



Welcome to the May 2023 PDA Student Newsletter

In this edition, read about how you can get involved in the Medicines to Ukraine campaign and be part of our delegation at international pharmacy congresses. Also, read about our attendance at the BPSA's Annual Conference, the opportunity to get involved in the new PDA Student Committee, and how 4th-year students can transition into their trainee year with PDA membership.

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PDA attends 81st BPSA Annual Conference



The BPSA's Annual Conference is an opportunity for pharmacy students to network, shape the future of the profession, and meet renowned pharmacy leaders. The theme for this year's conference was, The Wider World of Pharmacy.

We are committed to supporting pharmacy students and join the conference every year. PDA Chairman, Mark Koziol, PDA Organiser, Jayne Love, and PDA Organising and Engagement Assistant, Manuella Asso attended the conference in April and spoke on various topics.

Jayne and Manuella gave a presentation on the PDA's [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) Networks](#) and how students can get involved. Membership of the PDA's EDI Networks is free to pharmacy students and each network aims to proactively address and campaign around all forms of discrimination and its causes and consequences.

At the conference Jayne and Manuella also shared upcoming opportunities for students such as the PDA's events and campaigns as well as how student members can become a [PDA Student Rep](#).

Pharmacy students had the opportunity to hear from Mark Koziol who talked about his pharmacy journey and the importance of collaborating with others. Mark spoke on the Medicines to Ukraine campaign in which the PDA continues to work with various European pharmacist union partners to supply specialist medicines and deliver them to Ukrainian hospitals. Mark also discussed how students can [get involved](#) in the campaign and the exciting opportunity available to those leading their own fundraising campaign in their university.



We hope that all pharmacy students in attendance found the conference useful and look forward to attending next year!

Join the PDA Student Committee

Are you looking to develop as a leader, represent your peers, and make a difference? Why not join the PDA Student Committee? This is a unique opportunity to be a part of providing support, training, education, and a voice within the PDA and the profession for students. It's a fantastic way to develop essential transferable skills and build your confidence in pharmacy, while networking with student, trainee, and qualified pharmacists.

The PDA is the largest pharmacy membership organisation and only independent trade union exclusively for pharmacists in the UK. Through our organisational structures and values, we ensure our policies and practices are member led.

We are launching a PDA Student Committee to represent the opinions and concerns of UK pharmacy students. We hope the student committee will ensure student opinions are incorporated into wider PDA activities and policy, and that the committee will work to strengthen the voice of pharmacy students. We also hope that the committee will improve the student experience and lead change on issues that are important to PDA student members and the sector.

If you are interested in being part of a nationwide student team, please email students@the-pda.org and let us know why you're interested.

Medicines to Ukraine: an opportunity for students

There is still time to get involved with the [Medicines to Ukraine](#) campaign. This is an initiative which is providing Ukrainian hospitals in the war zone with specialist medicines, enabling them to care for casualties of war.

We are looking for MPharm students to work together in university teams to run a localised [Medicines to Ukraine awareness and fundraising campaign](#). The campaign will see you raising funds for sending medicines to Ukraine, as well as educating others on the role of pharmacists within healthcare and humanitarian crises.

This is a fantastic opportunity for students to get involved with, and alongside making a difference to the lives of Ukrainians, it will give you the opportunity to develop useful transferable skills such as leadership, teamwork, project management, and advocacy.

Each team's campaign will be judged based on leadership, profile, engagement, innovation, inclusion, and education. The teams that are awarded first, second, and third place will have the opportunity to send a representative to be part of the PDA's delegation at [international pharmacy congresses](#).



The representative of the team awarded first place will be able to attend the International Pharmaceutical Federation's (FIP) Congress in Brisbane, Australia. The representative for the teams awarded second and third place will be able to attend the European Association of Employed Pharmacists' (EPHEU) Congress in Oslo, Norway.

[Click here to get involved](#)



Please email students@the-pda.org if you are interested in learning more about the Medicines to Ukraine campaign.

PDA and GPhC co-host session on the changes to the initial education and training of pharmacists

We were delighted to be joined by Alex Lescaian, Sarah Purdy, and Lisa Gilbert of the GPhC, alongside our PDA student members, for a live session on the changes to the initial education and training of pharmacists.

These changes promise to transform the education and training of pharmacists. It will enable pharmacists to have a greater role in the clinical care of patients from the point of registration, greater recognition as experts in medicines, and a greater role within healthcare.

The session covered the key changes, supervision during the foundation year, and the process for implementing the changes. There was also an opportunity for PDA student members to ask questions, with independent prescribing and how that was to be added to the initial education and training of pharmacists of particular interest to attendees.

We are proud to be a part of the GPhC advisory group and are happy we could facilitate this opportunity to communicate the changes to our student membership.

Glaysa Gealan, a PDA Student Rep said, *"The session helped my understanding of the changes. It was good to hear how the outcomes for universities are being altered and how the trainee year is being adapted to suit the additional prescribing qualifications, with applicants having a designated prescribing practitioner."*

Questions were also asked about rates of pay as independent prescribers are able to provide more services for patients and provide a higher level of care. The PDA regularly negotiates on behalf of members on pay and conditions, like this year negotiating a wage increase for Boots trainees in England and Northern Ireland.

Overall, it was a wonderful evening that made my mind less anxious about becoming a prescriber after university, as I now know that there will be support provided."

PDA LGBT+ Network publish statement on Gender Affirming Care

The PDA LGBT+ Network is committed to examining healthcare issues affecting LGBT+ people, in addition to issues affecting LGBT+ pharmacists, and campaigning on issues important to the network.

PDA LGBT+ Network members have put together a statement that expresses the position of the network with regards to gender-affirming care for transgender people. This statement applies the PDA's ['Wider Than Medicines'](#) roadmap to gender-affirming care, in pursuit of an integrated healthcare system that ensures that transgender people receive safe and effective pharmaceutical care.

The network believes that pharmacists, regardless of the sector they are employed in, have a key role in improving the care of transgender people and that carrying out the recommendations in the statement will better support pharmacists to care for their transgender patients. This will also help to alleviate the health inequalities faced by transgender people.

Scott Rutherford, President of the PDA LGBT+ Network said, *"I am pleased to finally publish the statement to make our commitment to improving the quality of care received by trans people clear. This is the foundation of our future work on gender-affirming care, and we aim to use the statement as a blueprint and a springboard for this work."*

[Click here to learn more](#)



PDA LGBT+ Network committee member wins trade union equality award



Fife-based trainee pharmacist and Honorary Secretary of the PDA LGBT+ Network, Soh Xi Ken has won the Scottish Trades Union Congress' (STUC) Equality Award.

Soh Xi Ken of the PDA received the Equality Award at the STUC Annual Congress this month in Dundee. The award praised Xi Ken's tireless advocacy for LGBT+ workers within pharmacies in Scotland, highlighting his personal experience of homophobia in Scotland and his home country, Malaysia.

[Click here to learn more](#)



Transition to your trainee year with the PDA

As 4th year students approach their final assessments, thousands will soon be looking forward to starting their trainee pharmacist foundation year.

This is undoubtedly an exciting time, but possibly also one of trepidation as you prepare to embark upon the next phase of your qualification. Membership of the PDA gives that much needed peace of mind through one of the most important years in a pharmacist's career.

FREE PDA trainee pharmacist membership includes indemnity and legal defence costs insurance, access to lawyers and pharmacist advisors and membership of the PDA Union.

The PDA Education Hub provides trainee members with a free GPhC revision programme including practice questions, as well as training around locuming, mental health, mentoring and more.

You can sign up for trainee membership as soon as you receive your final assessment results.

[Sign up for FREE PDA trainee pharmacist membership](#)



PDA calls on Higher Education Institutes to settle the lecturers' pay dispute

A marking and assessment boycott has been implemented by university lecturers as part of their efforts to end a pay dispute and this may be impacting pharmacy students.

We are calling on Higher Education employers to settle their dispute with their lecturer employees which has led to a marking and assessment boycott. The boycott was called by the University & College Union (UCU) after 89.9% of respondents to a strike action ballot (with 56.4% turnout of those eligible to vote) confirmed they were prepared to take action short of strike, such as boycott. The boycott began on Thursday 20 April 2023.

Many PDA student members are concerned about the impact on their education at the start of their career. They are paying university fees, with many building up student debt as a result, yet some are concerned that they may not receive the education promised. However, this is not the fault of the academics and other staff employed by universities, who students appreciate have a right to request fair pay from their employers.

[Click here to learn more](#)



PDA urges the government to not backtrack on sexual harassment laws

MPs have made more than 40 amendments to the prospective bill, meaning that the bill may not be passed in the allotted time.

After it was announced that MPs have recently made multiple amendments to the Worker Protection Bill, many of which aim to make the bill more lenient, we have urged the government to not backtrack on its promise to strengthen sexual harassment laws at work.

Ayah Abbass, PDA NAWP Network President said, *"The reason why I joined NAWP is to help women pharmacists find their voices and to find a safe space to raise their concerns in the workplace.*

It's concerning that sexual harassment at work is still happening. I have spoken to female pharmacists that sadly went through sexual harassment during their pre-registration (trainee) period when they are at a vulnerable stage of their career and worried about whistleblowing as it might impact their training and qualifying. Sexual harassment still exists sadly. We should feel safe at our workplace – it's our basic right. Sexual harassment is very serious as it can impact an individual's life mentally and physically. This is a bold statement, but I can guarantee every woman pharmacist has sadly been affected by sexual harassment.

We deserve to be protected and to feel safe. A safe space at work should not be difficult. We need policies in place so that women feel safe when reporting sexual harassment and believe that the correct action will take place."

[Click here to learn more](#)



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