

Protecting Patients

A Safer Pharmacies Charter



| representing **your** interests |



A Safer Pharmacies Charter

PURPOSE

Keeping patients safe is key to the role of every pharmacist. But less than safe working conditions risk harm to patients as well as damaging consequences for pharmacists – such as impacting on their physical or mental health. This charter defines basic standards to ensure safe practice wherever pharmacists work.

These commitments must be standard practice whenever and wherever pharmacy work is carried out.

OBJECTIVES

Improved safety and care for patients, through better working conditions in UK pharmacy practice.



COMMITMENTS

1. NO SELF-CHECKING

Where pharmacists are directly involved in dispensing, or other processes requiring a high degree of accuracy, a suitably trained and competent member of staff will be readily available in the pharmacy at all times to provide an independent accuracy check.

An independent second check improves patient safety by preventing errors.

2. SAFE STAFFING

Staffing levels will be sufficient to allow all legal, contractual and regulatory obligations to be met; to meet the workload involved in following standard operating procedures and to carry out other work in accordance with the organisation's expectations. All staff must be suitably trained and competent to carry out the pharmacy work they are involved in.

Providing enough suitably trained staff improves patient safety, quality of care and service.

3. ACCESS TO A PHARMACIST

A pharmacist is traditionally one of the few healthcare professionals accessible to patients without an appointment. A pharmacist must be available wherever patients expect immediate access to face-to-face expert advice on any medicines-related matters. The pharmacy owner or employer will meet this expectation by ensuring a pharmacist is available to patients and present in the pharmacy throughout its hours of operation.

Pharmacists are the experts in medicines and must be present to ensure that medicines provided to patients are safe and appropriate.



4. ADEQUATE REST

Pharmacists must be able to take at least their statutory and contractual breaks and rest periods, and additional breaks as required to meet their professional obligations. Pharmacists will be enabled to take these without interruption and will not be placed under any direct or indirect pressure to forfeit.

To keep patients safe, pharmacists must be alert at work.

5. RESPECT FOR PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

Pharmacists will be enabled and encouraged to exercise professional decision-making in the workplace, so that patient safety and professional standards can be placed above any commercial or other operational considerations. Organisational and other targets must not inhibit professional autonomy.

As health professionals, pharmacists put patients' health first.

6. RAISING CONCERNS

Pharmacists will be able to raise concerns without reprisal or fear. This will be facilitated by a supportive, open and receptive organisational culture. Issues identified will be promptly addressed and robust and enduring solutions implemented without delay.

Concerns at work which could impact on patient safety need to be raised and resolved without delay.

7. PHYSICALLY SAFE

Pharmacists will not have to work in the pharmacy alone and will have access to the necessary support at all times to perform their roles. Risks will be assessed and preventive measures put in place so that patients and staff are safe – and can feel safe. A zero-tolerance approach will be taken to violence or abuse of pharmacists and other pharmacy staff.

Pharmacies need to be safe places for patients, pharmacists and everyone.

www.the-pda.org

The Pharmacists' Defence Association
The Old Fire Station
69 Albion Street
Birmingham
B1 3EA

Contact information

General Enquiries: 0121 694 7000

Fax: 0121 694 7001

Web: www.the-pda.org

Email: enquiries@the-pda.org

| representing **your** interests |

