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Welcome message

Dear Pharmacist,

As you are aware this weekend is the opening of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Congress in Dublin and PSI look forward to seeing many of you there. If you are attending the congress please visit the Pharmacy in Ireland stand in the Exhibition centre.

The PSI has formally published the Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists and will be distributing a hard copy of the Competency Framework to all pharmacists in the coming week.

This month's newsletter brings you information on the recent election of a new PSI President and Vice-President and the launch of the new PSI Corporate Strategy.

We also have updates in influenza vaccinations for the 2013/2014 season and the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013, the WHO statement on E-cigarettes as well as some CPD opportunities that may be of interest.

PSI Core Competency Framework for Pharmacists Published

The PSI [Core Competency Framework](#) for Pharmacists has been published and hard copies of the competency framework will be distributed by post to all pharmacists on the register in the coming week.

The Core Competency Framework is the cornerstone of the PSI's programme to reform the education and training of pharmacists, both in terms of the qualification for practice and also for postgraduate education of pharmacists in Ireland, including Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The competency framework for pharmacists in Ireland was developed in consultation with pharmacists and the PSI would like to thank all those who contributed their expertise in the development of this framework and to all pharmacists who engaged in this consultation.

The PSI will now proceed to develop a self-assessment toolkit that can be used by pharmacists to guide and structure their learning needs for the purposes of the CPD model that will be managed by the [Irish Institute of Pharmacy](#). The Institute will be the main support for pharmacists and their engagement with the framework as the CPD model is rolled out over the coming months.

New PSI President Elected

On July 18th the Council of the PSI elected a new President, Eoghan Hanly, and a new Vice-President, Noel Stenson. Eoghan Hanly graduated from Robert Gordon University Aberdeen in 1995 with a degree in Pharmacy. Since 1996 he has practised as a pharmacist in his family's pharmacy in Loughrea, Co Galway, which was established by his grandfather, P.J. Killian in

1940.

New Vice President Noel Stenson is originally from Longford and studied pharmacy in Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, registering with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and PSI in 1991. He returned to Ireland in August 1991 to take over a community pharmacy practice on Achill Island, Co. Mayo and has practiced there since.

PSI Corporate Strategy 2013 - 2017

The [Corporate Strategy for 2013-2017](#) was recently launched by the Minister for Health, James Reilly TD. Speaking at the launch, the new PSI President Eoghan Hanly said the previous PSI strategy, based on the implementation of the Pharmacy Act 2007, had put pharmacy services and the regulation of those services in Ireland on a solid foundation.

He continued "The establishment of the new Irish Institute of Pharmacy, the creation of the National Forum for Pharmacy Education and Accreditation, and an effective fitness to practise framework have all brought significant benefits to both patients and the practising profession. Now we must ensure that we complete the important work we have started to support the Pharmacy Ireland 2020 vision, and that the full benefits of this work are brought to bear for patients, for the public, and for those working in the healthcare system, including pharmacists and pharmacy owners."

The key objectives outlined in the Corporate Strategy 2013-2017 include: promoting lifelong learning, continuing to assure high standards of patient care and good pharmacy practice; facilitating the development of pharmacy as a profession in Ireland; ensuring fair registration procedures and delivering an effective compliance system.

The full PSI Corporate Strategy 2013-2017 document is available to download from the [PSI website](#).

PSI Council Approves Vaccination Training for 2013/2014 Season

The PSI Council has approved the training for pharmacists for the 2013/2014 seasonal influenza season. The training course that a pharmacist will be required to attend depends on both the previous training completed and the vaccination experience of the individual pharmacist. A training needs assessment guide has been developed to help pharmacists identify the correct training course to address their training needs, to view this guide and for further details on the courses approved please consult the PSI website [here](#).

As pharmacists prepare for the delivery of vaccination services in pharmacies for the 2013/2014 season, they should ensure that they are aware of the requirements in the [PSI Guidance on the Provision of a Vaccination Service](#). The relevant vaccination procedures within your pharmacy should be reviewed and updated prior to service implementation and the pharmacy must have the required equipment and facilities available, including a suitable and private consultation area for vaccinating patients. Details of the records required to be maintained and other additional requirements are also set out in the PSI Guidance. During the coming months, PSI Inspectors will be reviewing the seasonal influenza vaccination services provided in pharmacies.

The PSI will shortly publish the Report on the Evaluation of the Seasonal Influenza vaccination Service in Pharmacy 2012-2013.

Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013 - Update

As you are aware, the IMB published online the initial list of interchangeable medicines containing groups of atorvastatin products. This follows the completion of a consultation process as required under the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013. Visit the IMB website for [further information](#) and to [view and search the list](#).

The HSE have now developed a website for patients at www.hse.ie/generics, with general information on generic substitution, and an introduction to reference pricing. Two information videos have also been produced, featuring a Pharmacist and a GP, to introduce the new legislation and what will happen at first. These are available on the web page and if Pharmacists wish to use the videos in the pharmacy, they can contact Fidelma Browne or Sally Downing from the HSE, at digital@hse.ie.

The PSI issued a newsletter last month with general information and guidance on the new legislation. The PSI continues to take queries from pharmacists on the legislation and queries can be sent to the PSI at info@thePSI.ie. One area that may require further clarification is in relation to the section of the PSI guidance on the identification of patients where additional care is required. The guidance states that pharmacists should exercise their professional judgment when substituting products to ensure that substitution is safe and that efficacy will not be affected e.g. they should not substitute medicines with a narrow therapeutic index or those with differing pharmacokinetic profiles likely to impact on efficacy or safety. This guidance relates to products outside of the list of interchangeable medicines only, as assessment to include medicines on the list takes account of the considerations outlined.

WHO Statement on Electronic Cigarettes

The WHO's Tobacco Free Initiative has issued a statement addressing [questions and answers on electronic cigarettes or electronic nicotine delivery systems \(ENDS\)](#). The statement outlines a number of conclusions regarding electronic cigarettes including:

The safety of electronic cigarettes has not been scientifically demonstrated.

Testing indicates that electronic cigarettes vary widely in the amount of nicotine and other chemicals they deliver. Most contain large concentrations of propylene glycol - a known irritant when inhaled. The testing of some products suggests the presence of other toxic chemicals. Electronic cigarettes can also pose a risk for nicotine poisoning e.g. if a 30kg child swallowed the contents of a 24mg nicotine cartridge this could cause fatal nicotine poisoning.

The efficacy of electronics cigarettes as smoking cessation aids has not been scientifically demonstrated.

When electronic cigarettes are used as cessations aids, they are intended to deliver nicotine directly to the lungs. None of the approved, regulated cessation aids delivers nicotine to the lungs. Therefore, the biological mechanism by which smoking cessation might be achieved by delivery of nicotine to the lungs and its effects are unknown and may be dangerous.

The WHO statement concludes:

Until such time as a given ENDS is deemed safe and effective and of acceptable quality by a competent national regulatory body, consumers should be strongly advised not to use any of these products, including electronic cigarettes.

Further information can be found on the [WHO website](#).

Upcoming CPD Opportunities

Smoking Cessation Training

As previously highlighted in the PSI's April eNewsletter, the HSE regularly delivers Brief Intervention for Smoking Cessation training events around the country in a number of locations. These training sessions are free-of-charge and are open to all healthcare staff, including all members of the pharmacy team.

Brief Intervention for Smoking Cessation training provides up-to-date facts on smoking and its impact on public health, aiming to motivate participants to be proactive in this area through the development of a more positive attitude to smoking cessation and the skills necessary to provide an effective smoking cessation service.

Pharmacy staff can find the schedule of dates and venues of upcoming training sessions, and register for a course, at the following link: [BI Train Q3 2013](#)

If you would like to organise a specific training session, and can co-ordinate a group of pharmacy staff (a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 staff), you can contact the relevant trainer directly who will be more than happy to facilitate a specific training course. The list of trainers for each region and their contact details are available [here](#).

PSI Recruitment

The PSI will be seeking to recruit two pharmacist inspectors in the coming months. The positions will be offered on a three year contract basis. If you are interested, please look out for application details on the PSI website.

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