



*The launch of The Irish Institute of Pharmacy
and National Forum for Pharmacy Education & Accreditation
and FIP World Congress 2013 Dublin
By An Taoiseach Mr Enda Kenny TD, 2nd February 2012*

Address by PSI President Paul Fahey

Taoiseach, Minister, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the PSI Council I welcome you all here today to this important occasion where we are laying foundations for the future of pharmacy in Ireland.

Over a decade ago now, the pharmacy profession and the State envisaged a wider canvas for pharmacy in Ireland, an expansion of pharmacy practice and a more integrated role in our health services. In order to achieve this vision, a number of interconnected pieces had to be assembled, and a key first step was a new regulatory environment, which the Pharmacy Act 2007 has provided.

In addition, we were acutely aware of the need for the profession to be able to respond to the evolving needs of the healthcare system and the patients within it, and even more so now in this time of great economic challenge for our society, that the resource and expertise of the pharmacy profession can be properly and fully applied across the health system.

It is important too that we also give consideration and a context to new reports and developments nationally and internationally, including recent reports from the ESRI and others which indicate that our pharmacists are under-utilised; in the US a recent report to the Surgeon General looking at how pharmacists can work in closer collaboration with other clinicians to better manage chronic disease patients and their medicines, as well as play an increased role in disease prevention and support patient-centred, cost-effective, evidence-based care; to our colleagues in New Zealand who are introducing prescriptive authority for specialist pharmacists and this year the PSI will be looking at the mechanisms by which specialist pharmacists in Ireland can be recognised – all these developments have to be

considered to ensure that the profession of now – and the future – can be best placed to meet patients’ needs.

And it is because of this need to build the competence and confidence of the profession to meet these challenges, and to learn from international best practice, that the new Council of the PSI in 2007 clearly identified education and training reform as a key priority - not only to ensure we build a culture of patient safety but to also progress the development of the profession.

The Council commissioned reports on undergraduate education – the seminal PEARs project report – and a review of international Continuing Professional Development (CPD) models. And today, as we mark the launch of the major implementation vehicles for these initiatives, I would like to pay particular tribute to my predecessors as President, especially Noeleen Harvey for her leadership on this, and to also acknowledge the trojan work done by the former Chair of the PSI’s Professional Development and Learning Committee, Professor Paul Gallagher, his committee and steering groups, and the assistance of Lorraine Horgan from the PSI Executive.

The National Forum is implementing the 5 year integrated Masters so that the career opportunities of future graduates are enhanced, through better linking teaching and practice, and the key to success for the Forum is that it brings all the key stakeholders, especially our three Schools of Pharmacy, together to make this happen, and the Chair of the Forum, Marian Shanley will speak more about the Forum in a moment.

The other exciting educational initiative we are launching here today is the Irish Institute of Pharmacy – the Council recently awarded the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland the contract to manage the Institute on its behalf, and we will invite RCSI President Professor Eilis McGovern also to speak shortly.

The establishment of the Institute is one of the most important developments in pharmacy in Ireland – it is important for the profession of pharmacy as CPD will underpin developments and expansions in scope of practice, provide for specialisation and recognition of excellence within profession;

it is important for patients and the health service as it will provide a quality assurance of practice and services from pharmacists and ensure that evolving health service requirements and patient needs drive CPD – and I would like at this point to welcome the many patient advocates and representative, as well as those from the health service who are here with us today;

it is also important for building and developing relationships with other professions and today we are pleased to welcome our colleagues from the other professions, from their regulatory and educational bodies

and the Institute will also play a leadership role for pharmacy profession – we have huge support from the profession for this journey, from their representatives, IPU and HPAI Presidents, and the tutor pharmacists here today, and the ICCPE on whose experience we will be building.

Finally, today is also to celebrate that Dublin and Ireland will be hosting the world congress of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) 2013. FIP is the global federation of more than two million pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists, in official relations with the World Health Organisation, and provides an extensive global network for the profession.

The PSI has huge support across the profession and the sector here in Ireland for this event which presents great opportunities for pharmacy and the wider health sector, as well as the tourist and local economy and we look forward to welcoming over 3,000 delegates from all around the world to Dublin next August.

I am particularly delighted that the Secretary General of FIP, Mr Ton Hoek and their Congress Director Carola van der Hoeff were able to join us here today and I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Taoiseach and his government for their ongoing support for this important event.