

Role of the PDAU Regional Committee Member

The role of the regional committee member is a vital part of PDA Union operating effectively everywhere that we have members and potential members. This note gives a reminder of the role. Regional Officials are there to support regional committee members and also undertake these activities.

Recruit

Every pharmacist who isn't already a PDA Union member is a potential member, as is everyone that is studying to become a pharmacist. There are only a few reasons why a pharmacist couldn't join, such as also being the superintendent of a significant chain of pharmacies or being the owner of a pharmacy.

As the local face of the PDA Union, you are best placed to encourage any potential members you meet to join. Trade union experience shows that a response to a face to face request to join from another colleague will be far better than sending them a recruitment mailing. By explaining why, you benefit from PDAU membership and directing people to the "join" pages of the website, you can help us grow and help others benefit from PDAU membership.

If you are able to get a speaking slot on a pre-registration group's event local to you, or similar, then you can talk to a number of potential members at once about why they should join and what we do. We coordinate our presentations to students and pre-reg trainees, so please let us know before approaching any pharmacy school.

Communicate

Making your contact details available and asking members to let you know what is happening in their workplace and their experience of the profession will help you better understand the challenges and opportunities of colleagues across your region. Listening and understanding what they say is very important and most of our communication activity should be about listening to members.

Committee members are also requested to connect with colleagues in other regions of the same membership type, e.g.: 'locums' to share knowledge of that environment across the U.K. This can be done via a virtual network, using WhatsApp for example.

You should identify appropriate ways to complement the national communications from PDAU so that information reaches your local members. This could include organising local events or correspondence. Make sure you keep up to date with PDA and PDAU communications yourself including regularly visiting our website, following PDA on social media and reading every article in Insight Magazine, Insight on-line and in other PDA communications. You should also "scan the horizon" by engaging in events relevant to your membership group or checking communications online e.g. debates on social media and internet forums and looking out for relevant consultations to which the PDAU could respond.

By submitting draft articles to the PDA office, you can also help the production of web pages, articles for Insight magazine, etc. that raise the profile of issues that concern your members.

Represent

With the knowledge of what your members think, you should be able to represent their views in a professional context. National representation is usually done from the office but there will be other bodies in your region on which you might represent the profession or maintain a dialogue. There may be opportunities to attend seminars or conferences or give presentations on behalf of the PDA and PDAU. In Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland this may include relations with particularly influential bodies with oversight of pharmacy in the country, due to the structures there.



Organise

To be effective, we need a comprehensive network of contacts across the profession, and every member is a potential representative. If there are significant geographical areas or groups of pharmacists without a committee member, then identify and encourage local members to step forward and fill that gap.

In some locations, members may agree to be a 'local contact', rather than a fully trained representative. This gives us another pair of eyes and ears on the ground and they can still encourage colleagues to join and be another part of our communications network, making sure you get to hear what pharmacists are talking about. Periodically checking with them is another way to hear about members' concerns.

At employers where PDAU has trade union recognition, there will also be employment-based consultation and negotiation forums in which members working for that employer will need to be represented. This includes Boots where we have negotiating rights and many NHS Trusts where we are recognised for consultation. You should try and be the PDAU representative if this applies at your employer and encourage other members to step forward at other employers where there is recognition.

NB: Check with head office before accepting a role formally representing PDAU.

Develop

Alongside your professional CPD as a pharmacist, you should also keep your trade union competency up to date. Attend training sessions, participate in PDAU meetings and undertake other activity to develop your abilities and knowledge. You may want to request development activity for you and other representatives in your region.

We have affiliated to the GFTU so that you can participate in [a broad range of trade union training with them](#). There are also other publications, websites, podcast, etc that you can use to broaden your knowledge.

Service

Formal support of members with workplace conflict is coordinated by the Defence Services department and as a trained trade union representative, you'll have the support of the national PDAU team when supporting individuals or small groups of members with their issues, such as at disciplinary or grievance processes.

From the member's perspective you are the local "face" of the union and to them you are the union, so while you mustn't give advice that you're not qualified to provide, you should also be prepared to signpost members to sources of support, website pages like the PDA plus benefits and give general information.

More help?

For more help with the role of the representative please speak to your Regional Official or Collette Bradford, PDA Head of Organising & Engagement - collette.bradford@pda-union.org