

## **PDA Pre-reg Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Would it be possible to have a different assessment this year?**

The GPhC is considering what any assessment and examination process may be in light of their decision to postpone during the COVID crisis. The PDA position is that given pre-regs will have had a period of months in practice as provisionally registered pharmacists any assessment should not be the traditional route which has been used predominately in the past.

The PDA believe that to be fair to 2020 pre-regs, following a period of provisional registration, any future assessment should properly reflect the experience you will have gained and any additional support you will have received. We recognise that the calculations element examination is essential however, we question the requirement for an examination which tests your ability to memorise and regurgitate the British National Formulary (BNF).

### **What happens if I don't want to be provisionally registered?**

Our view is that working as a pharmacist with provisional registration will be an important journey towards any revised assessment. Working as a provisionally registered pharmacist in an appropriately supportive environment will support professional development and help towards successfully achieving full registration status.

The GPhC will need to accommodate a variety of situations where pre-regs may not be able to join a provisional register and therefore won't get that work experience. The GPhC will publish how this will work in due course.

Regardless of circumstances the PDA is committed to providing a range of support and training tools to help individuals achieve full registration. Keep an eye out for further information on this.

### **What can the PDA do to help ensure that employers do not take advantage of those provisionally registered?**

The PDA has a team of specialist employment lawyers and expert pharmacists whose entire focus is to ensure that our members are supported through workplace issues and concerns. We have expertise in advising newly qualified pharmacists and pre-regs with the difficulties they can encounter at the start of their professional career. The PDA Union is also able to send specially trained representatives into the workplace when required to help provisionally registered pharmacists who are in dispute with their employer.

## **What should a provisionally registered pharmacist expect to be paid?**

Until the expectations and professional responsibilities of a provisionally registered pharmacist are released by the GPhC, it is difficult to speculate on the level of remuneration likely to be associated with the role. Other factors will also influence the pay package, such as location and sector of pharmacy worked in. There is likely to be a nationally agreed Agenda for Change (AfC) role profile for those working in the NHS which will determine salary levels for that sector. The PDA Union will shortly commence negotiations with the largest private sector pharmacist employer in the UK about the job role and reward package for its provisionally registered pharmacists, and the union negotiating team will be working hard to secure appropriate levels of pay and reward for this unique and vulnerable group.

## **What are the legal issues that may arise from provisional registration?**

This question cannot be answered in great detail until the GPhC have clarified the responsibilities and expectations of the role. However, some basic principles apply to minimise legal risks, including:

- Work only within your level of competence and refer to a fully registered pharmacist if unsure
- Particular care should be taken with calculations and wherever possible obtain a second check with a suitably competent person
- Particular care should be taken with controlled drugs and drugs with a narrow therapeutic margin
- Never self-check your own work unless it is a very last resort
- Maintain good links with your tutor for support and guidance
- Work within the job profile provided by your employer
- Remember the PDA pharmacist team can assist you when you're faced with professional and ethical dilemmas at work
- Working as a self-employed locum carries significant additional risks and it is possible that the GPhC may have a specific view on that role with regards to the provisional registration.

## **What will pharmacists be expected to do during the 6-month provisional registration period?**

The GPhC is consulting with relevant pharmacy bodies to discuss proposals for the 6-month provisional period. The question of whether pharmacists will be able to act as Responsible Pharmacists is still a moot point, but whatever the outcome of this debate, pharmacists will be expected to work within their competency.

The PDA is liaising with the GPhC to discuss the format of structured support which might be put in place to support provisional pharmacists; how pharmacists might be expected to demonstrate required competencies and what type of final assessment would be

appropriate. Whether this comes at the start, during or at the end of the additional period of practice.

### **How might this affect starting a clinical diploma / prescribing?**

The recent GPhC letter proposes that time spent provisionally registered would count towards the two years of practice needed to become an independent prescriber and towards any Foundation training that provisionally registered pharmacists may undertake.

### **Please can you give more detail about the PDA Indemnity for Provisional Registered members?**

Provisionally Registered Indemnity will be the same as the Newly Qualified offer, so your first 3 months are completely FREE (student and pre-reg indemnity is also free) and after 3 months you will pay just £99 a year for the same great value policy, which includes:

- £5,000,000 Professional Indemnity (PI) Insurance\*
- £5,000,000 Public Liability (PL) Insurance\* - cover in the event that a pharmacist accidentally causes damage to a third party or their property
- £500,000 Legal Defence Costs Insurance\* - to cover the payment of legal fees for the following:
  - Employment Tribunals
  - Professional Tribunals
  - Prosecutions
  - In-Depth Taxation Investigation
  - Injury and Fatal Accidents
  - Contract Disputes
  - Jury Service Reimbursement
  - 24-hour Legal Advice Line
- Membership of the PDA - there are many extra discretionary benefits of being a member of the PDA, which are provided over and above the protection provided by dint of the insurance cover:
  - Employment and Professional Support
  - Locum Contract Dispute Resolution
  - Professional Advice
  - Risk Management Development
  - Active Education and Research Agenda
  - Proactive Lobbying
  - Interactive Communication



- Membership of the PDA Union - enhances the membership benefits to include automatic rights of representation in disputes with employers and certain collective bargaining rights. This means that in serious job-threatening situations, PDA Union officials are able to accompany members to disciplinary meetings with employers
- PDA Plus - giving access to a range of specially-negotiated preferential services for PDA members, whether it's a meal out with friends, your weekly grocery shop, income protection cover or renewing your car insurance, PDA Plus has a deal that could save you money

\*The insurance included with PDA membership is arranged and administered by The Pharmacy Insurance Agency (PIA) Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (Register No 307063).

### **How do I get more involved in the PDA and initiatives like the Pre-Reg Network & Pre-Reg Focus Group?**

The PDA has received an overwhelming response to the launch of our pre-reg member network. We are including all our pre-reg members in the network and exploring how you might like to get more involved with PDA structures.

The PDA Focus Group is a smaller group of PDA Pre-Reg / Prov-Reg Reps. We are following up on all the enquiries we have received with regards to how to get more involved with the PDA and the role of a pre-reg rep. At the moment this is being done through telephone conversations made by colleagues in our Organising & Engagement Team who are finding out more about your individual needs, the sectors you operate in and the reasons why you want to be involved in our Focus Group.

If pre-regs would like to express an interest in becoming a PDA Pre-Reg / Prov Reg, you can email us at [enquiries@the-pda.org](mailto:enquiries@the-pda.org) with your full contact details and a few paragraphs about you and why you would like to be involved.