

**Press Release
26th October 2009**

How are research principles taught to undergraduates?

Call for study proposals

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust) is inviting applications for a project to investigate how research principles, use and practice are taught and embedded at undergraduate level.

Pharmacy is a rapidly changing profession with the addition of more specialist services, technological developments and changing patient expectations and it is vital that educational preparation keeps pace with, and even anticipates, these changes in practice¹. Furthermore, a Trust organised event which discussed future research priorities for pharmacy practice indicated an apparent lack of engagement with research at practice level².

Says Beth Allen, Acting Director of the Trust: "This has highlighted a need to understand how research is taught and embedded at undergraduate levels. Other studies have suggested that pharmacists recognise the importance of research towards advancing their profession but they do not perceive their practice role as compatible with leading research³."

The following priority areas have been identified for investigation:

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- How is research taught at undergraduate level and what place does research have in the curriculum?
- What impact do research projects have on student appreciation of research? Does it influence their career choice? Does it influence their use of it as a tool to guide clinical decision making and practice?
- How do student research projects contribute to priorities for pharmacy practice research?
- What impact do resources have on the delivery and effectiveness of research projects?

Marshall Davies, Chair of the Trust says: “Pharmacy practice research broadly aims to support and advance the professional practice and performance of pharmacists by providing a sound evidence base that underpins and demonstrates how pharmacy delivers effective, high quality and value for money services. Also, the number of academic pharmacists has declined in the last decade which has led to an imbalance between teaching commitments and research capacity⁴. This needs to be addressed so that we can rebuild and sustain research at a capacity where it can support pharmacy practice and medicines use.

The aim of this new project is to investigate the effectiveness of research training so that any future recommendations and alterations to the MPharm curriculum are themselves evidence based.”

A grant of up to £60,000 is available to fund this research. Further details and application form are available from: charlotte.coates@rpsgb.org or at:

www.pprt.org.uk/ResearchFunding/Commissioning.aspx The closing date for applications is Friday, 29th January 2010.

Ends.

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Notes to editors:

1. The full commissioning brief and application form is available at: www.pprt.org.uk/xxxx

.2 The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust) was established by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of GB in July 1999 as an independent research charity with a broad objective to promote and develop the field of pharmacy practice research. Its trustees are drawn from senior health policy makers, leading academics, industry and retailers.

The Trust has invested around £2m in research; 30% supporting capacity building in pharmacy practice research and 70% on commissioned research. The Trust receives financial support from the Pharmaceutical Trust for Education and Charitable Objectives, the Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust and the Galen Trust, as well as a gift in kind from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. For further information and to access reports of Trust commissioned research or for funding/grant opportunities go to: www.pprt.org.uk

¹ Making Pharmacy Education Fit for the Future

<http://www.rpsgb.org.uk/pdfs/maphedfitforfuturesumm.pdf>

² Workshop Participants & Stakeholder Recommendations for Research Priorities for Pharmacy Practice Research

http://www.pprt.org.uk/Documents/ResearchActivity/Workshop_Outcomes_0309.pdf

³ Armour C *et al.* Pharmacists' views on involvement in pharmacy practice research: Strategies for facilitating participation. *Pharmacy Practice* 2007;**5(2)**:59-66

⁴ Pharmacy in England; Building on strengths - delivering the future. <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm73/7341/7341.pdf>