

Appointment to the PSI's Disciplinary Committees

Information Booklet



April 2019

About PSI – the pharmacy regulator

The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) is a public body established in law to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public by regulating pharmacists and pharmacies.

As the pharmacy regulator we set the standard for pharmacists' education and training in Ireland and create the standards and supports to promote good professional practice in pharmacy. We register pharmacists, pharmaceutical assistants and pharmacies, carry out inspections of pharmacies and take action when we receive a complaint about a pharmacist or pharmacy. Our functions are set out in the Pharmacy Act 2007 (the Act).

In Ireland, it is estimated that two million visits are made to pharmacies each month. Most people have high levels of trust and confidence in their pharmacist and pharmacy, but errors do happen, medicines are complex, and concerns can arise about the care or treatment that is received from a pharmacist or pharmacy. When this happens, the PSI is responsible for receiving and handling fitness to practise complaints from a member of the public about a registered pharmacist or pharmacy.

As part of our role to protect the public, the PSI requires independent people to sit on Disciplinary Committees to make decisions on the fitness to practise complaints that we receive. It is important that the committees are made up of a range of people with different experiences and backgrounds, and we are now inviting people to express their interest in being appointed to our Disciplinary Committees.

We are creating a panel to fill vacancies that will arise on the committees over the next few years. If you are interested in public service and providing patient benefit through the work of these committees, please consider the information provided in this booklet and the application procedure.

Disciplinary Committees

There are three committees involved at different stages in the complaints process:

1. Preliminary Proceedings Committee

This committee reviews complaints at the screening stage. It advises the Council of the PSI on whether:

- the complaint should be referred to hearing before a Committee of Inquiry
- the complaint should be referred to mediation
- no further action should be taken in relation to the complaint

Meetings of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee are held in private.

2. Committees of Inquiry

There are two Committees of Inquiry.

(a) Professional Conduct Committee: This committee hears complaints which have been referred to a hearing, primarily on grounds of professional misconduct and poor professional performance. A selection of committee members (normally three) sit when an inquiry is due to be heard. The hearings normally take place in public.

(b) Health Committee: This committee hears complaints which have been referred for inquiry, usually on the grounds of inability of a pharmacist to practise due to health impairment. A selection of committee members (normally three) sit when an inquiry is due to be heard. It is usually held in private.

Hearings before the Professional Conduct Committee or the Health Committee are similar to hearings before a court or tribunal. The committee hears evidence from the parties to a complaint. When the committee has considered the evidence, it decides whether there are findings to be made against the pharmacist or pharmacy. Where the committee makes findings against a pharmacist or pharmacy, it recommends to the PSI Council the sanction which it thinks should be applied to the pharmacist or pharmacy.

Who sits on the Disciplinary Committees?

The PSI's Disciplinary Committees must include:

- Lay members (non-pharmacists);
- Registered pharmacists; and
- Registered pharmacists who also are pharmacy owners (either a sole trader or a shareholder or director of a limited company that operates a pharmacy).

Main Duties and Responsibilities of Committee Members

Depending on the Disciplinary Committee you are appointed to, a committee member is required to:

- work together to consider information and evidence presented to them;
- reach fair and well-reasoned decisions about pharmacists and pharmacies when considering complaints;
- consider allegations against pharmacists and pharmacies at fitness to practise hearings;
- participate in collaborative decision-making regarding fitness to practise hearings;

- consider information and evidence and arrive at clear and consistent decisions;
- attend training that is provided by the PSI so that you are competent to participate in the work of the committee.

Competencies required (skill, knowledge & abilities)

You do not need a qualification, or you do not need to have participated in committees or public bodies like this previously. However, committee members must bring appropriate experience, knowledge and ability. Consider how your experiences meet the competencies set out below.

Number	Core Competencies	Examples
1.	A clear understanding of and commitment to public protection	You will have an appreciation of, and commitment to protecting, promoting and maintaining the health, safety and well-being of patients and the public.
2.	A proven ability to work collaboratively and constructively with others	Accepting challenge from others whilst remaining focused on the task. Seeing beyond your own personal experience or specialism and considering other information and perspectives. Showing respect for committee members and all participants in the disciplinary process. Giving and receiving constructive feedback.
3.	Understanding of or interest in regulatory/legislative environments or frameworks	Working within a framework of legislation, rules, guidance and standards and understanding legal and procedural issues to achieve consistent determinations. Appreciating the PSI's obligation to protect the public and maintain public confidence in the profession and in the system of regulation. Respecting respondents' rights to an objective hearing and fair procedures.

Number	Core Competencies	Examples
		Ability to learn and develop professionally and maintain up to date knowledge of issues relevant to the role.
		Ability to act independently and in good faith and to behave in a fair, balanced and non-discriminatory fashion.
4.	Ability to analyse information and use effective judgement to make fair and reasoned decisions	Ability to reach objective, proportionate and reasoned decisions and accept responsibility for decisions.
		Identifying the relevant implications from what is being discussed and assessing the impact of a decision on all parties involved.
		Clearly explain how conclusions have been reached.
		Recognising when information is limited and where more information might be needed.
		Bringing independent and objective scrutiny.
		Ability to balance the need for proper and objective consideration of issues with the obligation to deal with matters in a prompt manner.
5.	Ability to communicate effectively with good interpersonal skills	Ability to communicate clearly and concisely – spoken and in writing.
		Being focused and succinct in your communication with good/active listening skills.
		Confident in expressing views and opinions in a group setting.
		Ability to communicate courteously with all participants in the disciplinary process.
		Ability to adapt your style appropriately for different situations.

Number	Core Competencies	Examples
		Satisfactory IT skills, able to access and communicate through email and use file sharing software e.g. iPads or other similar devices.
6.	Understands and values diversity and fair treatment	Shows awareness of the diversity of the communities which pharmacy professionals serve and an understanding of different needs.
		Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion; impartiality and fair treatment.
		Aware of own biases and manages these appropriately.
		Listens with patience and courtesy.

Time Commitment

Committee meetings and fitness to practise hearings are held at the offices of the PSI on [Fenian Street in Dublin](#).

- The Preliminary Proceedings Committee meets approximately every six weeks to consider complaints. This Committee operates on a fixed schedule and the annual meeting dates are normally agreed at the beginning of each year. Members of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee are expected to attend as many meetings as they are available to attend. Meetings can last from a half day to a full day.
- The two Committees of Inquiry meet, as required, when a matter is ready for hearing. Normally three committee members sit to hear each inquiry. Many inquiries last for one or two days. However, some inquiries can run for more than two days. The PSI will contact all committee members in advance of a hearing to ascertain availability to sit at a hearing for a particular date or dates. Members of the Professional Conduct Committee and the Health Committee do not have to participate in every inquiry, however, they are expected to make themselves available where possible. The PSI is under no obligation to provide a committee member with any guaranteed minimum number of days of hearing per annum.
- The Chair of the committee may convene additional meetings, if they consider this necessary.

- Committee members will be required to devote as much time to the duties of the committee as necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties. This will include time to read material relating to complaints in advance of committee meetings or fitness to practise hearings, to assist with the drafting of minutes and reports where necessary and to attend other activities such as, training and other ad hoc meetings as required. By applying for the position, it is assumed that the member can meet this time commitment.

Fees and Expenses

Disciplinary Committee members are paid a rate of €322 per day (the Chairperson of the Committee is paid a rate of €500 per day). Committee members will also be required to attend training days which are remunerated at a rate of €300 per day, and €150 per half day. All reasonable vouched expenses are discharged in line with the PSI's travel and subsistence policy. Committee members who are public or civil servants do not qualify for remuneration.

Review and Selection Process for Establishing Panel

The purpose of this application process is to establish a panel of prospective Disciplinary Committee members. Panel members may be selected for appointment to a committee where vacancies arise on that Committee, commencing this summer. The panel will remain in place until December 2021. After this date the panel will be dissolved.

The PSI is committed to ensuring diversity and inclusivity across its panel members. Therefore, we are encouraging any potential candidate who is committed to public protection and patient safety to apply.

All applications will be reviewed by an assessment panel consisting of four members, two of whom will be external to the PSI. The assessment panel will:

- Assess all potential candidate applications against the six competencies outlined above;
- Consider whether a brief meeting or telephone call is required in order to make a final decision in relation to a candidate;
- Consider whether any other selection or verification method is required (this may include the PSI requiring further information or statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants about their experience or qualifications).

All applicants will be contacted following review of the applications received regardless of whether they are successful or not. A panel will be created from the successful applicants. This panel will be called on when committee vacancies arise. Appointments to the committees are subject to the approval of the PSI Council.

Submitting your Interest

If you are interested in applying for membership of the PSI's Disciplinary Committee panel, please complete the accompanying application form, available on our website. Only applications made using this form will be accepted.

Please return this form to the PSI no later than **5pm on Friday, 26 April 2019**. You can email completed application forms with the subject line Disciplinary Committee Panel Application to eanna.olochlainn@psi.ie. Alternatively, it can be sent by post to: Disciplinary Committee Panel Application PSI- the pharmacy regulator, PSI House, 15-19 Fenian Street, Dublin 2, D02 TD72.

Should you wish to find out more information in relation to the role of a Disciplinary Committee member, please feel free to attend an **information session** which will be held on Tuesday 16 April at 5pm. There will be representatives of PSI available to answer any queries you have. If you plan to attend this session, please let us know [by email](#). You can also phone us on 01 218 4000 to speak to a member of our fitness to practise/legal team if it is useful.

Confidentiality

The PSI takes its data protection obligations very seriously. The PSI will process any personal data in relation to your application in accordance with the Data Protection legislation. The data will be kept for no longer than is necessary for its purpose, and it shall be kept in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data, including the unauthorised or unlawful processing of data. More information is available in our [Data Protection Statement](#).

Useful Links

- Read more [about the PSI – our role, responsibilities and governance](#)
- Read more about the [PSI's Disciplinary Committees](#)

- View the current membership of the [Preliminary Proceedings Committee](#), [Professional Conduct Committee](#) and the [Health Committee](#)
- [Pharmacy Act 2007](#)
- [PSI Reports and Strategy](#)