

Public Benefit

1. Background

All charities must have charitable purposes or aims that are for public benefit. Although all charities already have to meet this requirement, as of 1st April 2008 all organisations that wish to be recognised as a charity must demonstrate, **explicitly**, that their aims are for the public benefit. Previously the law has *presumed* this to be the case.

The Trust's aims (i.e. its objects as detailed in its governing document) are the relief of sickness generally and in particular:

- to promote research into the practice of pharmacy in the United Kingdom and to publish the useful results of such research;
- to promote the health of the public by educating pharmacists in order to improve the standard of healthcare available to the public; and,
- to advance and promote knowledge and skill in relation to the practice of pharmacy for the public good.

Charitable purposes are those that fall within the various descriptions of charitable purposes in the Charities Act 2006. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust currently falls firmly under the aims of:

- advancing education;
- advancement of arts, culture heritage or science;
- the advancement of health or the saving of lives; and
- the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

2. Charity Commission: Public Benefit

There are two key principles of public benefit and, within each principle there are some important factors that must be considered in all cases. These are:

Principle 1: There must be an identifiable benefit or benefits

- 1a It must be clear what the benefits are (*benefit to the public or group*)

- 1b The benefits must be related to the aims (*and each of those aims has to meet the public benefit requirement*).
- 1c Benefits must be balanced against any detriment or harm (*research areas would include ethical considerations e.g. research with vulnerable adults*)

Principle 2: Benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

- 2a The beneficiaries must be appropriate to the aims
- 2b Where benefit is to a section of the public, the opportunity to benefit must not be unreasonably restricted:
 - by geographical or other restrictions; or
 - by ability to pay any fees charged
- 2c People in poverty must not be excluded from the opportunity to benefit
- 2d Any private benefits must be incidental

3. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust & Public Benefit in General

To promote research into the practice of pharmacy in the United Kingdom and to publish the useful results of such research

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust commissions pharmacy practice research within the wider arena of health services research. Commissioning priorities are identified from the results and recommendations arising from completed research, and from public and professional stakeholder input. The Trust has amalgamated identified research areas into an over-arching time bound strategy but continues to review this document in light of changing health policy and the needs of the public and pharmacy profession. The profession of pharmacy is notable for the management of medicines from dispensing to ensuring the public's effective and safe concordance with both prescribed and non-prescribed (over-the-counter) medication. Research into the practice of pharmacy and pharmacists as healthcare professionals is a relatively new field and research commissioned by the Trust is particularly centred around the delivery of services and the impact on patients and the public, and the professional behaviour and competencies of pharmacists and the impact on patient and public safety.

The research is commissioned under appropriate research governance structures through national competition which is open to all and is neither restricted by geographical location nor organisational genre.

Received applications are peer reviewed with public involvement – and selected on the premise that the research has ethical approval* and meets the needs of

* The Trust will not knowingly invest in research that could potentially result in 'harm' to patients, the public and research participants. The research contract states that 'The Contractor will ensure that Research in any way connected with this Project is conducted in accordance with the Department of Health guidance "Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care" and, if relevant, in accordance with the Department of Health guidance "Local Research Ethical Committees" issued under cover of HSG(91)5 and HSG(97)23 which relates to

the end user of pharmacy services. To this end, all applicants are required to provide a brief lay summary of the research so that the findings are accessible to both researchers and the general public. All research projects have a designated external specialist steering group that oversees the research in terms of adherence to ethical guidelines and concerns around conduct, expenditure and time scales of the project. In addition, these groups consider the dissemination strategies of the research results, who the key target audiences are and how best to reach them.

All research which meets the research governance rigour requirements is published by the Trust and available free of charge (both in electronic format via the Trust's website and hard copy) to all.[†]

To promote the health of the public by educating pharmacists in order to improve the standard of healthcare available to the public

The Trust provides training bursaries and research awards to pharmacists. These awards and bursaries enable access to accredited training at various levels and facilitate the undertaking of small and medium research projects. Engagement with research, whether this be through formal training or the process of undertaking research, increases the professional knowledge base, confidence and skills which are directly passed on to the end users (patients and public). The primary outcomes of the research awards and bursaries are the number of pharmacists who move onto promulgate this knowledge by choosing to work in academia and the teaching of others. In addition, the awards and bursaries impact on pharmacy professionals' use of research and the evidence base for best practice in the daily delivery of services to the public and patients. Dissemination of research and undertaking education with other healthcare professions equips pharmacists to work in collaboration with other professionals. Much of this is non-quantifiable and has been identified through evaluation of the benefits of the award and bursary schemes to the recipient, whose reflections indicate the impact on the patients, public, colleagues and other professionals they work with every day.

These awards and bursaries are restricted to registered Pharmacists. However, the awards are not restricted by geographical location in the UK (although the funding is for UK residents only), nor by ability to pay. Funding is awarded irrespective of personal circumstances and income and is awarded on a competitive basis. The nature of the research project or the research project as

"Multi-Centre Research Ethical Committees" or such other guidelines as the Department of Health may issue and in accordance with guidance issued by the Medical Research Council, other research councils and professional bodies such as the British Psychological Association and ALSSIS. This is an essential requirement of Trust funded research'.

[†] The research contract states 'If within one year of the Completion Date or of the termination of the Project the Contractor has not produced a Final Report in pursuance of paragraph 17.1 above which, in the view of the Trust's Representative, gives an adequate account of the Results of the Research and is in a form suitable for publication, the Trust reserves the right to prepare such a report and to arrange for its publication. The Trust, however, would not undertake any such publication if the Results of the Research are vitiated by methodological problems in the Research or otherwise'.

part of accredited training, unlike the direct commissioning of research, is also not restricted by subject or priority.

To advance and promote knowledge and skill in relation to the practice of pharmacy for the public good

Dissemination of research results arising either from research awards or from training bursary projects is critical to this aim, as research that is neither published nor read by the public or professionals is disingenuous to the aims of promoting research. The Trust therefore provides all publications free of charge and hosts open events to both promote research and encourage discussion and open debate.

The Trust recognises that intellectual property protection is a valuable tool to provide incentives for the translation of research results into products that benefit public health[‡]. In terms of the Trust, this equates to translation of research into publishable documents that incorporate recommendations for practice that provide the direct impact of public benefit. The importance of protecting and exploiting intellectual property arising from research as a means of achieving public benefit is crucial. Accordingly, the Trust views it as desirable to encourage, where appropriate, scientifically productive relationships between Trust-funded researchers and commercial organisations. At the same time, it wishes to ensure that the intellectual integrity of Trust-funded researchers and their freedom to carry out curiosity-driven research are not compromised by such relationships.

Although the Trust never commissions research solely for the purposes of commercial gain, commercial benefit from the exploitation of the results of the research may accrue to those contractually involved. This may result in the Trust incidentally benefiting from the outcomes of research. For example, research that leads to the development of training tools may be sold for commercial value which will derive funds that accrue to the researchers and the Trust. Should such funding be forthcoming the Trust would ensure that any sums would be reinvested either into commissioned research or the awards and bursaries schemes.

[‡] From the research contract 'The Contractor hereby assigns to the Trust, with full title guarantee, all rights in and to any Intellectual Property created or arising from the Research for the full duration of such rights, wherever in the world enforceable, and shall procure such an assignment from the Lead Researcher, the Contractor's Representative and any other person who shall engage in the Research. The Contractor further agrees to (or in the case of the Lead Researcher or any other person it shall engage in the Research to procure that they shall) execute all further documents and assignments and do all such further things as may be necessary to perfect the Trust's title to the Intellectual Property or to register the Trust as owner of registrable rights.'