

**Media Release
4th October 2010**

How are research methods taught in schools of pharmacy?

PPRT awards grant for investigation into how research training is carried out in the UK

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the PPRT) has awarded a grant to the University of Bath to investigate the role of the pharmacy undergraduate programme in the teaching of research methods, use and practice. The research will explore the research methods teaching in schools of pharmacy throughout the UK.

The study will be led by Dr Jane Sutton, Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice and Dr Philip Rogers, Director of Teaching, Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, University of Bath and attention will be paid to the teaching of research methods particularly in regard to the final year project. The 18 month study will ascertain the extent of research methods teaching in the MPharm curriculum and explore its effects on the future career choices and practices of both student and qualified pharmacists.

Said Dr Sutton: "One of the minimum threshold standards of the pharmacy degree curriculum is an ability to understand the techniques used for research in healthcare issues and to be able to apply these skills in practice. It is important therefore to ascertain what is being taught at undergraduate level and whether there are any differences in the teaching of research techniques. Our research will therefore reveal the extent of, content and methods used by schools of pharmacy in the teaching of research methods at undergraduate level and an overall view of the role of research in the pharmacy undergraduate curriculum."

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Beth Allen, Acting Director of the PPRT said: “It is vital that pharmacy practice research capacity is sustained and indeed built upon, to provide a sound evidence base demonstrates how pharmacy delivers safe, high quality and cost-effective services. This research will help us understand how best we can ensure that the academic pharmacy community and workforce continues to develop. Furthermore, by investigating the effectiveness of research training we can ensure that any future recommendations made regarding the MPharm curriculum as a result of this project are themselves evidence based.”

Ends.

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Notes to editors:

1. *Research in pharmacy and the role of the undergraduate programme.*

Dr Jane Sutton, Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, University of Bath; Dr Philip Rogers, Director of Teaching, University of Bath; Dr Ian Blagborough, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath; Professor Jane Millar, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), University of Bath.

2. The research objectives are to:

- Identify and describe research teaching content and methods across the UK
- Explore the views of students of the MPharm course and early years pharmacists on the effects of such teaching on their future career
- Explore the attitudes of student pharmacists towards pharmacy practice research
- Explore the attitudes of pharmacists at two key stages in the career of pharmacy
- Compare the responses of pharmacists in the community and NHS primary and secondary care
- Explore the views of stakeholders (e.g. employers) of the need for and the place of research in their organisation/context

3. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust

The Pharmacy Practice Research 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. It receives financial support from 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

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