



PSNC Briefing 037/16: Guide to the Regional Representative Election for the West Midlands Region

West Midlands regional representative, Rajesh Morjaria's resigned on 20th July 2016, because he no longer meets the eligibility criteria to be a regional representative – he now operates retail pharmacy businesses from more than 9 pharmacy premises in England from which NHS Pharmaceutical Services or Local Pharmaceutical Services are provided, the maximum for a regional representative of PSNC.

The vacancy is filled following an election process of independent chemists in the West Midlands region (which covers the following LPCs; Birmingham LPC, Coventry LPC, Dudley LPC, Herefordshire & Worcestershire LPC, North Staffordshire LPC, Sandwell LPC, Shropshire LPC, Solihull LPC, South Staffordshire LPC, Walsall LPC, Warwickshire LPC, Wolverhampton City LPC and the successful candidate will represent the region for the remainder of the current office term, which ends on 31 March 2018.

Pharmacists who are independent chemists and members or officers of these LPCs are eligible for election as the regional representative.

This briefing details the election process and actions required for those seeking to stand for election.

Role of the PSNC Regional Representative

PSNC includes thirteen independent chemists elected by regions in England. Their term of office, as for all members of PSNC, is four years, with the current term of office ending on 31 March 2018.

The regional representatives, together with the other members of PSNC, represent the interests of NHS pharmacy contractors and ensure that PSNC undertakes the functions set out in its [Constitution](#). In addition they provide an important conduit between the independent contractors in their region and PSNC. They will be a member or officer of at least one LPC in the region where they are nominated, and so have some experience of local NHS issues. They can be consulted about matters relevant to PSNC's role, and take issues raised at LPC meetings for discussion at the PSNC meetings. They may be invited to attend LPC meetings across their regions. PSNC meeting agendas and minutes are published on our website, and the regional representatives can be asked to provide more detail or explanation where needed or to direct requests to the relevant member of staff.

PSNC has six main meetings a year which take place over two days. Occasionally there are extra plenary meetings and members may be nominated to attend additional sub-committees, working groups or panels – and may be asked to represent PSNC at external meetings. PSNC Regional Representatives will therefore need to be confident that they can make arrangements for their pharmacy to be run by another pharmacist on a number of occasions during the year.

As an independent chemist (personally, as a partnership, or a director and substantial shareholder of a body corporate that is an independent chemist) the decisions made at PSNC could have a significant effect on a regional representative's own business. For example, agreeing the terms of the contractual framework or funding for pharmacy will have a direct impact on the business. So, pharmacy contractors who elect a regional representative have to be assured that the proposed representative will do his or her best for the whole network of pharmacies.

PSNC has a rigorous governance policy which ensures that members of PSNC adhere to the highest standards, comparable to the Nolan Principles. The corporate governance principles and Code of Conduct (which PSNC members must also adhere to) are available [here](#)

The process for elections is set out in the Constitution and Rules. PSNC has incorporated a company limited by guarantee (Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee) to which the business of PSNC will be transferred in due course. All regional representatives are appointed as directors of the company.

Eligibility

The candidate must be a/an:

Pharmacist - registered as a pharmacist with the General Pharmaceutical Council.

Member or Officer of a relevant LPC in that region - the relevant LPCs are: Birmingham LPC, Coventry LPC, Dudley LPC, Herefordshire & Worcestershire LPC, North Staffordshire LPC, Sandwell LPC, Shropshire LPC, Solihull LPC, South Staffordshire LPC, Walsall LPC, Warwickshire LPC, Wolverhampton City LPC

Independent Chemist - personally (either individually or in partnership), or as a director and a substantial shareholder (either personally, or through shares owned by members of his immediate family, i.e. parents, spouse or children) in a body corporate which is an Independent Chemist AND one of the Independent Chemist's premises must be in the region.

In addition, the candidate must not have a substantial ownership (either personally, in partnership or through shares owned by members of his immediate family, i.e. parents, spouse or children) in more than nine pharmacies in England.

See Rule 12.4 of the PSNC [Rules](#), available at www.psn.org.uk

The successful candidate must also agree to be bound by PSNC's [Code of Conduct](#).

Provisional timescale

PSNC will shortly be seeking to check the database of all pharmacy contractors, and of LPC members and officers. LPC Chief Officers will be sent a list of members and officers and contractors identified by PSNC so that these can be

verified. It is the responsibility of potential candidates to ensure that their LPC Chief Officer has their correct email contact details.

Friday 29 July 2016 – expressions of interest

On 29 July, an email inviting expressions of interest to be sent to all identified officers and members of LPCs in the West Midlands Region. Responses required by 15 August 2016.

Expressions of interest are not binding – a person who has completed an expression of interest is under no obligation to complete a nomination, and candidates completing nominations are not required to have submitted an expression of interest. However, it is hoped that expressions of interest will be submitted by all those who intend to seek nomination, because the persons who have expressed an interest are identified to all LPCs in the region, so that co-ordination can take place, with one or more ‘preferred’ candidates ultimately putting themselves forward if there is widespread support.

On Wednesday 17 August 2016 – formal nominations

A notice is to be issued by email to members or officers of LPCs in the region seeking formal nominations to include details of the members or officers in the Region who have expressed willingness to accept nomination.

Persons seeking nomination must return a valid nomination form no later than midday on the 15th day after the invitation to nominate is issued (Thursday 1 September). Any candidates expecting to be away during this time can complete and submit a nomination earlier, and a nomination form will be available on the PSNC website for this purpose.

The nomination form must be signed by six electors (independent chemists) in the region.

Thursday 1 September 2016 – deadline for receipt of written nominations

Written nominations must be received by midday on 1 September 2016. As the nominations must be signed by the six nominating chemists, hard copy signed originals are required and, generally, an email / fax is not acceptable.

PSNC’s office is in a shared office block, and as no guarantee can be given that post received in the building will be transferred up to PSNC office by midday, candidates should avoid leaving the nominations until the last minute. Late or incomplete nominations will not be accepted.

On receipt, the nomination forms are checked for eligibility (including checks of the eligibility of the six nominators).

If there is more than one valid nomination received, a ballot will be held. Otherwise, a single valid nomination in a region will be held to have been elected and notice given as soon as practicable thereafter.

Thursday 1 September 2016 – invitation for nominated candidates to submit a policy statement

If a ballot is to be held, candidates will be invited to submit a policy statement of up to 500 words, to be circulated with the ballot papers. The policy statement must avoid any direct reference to other candidates and be returned by 15 September. These are preferably to be sent by email in Microsoft Word or as a text file, so that the returning officer can collate these for printing.

By Wednesday 21 September 2016 – ballot forms sent out with deadline for casting the postal vote

The ballot forms accompanied by each candidate's policy statement will be issued by post to all independent contractors in the region by 21 September. Postal votes must be received by 5pm on Thursday 6 October.

At 5pm on 6 October 2016

Voting in the ballot will close at this time; votes received after this time will not be counted.

On or around 7 October 2016.

The successful candidate for regional representative will be declared as soon as practicable.

Next Steps

The timing above is provisional, and deadlines are subject to change to the extent permitted within the Rules. Potential candidates should therefore consider the different steps involved, particularly in getting nominations signed and returned.

As the election process depends on the Returning Officer being able to communicate with members and officers of LPCs it is essential that the contact details held by PSNC are accurate. Therefore, LPC members must ensure that Chief Officers of LPCs have the correct contact details. Chief Officers should inform PSNC of any changes to contact details by using the form at psnc.org.uk/lpcchanges.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [William Goh, Returning Officer](#).