



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society**
of Great Britain

1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN

Tel: 020 7572 2335

Fax: 020 7572 2503

News release

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MEMBER SUPPORT HELPS BREAKTHROUGH IN DECRIMINALISATION OF DISPENSING ERRORS CAMPAIGN

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's campaign to change the unjust law which automatically criminalises any dispensing error has reached a significant milestone after the Department of Health announced plans to amend the Medicines Act 1968 at the earliest opportunity.

The Society has been working with several Government departments and the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to raise awareness of the current legislation that sets pharmacists apart from other healthcare providers.

Although this process may take two years to complete, in the immediate future, discussions will be held with the Crown Prosecution Service, to develop interim guidelines for all Crown Prosecution Officers to remove the possibility of inappropriate prosecution for dispensing errors.

As part of its campaign the Society has lobbied senior figures in the three main political parties, spoken with civil servants, addressed the All-Party Pharmacy Group and tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) in the House of Commons.

The EDM has already been supported by over 80 MPs, making it one of the most successful this year. This was achieved by the Society supporting its members to lobby their MPs effectively.

President Steve Churton said: "We are enormously grateful to all of our members who supported our campaign on behalf of the profession and our patients, and are pleased with the impact our campaign to lobby government has had. No pharmacist should have to endure prosecution for genuine human error. The open reporting of errors is an essential activity in improving patient safety.

"It has been just as heartening to see the way in which the profession has united and worked together for something they believe in.

"Listening to and acting on our members concerns, and having this type of influence at Government level as a result, is an example of how our Professional Leadership Body will represent its members and provide a strong voice for pharmacy with real impact.

"We will be working the Department of Health and the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency to deliver a workable alternative to the existing law. We will also be keeping a close eye on developments with the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure that pharmacists are not subject to unnecessary prosecution while we wait for the Medicines Act 1968 to be amended."

Ends

**For media enquiries please contact the
Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain's Public Relations Unit
020 7572 2653**