

The PDAs International news update

As the Christmas break approaches and many PDA members wind down albeit only for a few days, the PDA is providing news on some of its more unusual activities. Some members of the PDA may not be aware of the extent to which the PDA draws some of its thinking and policies from the experiences of pharmacists in other parts of the world. Equally, at the PDA, we are aware of the benefits to others of learning about the PDAs experiences here in the UK.

Unsurprisingly, over the years, the PDA has developed many international links and we think that this international news update will provide members with some interesting reading.

The wider global opportunity for pharmacist leadership in Humanitarian crises



When the PDA, through its membership of the European federation of pharmacist unions called EPhEU got PDA involved in the Medicines to Ukraine campaign, members asked the PDA whether it would be able to support other crisis situations in other parts of the world as well.

With the Medicines to Ukraine scheme becoming hugely successful, it has now become possible for the PDA to lay some strong structural foundations for a wider global response. These will enable pharmacists to show leadership with medicines in a humanitarian crisis situation occurring anywhere in the world.



Why has PDA joined FIP and what will be the benefits to PDA members?

The PDA had already been a member of the European pharmacist federation organisation called EPhEU since 2011. It became increasingly obvious that being able to collaborate and learn from pharmacy organisations from other parts of the world was going to be a good thing for PDA members.

In particular, the learnings from things that had either been done well or been done badly elsewhere where going to help the PDA to create and drive policy for the benefit of members here in the UK. For example, in Austria, community pharmacists are not employed by the owners, they are employed by a national pharmacist salary fund and deployed to community pharmacies, in Poland, the £14 Covid vaccination fee is paid 50% to the pharmacy owner and 50% to the pharmacist.

The decision by the PDA to join FIP in September 2022 was an extension of that philosophy, it means that the PDA can seek out the very best ideas from a much larger international network for the benefit of members.

The list of benefits is extensive, but the PDA is currently focussing upon the first few.

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How the Medicines To Ukraine campaign became an effort to also help reduce Anti- microbial Resistance



The consignments of much needed hospital medicines being sent to Ukrainian Hospitals and funded through the generous donations of pharmacists across the continent brought the Medicines to Ukraine scheme to the attention of the Ukrainian government.

Consequently, the PDA has been contacted by the Ukrainian Minister of Health and asked for assistance with an emerging anti-microbial resistance crisis which has already gripped Ukraine, and which if not addressed promptly, will inevitably advance across the border to Western Europe. So now, in collaboration with the British Society of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (BSAC) and with the help of some of the UKs top anti-microbial pharmacist specialists, the PDA is arranging an organised package of support.

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The General Assembly of the European Association of Employed Pharmacists (EPhEU)

The PDA has been a member of a European federation of pharmacist representative organisations called EPhEU since 2011. In October of 2021, The EPhEU members elected PDA Chairman Mark Koziol as their secretary General, a post he will hold for three years.

The General Assembly of EPhEU, this year was held in Paris on the 19th -22nd of October. Here pharmacist employees from Austria, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Serbia and the UK and their national representative organisations gathered to discuss and learn about each other's matters of concern from their respective countries and to share their hopes and ambitions for the future.



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The Pizza is not working

Pharmacists in the United States have created a movement called the #Pizzaisnotworking.

The pharmacists involved have told the PDA that this is in response to what they see as typical management practice. Once the employers get to the stage where they have a large number of complaints and concerns being expressed by their pharmacist employee's, rather than risk them setting up a union; as was done in the UK, the employers simply invite them to a free Pizza evening. Here they are encouraged to air their concerns, and they are then told that something will now be done about it.

What happens next is often... precisely nothing.

The Pizza is not working movement is lobbying the government and is crowdfunding the production of a documentary – similar to the one that was done by the BBC here in the UK in 2016 about working conditions in one of the large UK multiples.

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PDA in Canadian Podcast interview

Pharmacists in other countries who are desperate to have their interests protected by a union will often be persuaded locally that their only hope of representation is to join a large powerful their general union with very many members that come from all walks of life, but where there will unlikely ever be any pharmacy focus.

It is therefore unsurprising that pharmacists in countries outside of the UK are intrigued about the history and the growth of the PDA in the UK which provides a dedicated pharmacist representative body to pharmacists.

PDA Director, Paul Day, was recently interviewed by a Canadian pharmacy podcast and asked how it might be done in Canada.



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PDA helps to launch a pharmacist Union in Poland

A brand new pharmacist union was established by pharmacist employees in Poland. Here the Polish Unions General Secretary, a pharmacist describes his experiences and extends a thank you to the PDA.

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