



newsletter

www.pharmtech.ie

President's Address

Dear members,

Summer passed us by without us noticing and I cannot believe that we have now reached the time of the year when we start planning for our next annual conference. Our committee have been busy working away on your behalf since we have last been in touch so I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on what has been going on.

This year we designed and issued numbered membership cards to all our current members. We hope that this card will help raise the profile of our association while the number will entitle current members to vote on issues affecting our association. If you have not received your card please contact Martina.McCabe01@amnch.ie. The committee have also been busy networking with hospitals nationwide. This activity has opened new lines of communication for hospital pharmacy technicians and has brought us new members who I am delighted to welcome to our association. In September we ran a pharmacy technician tutor training day in association with Carlow IT which was a huge success. I would like to thank Nicola Cantwell for her continued support. We are also working with other course providers of the pharmacy technician's course. Going forward we are due to meet with the HSE to review qualification requirements.

We have also been in touch with several pharmacy journals who are interested in working with us on CPD articles and on reporting on our events etc.

Recently, we have held meetings with the HPAI and the Pharmaceutical Society to discuss our campaign to move the pharmacy technician's role into a statutory regulated position with the same responsibilities and accountabilities as other regulated health care professionals. Representatives from the community pharmacy technicians attended the latter meeting. Together our associations have written a joint letter that we are forwarding to all stakeholders seeking their support in our campaign.

Through statutory regulation we aim to:

- Assure clear standards and competence in the interest of the public
- Standardise and protect the use of the title 'pharmacy technician'
- Develop our role in a structured way
- Develop education programmes to support learning needs

- Increase pride in our profession
- Increase accountability in our work
- Commit to self improvement

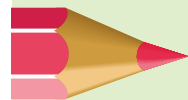
Statutory regulation will change how we work and will therefore affect all pharmacy technicians. It is important that we get it right and do the right thing. We need to know your views, queries and thoughts as we move this campaign forward. We ask that you use our website forums to openly discuss issues with other members and allow us answer your questions.

Our goal is to represent and to be the voice of hospital pharmacy technicians. As president, I hope that I can work with you to raise the profile of the pharmacy technician and get the recognition that we truly deserve.

Yours Faithfully

Yvonne Sheehan
President

dates for your diary



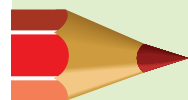
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Pharmacovigilance Information Day. 2nd December 2011, Crowne Plaza, Santry. Registration forms available from www.imb.ie. Return completed forms to kinga.wilczynska@imb.ie



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ASHP 46th Clinical Meeting and Exhibition. 4th – 8th December 2011, New Orleans. www.ashp.org for more details.



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NAHPT are planning on running a **Training Day** in January. We would appreciate topic suggestions from our members. Log on to www.pharmtech.ie and use the forum to leave your suggestions.



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NAHPT Conference. 28th April 2012, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Santry. See www.pharmtech.ie for further details.

European Association of Pharmacy Technicians Annual AEPT Meeting 7th -9th April 2011

Countries and delegates representing their national associations present at meeting.

Country	Delegate	Position
Croatia	Marija Žužak	President
	Svetlana Komazec	Member
Czech Republic	Monika Kacevova	President
	Alena Vagenknechtova	Member
Denmark	Susanne Engstrom	President
	Malene Hjornet	Member (solicitor)
Finland	Seija Komu	President
	Mia Suominen	Member (union rep.)
France	Catherine Piron	Member
	Marie Helene Gronget	Member
Germany	Jutta Brielich	Member (European rep.)
	Ingrid Heberle	Member
Hungary	Imre Csipe	Member
Ireland	Clare Ward	President (IACPT)
	Yvonne Sheehan	Vice President (NAHPT)
Norway	Rita Riksfjord Antonsen	First Vice President
	Jo o José Joaquim	President
	Luis Dupont	Delegate of European Affairs
Portugal	IngerJohanne Opseth	Second Vice President
	Zdenko Tausic	President
	Monika Panduric	Member
Sweden	Carinna Jansson	President
	sa Norman Grenninger	Executive Director
United Kingdom	Sarah Wilcox	President
	Tess Fenn	Education Officer

This year's meeting in Cardiff, Wales was the first meeting for EAPT as a formal organisation. This arrangement follows on from an agreement made in Lisbon 2010 between the members of the voluntary association of European pharmacy technicians, known as the Committee for European Pharmacy Technicians (CEPT)

CEPT was formed in 1989 and since that time has increased in numbers with representation from thirteen countries. Ireland, has been a member since 2001 and has been represented annually by members from the committee of the National Association of Hospital Pharmacy Technicians (NAHPT)

The new association was determined as a 'non-profit making association and supports the pharmacy technician in the provision of a safe, effective and efficient services for the

benefit of the patient in all association members countries' Its aim is to provide and compare information on the role and education of pharmacy technicians across Europe.

This year was also a first for the Irish Association of Community Pharmacy Technicians (IACPT) as this newly formed association was represented at the annual meeting by their President Clare Ward.

The annual meeting was hosted and chaired by Sarah Wilcox and Tess Fenn (APTUK). The event ran over a busy two days but I am happy to say we did get to enjoy the beautiful Cardiff Bay area each evening.

On day one, a working group which was formed at the previous year in Lisbon, reported back to the members about a meeting that they held in Brussels in November 2010. At this meeting the group finalised the EAPT statues and internal rules.

We then all agreed to this final document and to a new logo design for our association. The objectives of the association are set out in article 3 of the statues and are:

- To promote and develop the profession and role of 'pharmacy technicians'
- To promote patient safety within pharmacy practice
- To promote, influence and negotiate on European policies on issues relevant to the pharmacy technician profession.
- To collaborate with other organisations with similar objectives.

The working group also reported back to us on a meeting that they had with the President of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists. This meeting was very informative as the President gave us back on how they got set up and advised us on raising funds for our association. The EAHP offered for us to share their address in Brussels to register our association. The Danish representatives, who were part of the working group, announced that their association had set up and paid for a website address for EAPT.

During our morning schedule, the members of the committee accepted the Czech Republic as a member of the association. Hungary made an application to join the association and a result will be announced at the next annual meeting. We then elected the first members to the EAPT board. We used a process by which countries put themselves forward for nomination. Delegates were asked to consider the equity that could be achieved if we had a board that represented Eastern Europe, Western Europe and the Nordic region. I did not put an Irish nomination forward at this time as the NAPHT do not have the resources to commit to such a position. Six countries put themselves forward for nomination and the election resulted in the following new board.

President	João José Joaquim	Portugal
Vice President	Susanne Engstrom	Denmark
Secretary	Catherine Piron	France
Treasurer	Monika Panduric	Slovenia
Member	Tess Fenn	UK

Prior to the annual meeting each member country submitted an annual report on their association and on current activities in their countries that affected pharmacy practice. Each member was provided with a copy of all reports and during the morning part of the meeting we gave a brief overview of our report, highlighting areas such as education, pharmacist supervision, the technicians' involvement in the dispensing process and patient counseling and finally registration. On the second day of the meeting we held an open discussion where members could ask each other to explain their report in more detail.

Our UK hosts, Sarah and Tess organised a visit for us to St Mary's Pharmaceutical Unit in Cardiff. This is a stand-alone manufacturing unit which provides a whole spectrum of pharmaceuticals to both primary and secondary care within Wales and further afield throughout the UK and now Ireland. The unit holds a specials manufacturers license and a wholesaler dealer's license.

During the visit we got the opportunity to tour around the unit as it was a Friday afternoon and they had finished manufacturing. It was a great opportunity to see the manufacturing side of pharmaceuticals and to pick up a list of products that we can now source than make!

On the final day of our meeting Catherine Piron (France) presented

to us on ECVET (The European Credit for Vocational Education and Training). Catherine picked this program to review as she believes it will be of interest to association as the pharmacy technician qualification involves learning skills and demonstrating knowledge and competencies. The EDVET program 2012 will allow us to compare pharmacy technician qualifications across Europe. The Portuguese representation added to this presentation as they are currently trying to identify programs that will take into account post qualification experiences and learning and provide credits for further studies etc. In a general discussion after the presentation we agreed to revisit the education audit that CEPT held in 2008. Tess Fenn from the UK and I have agreed to form working group to design a new survey and review the desired outcomes.

In our final meeting our new president chaired a discussion around how we could raise income for the association. It was suggested that we should identify projects that we can as a group get involved in such as medication safety projects. It was also agreed that we should start working towards a European congress for pharmacy technicians. The new board then agreed to meet in Lisbon later this year to move ideas forward.

Our day finished with a presentation from Rosemont pharmaceuticals who

are liquid medicines specialists. Their talk which focused on making medicines safer for children was very informative as they addressed the considerations in prescribing and purchasing unlicensed medicines for use in children. The presentation also highlighted the various problems that may arise from using the different classes of unlicensed products (specials, imports, extemporaneous medicines and manipulation of a formulation)

Next year's Annual EAPT will be held in Hungary May 2012. The NAHPT are hoping to host the meeting in Dublin 2013.

Yvonne Sheehan

President
National Association of Hospital
Pharmacy Technicians

Tutor Day Carlow

I recently attended a half day tutor course in Carlow IT on Saturday the 17th of September. The course tutor was Anne Carpenter from Carlow IT. The course was kindly sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline. Twenty pharmacy technicians attended the course.

Tutors have two main tasks, a concern for the task being carried out and a concern for the student's welfare while in the workplace. It is important to strike a healthy balance between the two.

We learnt interpersonal skills such as active listening, how to give feedback both positive and negative. The class was then divided into groups to discuss the challenges that arise when tutoring students in the workplace. The main challenge that arose was lack of time to properly tutor the student.

Groups were then asked to fill out questionnaires to determine what learning style a person uses. The different learning styles we studied were Vark, visual, aural/auditory, read/write and kinaesthetic and the Honey and Mumford learning style which shows whether you are an activist, reflector, theorist or pragmatist. The questionnaires threw up many surprising results!

The pharmacy technicians' coordinator Nicola Cantwell also reminded us that she is only a phone call away if we ever need her advice on the tutoring of students in our workplace. The course finished with a tasty lunch.

Catriona Wyer

Pharmacy Technician
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital



Our Department

The new hospital at Midlands Regional Hospital at Tullamore was opened 4 years ago. The hospital has 237 beds, 217 in-patient and 20 day beds, 15 chemo treatment units. Tullamore houses the Regional Orthopaedic unit, Renal unit, Regional Oncology/Haematology unit along with Intensive care unit, Coronary care, Medical and Surgical wards, Accident and Emergency, Day ward, Outpatients, Theatre and Childrens ward.

There are 7 dispensary pharmacists, 2 dispensary senior technicians, 4 basic grade dispensary technicians, 1 clerical officer, 4 attendants, 3 oncology pharmacists, 1 senior oncology pharmacy technician and 2 basic grade technicians.

I am the senior technician in oncology, the basic grade technicians rotate between dispensary and oncology this ensures that both areas have qualified staff at all times and also gives variety to the technicians in MRHT. The senior technicians do not rotate at present.

The roles of the ward/dispensary technicians include:

- Ward top up.
- Staff prescription dispensing.
- Extemporaneous dispensing
- Clozaril individual dispensing
- Purchasing Technician
- Pre packing
- Dispensing ward requisitions
- Informing pharmacist of interventions from ward requisitions
- Dispensing to long stay outlining hospitals
- Emergency trays and wraps
- Date checking and stock rotation

The roles of the oncology technicians:

- Compounding of chemotherapy and Monoclonal antibodies.
- Preparation of trays for compounding from oncology prescriptions
- Cancellations and rescheduling of patients
- Ordering of outsourced chemotherapy
- Date checking and stock rotation
- We compound up to 100 items per week in the aseptic suite in MRHT.

Training:

Training courses available to technicians outside the hospital are:

- BOPA
- Leeds aseptic course.
- PPPG training
- HPAI poster competition

In house training is available throughout the year on hospital related issues.

Continuing professional development:

- We have breakfast meetings every week where a rep will come in the morning to present to the pharmacy department.
- One of our basic grade technicians 2 year B Tech in clinical pharmacy from Derby University.
- I have submitted 2 posters for the HPAI am working on another for next year's conference.

Current practice within MRHT:

- The technicians in Tullamore do Tech checking, this is when technician dispenses broken bulk another tech will perform the final check before it goes to the ward.
- We also have an Emergency room, this is a fully stocked room separate to the pharmacy that is accessible to nursing admin after pharmacy is closed, a technician is solely responsible for keeping this room topped up and for charging requisitions to wards. We found before we moved into the new hospital that during the weekends when nursing staff has access to the pharmacy that stock could not be accounted for. The emergency room allows for a more tight control over what goes out over then weekend.
- We are also preparing pre packs for Outpatients, A&E and the Ambulance.

In Oncology:

- We are currently looking into a closed system device for use in compounding unit, this is part of what I am working on for HPAI poster. The system we are looking at is the Phaseal, this system will save money as once the vial has

been pierced the expiry date can be extended due to the fact that the microbial integrity of the drug not being affected. It is also very safe to use as it is needle friendly as apposed to needle free.

- As part of this project we surveyed 11 oncology pharmacies to ascertain what practices they were using for compounding aseptics. We looked into what closed system devices that were on the market and decided on one product that we are hoping to introduce in our unit.

We would hope to expand the technician's role out into the wards as one of our technicians has the B Tech in clinical Pharmacy.

Trish Scully

Senior Pharmacy Technician
Oncology Pharmacy
Tullamore Hospital.

Letters/Articles to the Editor:

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Reminder

We had lots of great posters at our conference this year. We would like an even better turnout next year so start thinking about your poster now. All the poster abstracts from this year's conference can be viewed on our website (www.pharmtech.ie) along with all the presentations.