



FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

Delivering our 2012–2017 strategy, highlighting achievements and setting a clear vision for the next five years



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About the Society

The **British Pharmacological Society** leads the way in the research and application of pharmacology around the world. We are a friendly and collaborative global community, with around 4,000 members from more than 60 countries worldwide.

Our members work in academia, industry, regulatory agencies and the health services, and many are medically qualified. The Society covers pharmacology in all its forms, including laboratory, clinical and toxicological aspects.

Presidents' Message



Professor Philip Routledge (2012 – 2013)

Since the development of our strategy five years ago, the British Pharmacological Society has evolved into an organisation that serves the pharmacological community extremely well, and crucially, is focused on continuous improvement.

In 2012, when we began our strategic review, we understood that the Society would need to modernise its practices and focus its activities in order to stay relevant in a shifting pharmacological landscape. We believe that goal has been achieved, and we're delighted with the progress that has been made – both by the organisation and by the disciplines of pharmacology and clinical pharmacology and therapeutics – since then.

Professor Humphrey Rang (2014 – 2015)

The input of our members along the way, allied with the hard work of the committees and Council, and the professionalism of an ever-stronger BPS staff team, has transformed the Society. Our membership is now much broader, we've encouraged and empowered our younger pharmacologists, and we are much more outward looking. We have championed our Society by focusing on the relevance and influence of pharmacology and clinical pharmacology to the health and wellbeing of the public.

This document sets out some of the Society's many achievements from the past five years, and, as Presidents of the Society over that time, we have added our reflections throughout.



Professor David Webb (2016 – 2017)

Of course, the work doesn't stop here. This document also provides an opportunity to share with you our new five-year strategy, which will guide the Society's activities and priorities from 2018. We look forward to seeing how the Society progresses over the next five years.

Chief Executive's Message



Jonathan Brüün Chief Executive Officer

This review sets out some highlights from the past five years but tells only some of the story of change and development at the Society during that time.

Since 2012, our governance has been reframed, our business and technological infrastructure transformed, our appearance and web presence enhanced, and our use of data to understand more about pharmacology and the needs of our members has improved substantially. These fundamental structures have enabled us to deliver for our members in a targeted and effective way.

I would like to acknowledge the support and guidance of the many staff, officers, committee members, journals editors and volunteers – past and present – that has ensured the delivery of our five-year strategy. In my view, the Society is about partnership in support of a common goal, and it is only through the collaboration of our staff and members that we have been able to achieve such a lot in a short space of time. I look forward to beginning work on our new vision from 2018.

Business highlights

"We've been laying the foundations for the past five years and are now poised for growth."

Mike Poole, Finance & Commercial Director

Two key ambitions of the five-year strategy were for the Society to achieve financial resilience and to diversify its income streams. Through overhauling financial reporting systems, managing existing contracts to get a better deal, and seeking out new business opportunities, the Society has established a very strong financial position.

In terms of revenue, the Society has not only maintained its main source of income – the journals – but over the past five years it has grown this business and identified promising new income streams. Income for 2017 is on track to exceed £4 million. Total income

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*2015 includes non-recurring income from the journals' publishers on completion of a new agreement *Year-end forecast figure prepared in August 2017

Improved financial management

"The introduction in 2014 of monthly management accounts and financial projections looking three years ahead has given us much greater control and understanding of our income and expenditure. The Society is now operating with financial information at its fingertips, enabling the management team and committees to make timely and informed decisions, and crucially to capitalise on new business opportunities."

Mike Poole, Finance & Commercial Director



Reviewing existing infrastructure

In 2015, the Society appointed new auditors. Finding a firm with a track record of working with organisations with the same size and remit as the Society was useful as they provide appropriate advice, recommendations and challenge. They also have an extensive range of business expertise and services which the Society has benefitted from.

Renegotiating our contract with our publishers, Wiley – also in 2015 – reduced the Society's costs and ensured a better deal for the future. "In 2012 there were 12 staff on the premises. To accommodate a growing team we reconfigured the office to make better use of space, and importantly to ensure we have room to grow again. We now have capacity for 20 staff, and are looking for new premises to support further growth. With office logistics, as with finance systems, it's about trying to future proof everything we do."

Jono Brüün, Chief Executive

Seeking new opportunities

In 2013, having explored various avenues to diversify its income, the Society identified assessment and e-learning as having the greatest potential for generating new business. The successful Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA), which had been developed with the Medical Schools Council for use in the UK, seemed the most promising starting point for something that could be adapted for international medical schools.

In 2016, the Society created a new spin-out company – BPS Assessment Ltd – to accompany the roll-out of what would be known as the Prescribing Skills Assessment: an adapted version of the PSA, designed specifically for the international market. "Adapting the PSA into an online resource has become a promising source of income. Having laid the foundations, we're about to see whether the investment we have made is going to convert into income for us.

There are many further applications for the PSA. In addition to providing an important part of medical undergraduate training, it is being delivered to doctors as continuing professional development as well as to non-medical prescribers such as pharmacists. By developing commercial opportunities for this resource internationally, we are generating exciting new income streams."

David James, Executive Director, Strategic Innovation



Fulfilling the needs of members

Key Objective: Greater matching of the Society's activities to members' needs.

Between 2012 and 2017, the Society enjoyed a substantial increase in membership numbers. To ensure we are doing all we can to retain and serve our members – as well as identifying how best to and attract new ones - substantial member engagement surveys were conducted in 2013 and 2016.

"If you don't listen to the members there's a danger you might think you know all of the answers. I feel the direction of the Society is now as much bottom-up as it is top-downwhich is extremely heartening."

Philip Routledge, President 2012–2013

Key findings:

Keeping up to date with developments in pharmacology is the most cited reason for joining the Society.

The proportion of members rating the Society as 'excellent' has increased from 31% in 2013 to 42% in 2016.



Members use words like professional informative and '**expert**' to describe the Society. Perceptions of it being 'welcoming', 'forwardthinking' and 'modern' have increased (by as much as 10%) between 2013 and 2016.

A majority of members believe that the Society should focus effort on raising awareness of pharmacology in Government and within universities

Focusing on policy

The membership engagement survey results called for a focus on policy initiatives to raise the profile of pharmacology. Over the past five years the Society has responded by shifting its approach from working across a broad a range of policy issues to focusing its expertise on a smaller number of key priorities.

More than 50 major consultation responses have been submitted over the past five years on issues including legislation to encourage medical innovation, leaving the EU, life sciences and industrial strategy, the Wakeham Review, Lord Stern's review of the Research Excellence Framework, antimicrobial resistance, and promoting innovation and access to medicines.

societies and by government."

David Webb, President, 2016-2017

Membership overview

Between 2012 and 2016 there has been a 25% increase in membership numbers, reaching over 4.000 for the first time in the Society's history.

25% 35%

The number of female members has remained consistent at around 35% of the membership.

32%

In 2012, young members (those under 30) made up 32% of the membership. This is forecast to rise to 42% by the end of 2017.



Focus on young pharmacologists

As the future of the Society, a concerted effort has been made to ensure younger members feel supported and valued. In 2016, voting rights changed for young members, enabling them to vote in the Society's Annual General Meeting for the first time.

"It's crucial that we are totally engaged with our early-career pharmacologists and there has been real progress in this area. Young members are now represented on nearly all the Society's committees, and its Council. It's all part of moving the Society from being a club to a vibrant society that invests in and champions the activities of all its members – whatever level they are at in their career."

Steve Hill, President-Elect, 2018-2019

Increased recognition

To better recognise achievement across the membership five new awards were launched in 2017 for young pharmacologists, educators and career returners.

- Bülbring Award for career returners who have had a significant career break
- **Dunlop Prize Lectureship** for early career clinical members
- **Pickford Award** up to four study awards for early career researchers
- Zaimis Prize awarded for long-term commitment to teaching
- Vogt Prize awarded for excellence in postgraduate studies

Introduction of Society Ambassadors

In 2015, a two-year pilot was launched to appoint members from across universities, and industry as volunteers to promote the Society. 13 representatives were given funding to deliver activities at their institution. In just two years, the scheme has established an invaluable connection between the office and membership, and its future expansion offers significant potential to widen member participation across the Society's activities.



"Our BPS ambassadors are valued advocates for the Society, providing an all-important point of contact on the ground for existing members, and encouraging non-members to get involved. They have also played an essential part in shaping and communicating the Society's activities – coordinating input into consultation responses and disseminating policy information through their own local networks."

Teesha Bhuruth, Engagement Manager

Promoting clinical pharmacology

Key Objective: Maintain a central position in the promotion of clinical pharmacology, promotion of safe and effective prescribing, and in discovery and development of medicines in the UK.

Launched in 2014, the Society's campaign to increase the visibility of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in the NHS has already made promising progress. Following a series of highprofile reports, parliamentary lobbying, sector collaborations, and engagement with Health Education England, it is expected to have a significant impact in safeguarding the future of clinical pharmacology.



Delivering our 2012-2017 strategy

Promoting safe and effective prescribing

"Students need more than the basic science of how to make a diagnosis. They need to know how to prescribe treatments – it's probably the most dangerous thing they do, so it makes sense to assess their ability to do it."

David Webb, President 2016–2017

In 2012, the trial of a new training resource – the Prescribing Safety Assessment – developed jointly between the Society and the Medical Schools Council, was rolled out across eight medical schools in the UK. It has steadily grown in uptake, and has become a priority for the Society. Five years in, the assessment is now taken in 31 medical schools by over 8,000 undergraduate medical students each year. It is recognised by Health Education England and the General Medical Council as being an important part of medical education in the UK, and is now a requirement for all students to pass by the end of Foundation Year 1 of the UK Foundation Programme. "The Society's association with this successful initiative has really improved our standing in the world of pharmacology. Everywhere we've introduced it, it has been really strongly supported. It's great for future medics and for patient safety."

Humphrey Rang, President 2014–2015



The importance of pharmacology in the modern world

Key Objective: Explaining the importance of pharmacology in the modern world by extending Society teaching and outreach activities.

"At the beginning of my presidency I was aware that there was guite a lot of disguiet amongst the membership about the recognition of pharmacology as a worthwhile and important discipline. The idea for the *Focus on Pharmacology* project came out of the need to make people more aware of why pharmacology really matters in the modern world "

Humphrey Rang, President, 2014–2015

Since its inception in 2015, the ambitious *Focus on Pharmacology* research project has taken input from across the pharmacology community – from academia, industry, educators, policy makers and of course students – along with real-world data, to produce resources that will support the discipline in the years to come.

Outcomes from the Focus on Pharmacology project

- Development of a new core curriculum setting out the key elements of an undergraduate degree in pharmacology
- An evaluation of the Integrative Pharmacology Fund, with recommendations for the future of *in vivo* education and training
- Development of Clinical Pharmacology Month – primarily focused on raising the profile of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics, but also to provide broader careers support for medical students and trainees
- Careers case studies published on Society website to provide guidance on career paths
- Published PwC report Pharmacology education and employment pathways describing UK pharmacology education landscape, and the employment destinations of graduates



"The Focus on Pharmacology project is working to understand both pharmacology education and employment. Through parallel research projects and a focus on building strong relationships, we're conducting research to examine the education and careers landscape, assess the impact of pharmacology in drug discovery and development, and have engaged with colleagues in industry. Working together we hope to shape the role of the Society in delivering for UK life sciences."

Anna Zecharia, Director, Policy & Public Affairs



Medicine Makers trialled at Big Bang Fair; this interactive engagement resource on how new drugs are discovered

Pharmacology Hall of Fame launched to raise awareness of pharmacology in society.

2013

Putting Pharmacology of the Map initiative launched to raise awareness of individuals who have played key roles in the development of pharmacology



2015

Pharmacology education and employment pathways report – key findings

The 'Pharmacology education and pathways report', commissioned from PwC highlighted a number of positive trends, but it also highlighted the ongoing 'visibility' challenge faced by the discipline. Of the 28 universities offering pharmacology, the subject was covered under 17 different course titles. The report also identified stark regional variations, indicating that pharmacology applications come from a limited geographical and socioeconomic cohort. Such insights are valuable in helping the Society identify where it can make a difference.

• The number of undergraduate acceptances for pharmacology has grown by 4.1% per year since 2007.

- There are 6.4 applicants per acceptance on a pharmacology course.
- 40% more students began a course in pharmacology in 2015 than in 2007.
- The number of postgraduate students studying pharmacology, pharmacy and toxicology has grown by approximately 6% a year since 2003–04.

Source: Pharmacology education and employment pathways report.

"The PwC report really helped to highlight the areas of the UK that need our attention – it means we can do more to engage in those areas, and help at a grassroots level."

Teesha Bhuruth, Engagement Manager





Conveying the importance of pharmacology through engagement

Over the course of the last five years, the Society has attempted to ensure its programme of outreach and engagement activities underpins its wider priorities. The annual cycle of outreach and engagement events has been supplemented by a number of new initiatives (see timeline), designed to demonstrate the value of pharmacology in scientific discovery and in the real world. The timeline below offers a snapshot of some of these activities.

Collaboration with other societies

Key Objective: Reflect the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of modern biomedical science by developing the Society's collaboration with other societies.

Examples of successful collaborations over the past five years

The remit of the Society spans education, medicine, industry and academia both in the UK and internationally. Over the past five years we have increasingly collaborated within this diverse community, to identify priorities for the future and bring about key changes.

"Pharmacology doesn't exist

in a bubble. It sits alongside many other disciplines such as biochemistry, physiology and neuroscience. And scientific collaboration is global, so it's really important that our activities reflect that, because it's what people see in their day-to-day lives."

Jono Brüün, Chief Executive



Guest Societies at Pharmacology

The *Pharmacology* annual meeting is of course the Society's biggest international collaborative effort. Over the past five years the 'Guest Society' initiative has been introduced with great success. Guest societies can participate by sponsoring sessions, setting symposia topics and inviting their own speakers.

In 2016 the Society welcomed the Chinese Pharmacological Society, American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), and Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASCEPT) along with the Biochemical Society. At *Pharmacology 2017* we will welcome the Japanese Pharmacological Society as our guest.



Prescribing Safety Assessment. This joint project, developed with the Medical Schools Council, was piloted in 2012 and has now been rolled out to every medical school in the UK, providing an essential assessment of final year medical students' prescribing skills.



Pharmacology Research & Perspectives open-access journal launched. A collaboration with the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), publishing original research, reviews and perspectives in all preclinical and clinical pharmacology and therapeutics research areas.



Concordat on Openness on Animal Research. The Society joined 72 other universities, charities, commercial companies and learned societies in committing to help the pubic understand more about animal research.





Joint report with the ABPI. 'Ensuring UK leadership in experimental medicine' explored ways to build greater connections between academia and industry such as creating a cohort of clinical pharmacologists capable of bridging academia, the NHS and industry.

Building links with industry. In preparation for its forthcoming Industry Engagement Strategy, the Society's Industry sub-committee hosted round-table events with senior representatives from the pharmaceutical industry, contract research organisations, and the venture capital and biotech sectors. It provided valuable insights into how the Society can work to address the clinical pharmacology skills gap in industry.



Building international awareness. The Society began collaborating with partner organisations in Canada, India, China, Australia and the Middle East on the Prescribing Safety Assessment. Separately, our journals increased their outreach in new markets by appointing regional editors and creating geographically themed virtual issues. Finally, our new International Advisory Group met for the first time, with a remit to extend the Society's global influence and impact.

2016

2017

Publications

Key Objective: Develop and integrated publications strategy.

Over the past five years, the Society's publications committee and journal editorial boards have successfully increased the profile of the Society's journals among new audiences, identified new opportunities to collaborate on content, and crucially maintained the breadth and excellent quality of research published.

Increasing international representation on the editorial boards of both the *British Journal of Pharmacology (BJP)* and the *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology (BJCP)* has succeeded in boosting authorship and readership from overseas; and regional editors, who were appointed to BJP's Editorial Board in 2014 and 2016, are already proving invaluable in raising the profile of the Society's journals internationally, as well encouraging submissions and readership in their respective regions.

During the period of the current strategy, Prof. Adam Cohen and Prof. Amrita Ahluwalia have taken up the roles of Editor-in-Chief at BJCP and BJP, respectively. Both were keen to increase integration and collaboration within their publications; and in particular to bridge the translational gap between the two disciplines and grow the journals' relevance to wider audiences, such as early career researchers and industry. Their collaborative leadership has resulted in a series of successful subject-based joint virtual issues – which have undoubtedly broadened visibility and impact by encouraging citations and downloads.



Prof. Amrita Ahluwalia, Editor-in-Chief, BJP

One of the most exciting achievements of the past five years has been the launch of the Society's new journal, *Pharmacology Research and Perspectives (PR&P)*, a joint initiative between the Society, the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) and Wiley. Published under a gold open access model, this journal provides a home for research across all areas of preclinical and clinical pharmacology. Its profile has been steadily growing since its launch in 2013 and, having been accepted into PubMed Central in 2014 and Medline in 2017, it is hoped that its accessibility and influence will continue to grow.



"PR&P is a broad scope open access journal with the backing of two of the world's leading pharmacological societies - BPS and ASPET. It's really well placed to provide a great editorial and peer review service to authors who cascade from other journals or submit directly."

Kathryn Wilson, Head of Publishing



Measures of success

BJP	Impact Factor	5yr IF	Eigenfactor	Article influence
2012	5.067	4.898	0.05348	1.362
2013	4.99	4.994	0.05527	1.371
2014	4.842	4.957	0.04828	1.316
2015	5.259	5.026	0.04527	1.316
2016	5.491	5.054	0.04299	1.34
BJCP	Impact Factor	5yr IF	Eigenfactor	Article influence
BJCP 2012	Impact Factor 3.578	5yr IF 3.555	Eigenfactor 0.01562	Article influence 0.9
2012	3.578	3.555	0.01562	0.9
2012 2013	3.578 3.688	3.555 3.477	0.01562 0.01546	0.9 1.023
2012 2013 2014	3.578 3.688 3.878	3.555 3.477 3.834	0.01562 0.01546 0.01694	0.9 1.023 1.145





Equality and diversity policy

Key Objective: Development and modernisation of the Society's equality and diversity policy to incorporate best practice into all the Society does.

"Our plan is to support female pharmacologists and clinical pharmacologists, and help them stay in science and education so that they remain active members throughout their careers. That might take 10 or 20 years – longer than our current or future strategy – but it's front and centre of everything we do."

David Webb, President 2016-2017



Improving diversity and equality is and will continue to be an overarching goal of the Society's strategy. The issue of representation – be it socioeconomic, gender or ethnicity – is an ongoing challenge within pharmacology, and the science community more widely. Where the Society has been able to redress the balance swiftly, however, it has done so. We now collect much more granular information on gender and identity through our new member database, and that information has helped us to improve our diversity policies.

In tandem with Council, where equality and diversity is a standing agenda item, the Women in Pharmacology Advisory Group has worked hard to ensure we have a good gender balance across all of our committees. Where a longer-term commitment is needed we are already working to identify the challenges and lav the foundations for change. Our report. Pharmacology education and employment *pathways*, identified that 58% of pharmacology students are women and that this high percentage continues on into the early years of training, PhD and post-doctoral research. However, the subsequent drop off is a concern. The Society offers bursaries for childcare while members attend our meetings and a bespoke career break membership, but to address the root cause of the problem will take longer.

In the near future, the Women in Pharmacology Advisory Group will be consulting on whether to revise its remit to be more inclusive; to offer improved support for gender diversity as well as a focus on broader equality and inclusion across the Society.



Our commitment to improving equality and diversity

- The Society will make every effort to increase diversity within its leadership and governance structures, its membership, and its professional development activities.
- Throughout all of its charitable objectives the Society will articulate gender and ethnic diversity as a core value and highlight its importance to pharmacology at every level.
- Society management and participation in Society initiatives should reflect the gender and ethnic diversity breakdown of the membership.
- The Society will provide opportunities for and support of professional development for women and minorities.

Our new five-year strategy from 2018

Introduction from the President, President-Elect and CEO

This new Society strategy builds on the strong foundation and success of the past five years. Our numerous achievements and increased profile, along with the support of a growing membership, means we are now in an excellent position to accomplish even more; to establish the Society as an influential and proactive force for championing research, education, training and policy issues in pharmacology and clinical pharmacology.

Guided by an updated set of principles and objectives, we look forward to working with Council and committee members, office staff and of course members to deliver another five years of success and progress for the Society, and pharmacology as a discipline.



Professor Steve Hill

Incoming President 2018–2019



Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed President-Elect 2018–2019



Jonathan Brüün Chief Executive

British Pharmacological Society five-year strategy 2018–2022



A world in which pharmacology and therapeutics drive and support progress in science, medicine and healthcare.

Our mission

We will work with integrity to create global scientific, health, and economic impact by:

- Supporting academic and industrial drug discovery
- Improving outcomes for patients in relation to the therapeutic use of medicines
- Widening participation in pharmacology and therapeutics to ensure a vibrant and diverse community and workforce
- Increasing the visibility and influence of pharmacology and therapeutics through excellence in education, publishing, scientific meetings, communications, membership and policy with public engagement



Our partners

We will work nationally and internationally with members, patients and the public, educators and learners, academic institutions, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, the National Health Service, regulatory agencies, other learned societies, the media, and government and agencies involved in setting the policy agenda.





We are confident about the future of the Society and the value of pharmacology and therapeutics. We believe that:

- Pharmacology and therapeutics make a unique contribution to research to develop new drugs, and to improving the use of existing drugs to create better patient outcomes
- Pharmacology and therapeutics are evolving disciplines, and it is our responsibility to define, redefine and change them to reflect this
- Our growing, global community of members is crucial to our success
- Our goals in support of pharmacology and therapeutics and our membership can only be achieved if we ensure the financial sustainability of the Society
- Having fun is an important part of what we do



To have an impact, we will focus on delivering the following objectives:

- To remove barriers to participation and success, while welcoming equality and celebrating diversity, and being inclusive in all we do
- To set the agenda in education and skills
 - To support access and career progression
 - To support the next generation of learners undertaking education in pharmacology and clinical pharmacology
 - To support pharmacology educators in their personal & professional development
- To be the leader in the dissemination of world-class research related to pharmacology and therapeutics
- To engage patients and partners in the NHS in our advocacy for fundamental and clinical research, as well as contributing to strategic leadership
- To sustain a skilled workforce that supports the development of novel therapeutics
- To lead the formation of valuable networks that reflect our position at the heart of the global pharmacology community
- To deliver clear, relevant and accessible advice to policy makers
- To nurture strategic partnerships across disciplines and sectors
- To define, monitor and respond to strategic areas of scientific priority



- Forming successful partnerships to maximize impact
- Grounding our decision-making in evidence and research
- Developing sustainable, ethical new sources of revenue and ensuring more of the Society's activities are self-sustaining
- Carefully considering our appetite for risk, and our ambition
- Ensuring that our staff and members work positively, effectively, and in partnership throughout the management and governance of the Society

About the British Pharmacological Society

Formed in 1931 the British Pharmacological Society is a charity with a mission to promote and advance the whole spectrum of pharmacology, including laboratory, clinical and toxicological aspects. The Society now leads the way in the research and application of pharmacology around the world.

With around 4,000 members from more than 60 countries worldwide, the Society represents a diverse community working across academia, government agencies, industry and the health service.



British Pharmacological Society The Schild Plot, 16 Angel Gate City Road, London, EC1V 2PT info@bps.ac.uk +44 (0) 20 7239 0171

www.bps.ac.uk

Get involved with our work...

We are always keen to hear from members who would like to get involved in the Society's activities.

If you are interested in supporting our **policy** work you can become a voluntary committee or advisory group member, or contribute directly via our consultation responses, publications and meetings.

If your passion is promoting pharmacology and sharing more about your area of research, you can sign up to our **public engagement** mailing list to find out about the latest opportunities at workshops, events and festivals.

And if you would like to raise awareness of pharmacology and the work of the Society within your own institution, our **Ambassador** scheme provides support for members to run events and workshops within their individual departments or medical schools, to increase the profile of the specialty.

For more information about any of these opportunities, please check the British Pharmacological Society the website or email **getinvolved@bps.ac.uk**