

REPS IN-DEPTH



JAYESH LADVA

I have been a member of the PDA since I was a student and felt they were the only organisation that had the interests of pharmacists at the heart of what they do. They give me real courage when they challenge employers, the government, and the regulator to support the interests of individual pharmacists' by proactively influencing the professional, ethical, and employment agenda.

Having worked in pharmacy for over 15 years gaining experience from hospitals, supermarkets, communities, and even pharmacy automation, I understand the challenges we face. I have actively campaigned for pharmacists' rights, better working conditions, and enhanced pay. At present, I am an Advanced Practitioner Pharmacist working in the North West area and enjoy building great relationships with both internal and external stakeholders.

After the PDA made history by derecognising the 'sweetheart' arrangement between Boots and the Boots Pharmacists' Association (BPA) and subsequently gained formal trade union recognition, I was inspired by the resilience, determination, and sheer will of the PDA to make a difference to pharmacists' working at Boots. I was keen to get involved and become a workplace representative.

Training was provided by the PDA in conjunction with the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) which was brilliant and gave reps a chance to meet and share experiences, whilst learning the core skills of being a workplace trade union official.

In my role, I hold a seat on the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) which meets quarterly to discuss matters of Health & Safety as well as issues affecting Boots pharmacists. In the spirit of partnership and resolving issues early, more locally, and together, we try and come up with joint solutions to problems. In addition to this, I have represented pharmacists in disciplinary, grievance, and redundancy consultations and managed to secure a positive outcome for members.

The question some pharmacists ask is, "Why should I join the PDA?". Well, if I asked you whether you would drive a car without insurance, you would probably answer "No!". So, why would you practice as a pharmacist without having indemnity insurance? Being a member of the PDA is a 'no brainer', not only do I get professional indemnity insurance, I have access to professional advice and union membership. I also get training and development opportunities, pro-active lobbying on my behalf, £1 per member donated to the Pharmacist Support charity and access to PDA Plus which gives multiple discounts on a range of benefits. In addition, my trade union, the PDA, is recognised within Boots; negotiating my pay, terms, and conditions, and consulting on other matters to improve my working life.