



PSNC's Work

July 2022

PSNC Briefing 019/22: Guide to the Regional Representative Election for the North East and Cumbria Region

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) is the organisation which represents and supports community pharmacy contractors in England. PSNC's membership consists of its Non-Executive Chair together with 31 registered pharmacists. Thirteen of PSNC's members are Independent Chemists elected by regions in England, in addition to two members nominated by the National Pharmacy Association.

PSNC is now preparing for a regional representative election process following Mark Burdon's resignation as regional representative for the North East and Cumbria region (which covers Community Pharmacy County Durham LPC, Community Pharmacy Cumbria LPC, Gateshead & South Tyneside LPC, North of Tyne LPC, Sunderland LPC and Tees LPC).

Pharmacists who are independent chemists and members or officers of these LPCs are eligible for election as the new regional representative. This briefing sets out the election process and actions required for those seeking to stand for election.

Role of the PSNC Regional Representative

PSNC's Committee includes thirteen independent chemists elected by regions in England. Their term of office, as for all members of PSNC, is usually four years, but the current term is now 5 years and ends on **31st March 2023** (see [PSNC elections postponed pending outcomes of independent review](#)).

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. The representative 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 PSNC meetings. They may be invited to attend LPC meetings across their region. PSNC meeting agendas and minutes are published on our website, and regional representatives may be asked to provide more detail or explanation where needed or to direct requests to the relevant member of staff (all subject to relevant confidentiality constraints).

PSNC has five main meetings a year each of which takes 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 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 governance policy includes a Code of Conduct and guidance on confidentiality (which PSNC members must also adhere to) and is available [here](#).

Eligibility

The candidate must be a/an:

Pharmacist – registered as a pharmacist with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

Member or Officer of a relevant LPC in that region – the relevant LPCs are Community Pharmacy County Durham LPC, Community Pharmacy Cumbria LPC, Gateshead & South Tyneside LPC, North of Tyne LPC, Sunderland LPC and Tees 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 (Please ask for clarification if required) **AND one of the Independent Chemist's premises must be in the region.**

(Note: An Independent Chemist means a chemist that is not a member of the Association of Independent Multiple pharmacies.)

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 14.4 of the [PSNC Rules](#).

The successful candidate must agree to be bound by [PSNC's Code of Conduct \(Committee Governance Code of Conduct Declaration\)](#) and declare relevant interests ([Code of Conduct Declaration of Interests](#))

Timescale

PSNC has confirmed its database of pharmacy contractors in the region (based on most recently available NHS source data), LPC Chief Officers will shortly be sent a list of members and officers identified by PSNC so that these can be verified. Potential candidates should ensure that their LPC Chief Officer has their correct email contact details.

Friday 15th July 2022 – expressions of interest

On Friday 15th July an email inviting expressions of interest will be sent to all identified LPC members and officers in the North East and Cumbria region. Responses – expressions of interest made to PSNC – are required by midday on Friday 29th July.

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 candidates ultimately putting themselves forward if there is widespread support.

During this period for an informal chat to find out more or discuss suitability please contact: James Wood, Director of Contractor and LPC Support by email james.wood@psnc.org.uk or Telephone 0203 1220 835, or Gordon Hockey, Director Legal by email gordon.hockey@psnc.org.uk

Monday 1st August 2022 – formal nominations

A notice is to be sent seeking formal nominations.

Persons seeking nomination must return a completed nomination form **no later than midday on the 15th day** after the invitation to nominate is sent i.e. midday (12noon) on **Tuesday 16th August 2022**.

Tuesday 16th August 2022 – deadline for receipt of written nominations

Written nominations must be received by midday using this [form](#). The nomination form must be signed by **six electors (independent chemists)** in the region.

The completed nomination form may be provided as one hard copy original signed by the six nominating independent chemists, or as an electronic nomination with electronic signatures from the six nominating independent chemists, or by providing six copy nomination forms (hardcopy or electronic) each signed by one of the six nominating independent chemists. A complete nomination form (even in multiple parts) should be submitted in one communication to PSNC. Late or incomplete nominations will not be accepted.

Candidates should avoid leaving the nominations until the last minute. The Constitution is explicit – and late or incomplete nominations cannot be accepted. Therefore, there is no discretion for the Returning Officer to accept late or incomplete nominations.

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

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 practicable.

Thursday 18th August 2022 – 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 within 14 days of the request. These are preferably to be sent by email in Microsoft Word, so that the Returning Officer, along with a digital photograph. They must be received by **Thursday 1st September 2022**.

By Wednesday 7th September 2022 – ballot notice sent by Royal Mail and electronically to eligible pharmacy premises email addresses. Voting period begins

Depending on the number of ballots to be held, it is intended that a ballot notice will be issued by post and email to all known Independent Chemist contractors in the region during this week. This will contain a link to a secure online voting portal and a unique two-part security code. Each Independent Chemist is entitled to one vote for each of its NHS pharmacy premises (by ODS code) in the region.

The voting portal will include each candidate's policy statement. Votes must be cast online by the closing date for the voting window which will be stated therein and not be less than 14 clear days from the date ballots are despatched, **by 5pm Friday 23rd September 2022**.

Voting will be run by Civica Election Services (formerly Electoral Reform Services) who will manage and oversee the ballot and act as Independent Scrutineer, to ensure the impartiality and integrity of the process. The PSNC Returning Officer will be James Wood, PSNC Director of Contractor and LPC Support.

At 12 noon on Monday 26th September 2022 – vote closes

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

By Wednesday 28th September 2022 – results declared

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

Next Steps

The timing above is indicative, 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 <https://psnc.org.uk/lpcs-and-local/lpc-members-area/lpc-member-changes/> (note, LPC Members Area login required).

Further information

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information, please contact James Wood, Director of Contractor and LPC Support by email james.wood@psnc.org.uk or Telephone 0203 1220 835.