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**URGENT: Completed Ballot papers must be RECEIVED before 12:00 noon on Wednesday 23 May.**

May 2018

Dear Colleague,

A positive and fair employer/employee working relationship is one which seeks WIN - WIN solutions to issues facing both parties. In this way, the employer and the workforce act in partnership to ensure mutually dependent success. In a large modern business, this can occur when a written collective bargaining agreement is made between the employer and the representative trade union.

A bargaining agreement has been made between Boots and the Boots Pharmacists Association and it explicitly excludes negotiations regarding the terms and working conditions of pharmacists. The existence of this agreement means that Boots does not have to recognise any other union.

The BPA was established in the 1970s and for nearly forty years no formal collective bargaining agreement between Boots and the BPA existed, it was only signed when the PDA Union sought rights to be able to negotiate the terms and conditions of Boots pharmacists in 2012. Ever since then, the PDA Union has tried to unravel this problem in the courts.

Senior company officials admitted that the agreement they asked the BPA to sign was designed to block the PDA Union's recognition application and to prevent any union from ever being able to negotiate the terms and conditions for Boots pharmacists. We were astounded that the BPA signed away the rights of Boots pharmacists without any consultation with those affected.

Not so long ago, the BPA applied for and were refused independent status by the trade union certification officer. This was only the third such refusal in more than twenty years. In his justification for the refusal the certification officer said "**The BPA is liable to interference by Boots.... tending towards domination or control.**"

The current agreement will never give Boots pharmacists the rights that they are entitled to, but it does give Boots the ability prevent their pharmacist workforce having a true representative voice. This is why we are asking you to vote **YES to end the current recognition agreement.**

If the **YES** vote wins, Boots would no longer be able to block the PDA union's application, allowing us to negotiate over the terms and conditions on behalf of Boots pharmacists. We believe that the principles established through such a process could lead to wider benefits in terms and working practices for all pharmacists.

**However, the Rules of this ballot require more than a simple majority. A tiny number of NO voters could win this ballot unless we get 2780 YES votes, so your vote will make a difference.**

Because of the PDA Union's campaigning over the last 6 years, you now find yourself in one of those rare situations where a major employment decision at Boots is not under the control of the company, instead it is in your hands. If you **vote YES to de-recognise the current Boots BPA collective bargaining agreement**, then I assure you that you will enjoy many more opportunities to have your say in the future.

**Please hurry, your completed ballot paper must be received by 12:00 on Wednesday 23 May.**

Yours sincerely

Mark Koziol M.R.Pharm.S.  
Assistant General Secretary, PDA Union