose to become a Regional Rep for the PDA representing my pharmacist colleagues in Greater London South. I am new to the role and still undergoing training with PDA Education. Moving forward I really want to promote all the good work the PDA does for its members and support my fellow pharmacists alongside giving them an opportunity to be heard and to be involved in addressing issues important to them.

PDA REPS NETWORK IN BOOTS

- [Why join the PDA?](#)

Health and Safety update: Mental Health Awareness

By Richard Evans, PDA Regional Rep for Northern Ireland

Boots and the PDA have agreed a process of an independent investigation procedure should our members be involved in a Health and Safety incident. The company investigation procedure would go ahead and report findings, and if needed, a Union Official would conduct their own further report.

Recently your PDA reps in Boots along with other PDA reps from primary care and LloydsPharmacy participated in Mental Health Awareness training. Mental health is an umbrella term covering many conditions that fall under Health and Safety of our pharmacist members. We undertook a range of case studies and looked at what the employers' have in place to help pharmacists with mental health and well-being issues.

Your PDA reps strongly recommend that should you feel affected by any issues relating to mental health and wellbeing that you talk to someone. BootsLive has information and a list of contacts for further guidance, your local PDA rep can also offer advice, and the PDA charity Pharmacist Support can also help.

We are living in stressful times. Employment challenges such as changes to hours, workload, shift changes, staff changes, and personal matters can all contribute to a negative effect on your wellbeing and difficulties managing your work life balance. In our rounds of upcoming member evenings, we will cover aspects of this wide and extremely important topic.

Learn more

- [Stress in the workplace](#)
- Login to LifeWorks [here](#). **Username:** boots | **Password:** care
- [Health and Safety Executive - Stress and mental health at work](#)
- [Pharmacist Support](#)

Previous Boots newsletters can be found on the [Boots](#) and [Resources](#) pages of the PDA website.