



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Máinnystrie O Poustie

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# Consultation: Pharmacy Premises Fees

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Consultation Period  
08 June 2026 to 03 August 2026

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## **1. Foreword by Health Minister**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland — the Society — is responsible for regulating pharmacists and pharmacy premises in Northern Ireland. Its work is essential to maintaining public confidence, supporting professional standards, and protecting patients.

Unlike some other health and social care regulators, such as the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, the Society does not receive core funding from my Department. It is an independent legal entity, and its income is primarily generated through the fees it charges to registrants, trainee pharmacists and pharmacy premises.

I recognise that the Society has faced increasing financial pressure over recent years. A prolonged period in which fees remained static, alongside rising operating costs, has created an urgent need to review how pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland is funded. Inflation has affected the Society's expenditure across a range of areas, including utilities, supplier costs and salaries. Additional pressures, such as increased employer National Insurance contributions, have added to these costs.

At the same time, professional regulation has become more complex and resource-intensive. The number and complexity of fitness to practise cases has increased, and the Society must be able to respond effectively to changes in the pharmacy profession and the wider health and social care system. A modern regulatory framework requires stable and sustainable funding.

In early 2025, the Society consulted, as required, on proposals to increase registrant fees, which had remained unchanged since 2016. As a result, registration and retention fees for registrants increased from £398 to £477 from 1 June 2026. Responsibility for setting pharmacy premises fees rests with my Department. These fees have remained unchanged since 2011 and are significantly lower than comparable fees payable in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

I am very conscious that this consultation comes at a challenging time and I recognise the pressures that many community pharmacies are facing. I do not underestimate those pressures. My department is committed to working with community pharmacy to optimise their contribution to health and social care delivery on a sustainable basis for the future. Premises Fees are used by the Society to cover the cost of developing and promoting standards and guidance relating to the operation of registered premises, conducting Fitness to Practise investigations and to fund staff and IT related costs. These are important functions and it is vital that the Society is resourced to continue delivering its statutory regulatory functions, with patient safety and public protection at the centre of pharmacy practice.

The current level of premises fees no longer makes an adequate contribution to the cost of delivering modern pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland. Change

is therefore needed to ensure that the Society can continue to operate effectively and fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

I have therefore decided to consult on a number of options for increasing pharmacy premises fees, as set out in this consultation document. These options have been developed in collaboration with the Society, and I encourage key stakeholders including community pharmacists, pharmacy owners, and pharmacy representative bodies to share their views.

Your responses will help inform decisions on a fair, proportionate and sustainable increase to pharmacy premises fees in Northern Ireland.

## **2. Background**

### **The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland was established by the Pharmacy and Poisons Act (Northern Ireland) 1925, and has been based at 73 University Street, Belfast since 1933. It is an independent body, established as a body corporate. It is the regulatory and professional body for pharmacists in Northern Ireland. It maintains a register of over 3000 pharmacists and at 1 January 2026 there were 537 premises registered in Northern Ireland. This includes 507 'contracted' pharmacies that provide HSC services and a number of registered pharmacies without an HSC contract e.g. hospital pharmacies, prison pharmacy and others.

As the regulatory body for pharmacists in NI, the Society seeks to protect public safety in pharmacy by:

- Setting and promoting standards for pharmacists' admission to the register and for remaining on the register;
- Maintaining a publicly accessible register of pharmacists, students and pharmacy premises in NI;
- Handling concerns about the fitness to practise of registrants and taking any necessary action to protect the public, and
- Ensuring high standards of education and training for pharmacists in NI.

The functions and powers of the Society are set out in the Pharmacy (NI) Order 1976 (1976 Order). In addition to its statutory regulatory responsibilities, the Society also has a role in supporting the professional leadership of pharmacy in Northern Ireland. Unlike other UK pharmacy regulators, this professional leadership function is delivered through the Society's arm's-length body, the Pharmacy Forum Northern Ireland, which represents and promotes the professional interests of pharmacists. The Society therefore provides the statutory framework within which the profession operates, while maintaining patient safety and public protection at the centre of pharmacy practice.

The Society is a legal entity and as such has powers and duties under the 1976 Order. The Society exists to provide a framework for the profession to operate within and maintain patient safety at the centre of its practice.

### Legislative Responsibility for Fees

#### *Registrant Fees*

The 1976 Order gives express statutory authority to the **Council of the Society to levy fees, in relation to pharmacists**, subject to Departmental approval, which includes: registration; retention of registration; examination; and annotation of the register.

The registrant fees collected from each of these categories are used to enable the Society to carry out its core statutory duties as a regulator and professional body which relate to, but are not limited to: setting standards for education and training; maintaining a register of competent professionals; setting and monitoring professional standards; investigating complaints about pharmacists' Fitness to Practise; and, delegation of professional leadership duties to the Pharmacy Forum.

#### *Pharmacy Premises Fees*

Responsibility for **setting the amount of pharmacy Premises Fees lies with the Department of Health** (the Department) under the Medicines Act 1968. The Society has separately addressed the issue of Registrant Fees increases.

The Society has operated in a financial deficit since 2021-2022 with the shortfall being met using strategic reserves. These reserves are finite and have eroded sharply over recent years.

As already highlighted, fees are the Society's primary source of income with some minor income from investments and pharmacy Premises Fees have not increased since 2011. **In discussions with the Society, the Department considers it imperative to consult on several options to increase the Premises Fees.**

The revenue from Premises Fees is designed to cover areas of expense to the Society, in particular, the cost of developing and promoting standards and guidance relating to the operation of registered premises, conducting Fitness to Practise investigations and to fund staff and IT related costs.

**The Society cannot continue to function with ongoing operational losses**, and the Department has worked with the Society in the development of a range of options for an increase in Premises Fees, as outlined in this consultation document.

Where the Department commissions the Society to carry out a project/ programme of work, fee revenue will not be used for associated costs. The Department will continue to provide funding to the Society specifically for commissioned work, subject to appropriate estimates being submitted and approved.

### 3. Premises Fees

Under the Medicines Act 1968, pharmacy premises in NI must be registered with the Society and registration system is administered by the Society in accordance with sections 69(3), 75 and 76 of the Act.

Fees payable by pharmacy owners to the Society for the registration of pharmacy premises are set out in [The Medicines \(Pharmacies\) \(Applications for Registration and Fees\) Regulations \(NI\) 2010](#) (the 2010 Regulations) made under powers in the Medicines Act 1968.

Pharmacy owners are required to pay Premises Fees to the Society under the following categories:

- A **registration fee** is payable on the registration of a new pharmacy premises from which a retail pharmacy will be operated. This is compulsory for pharmacies wishing to open a pharmacy business in NI.
- An **annual retention fee** is payable for those pharmacies wanting to continue to operate in NI.
- A **restoration fee** is payable by those pharmacies which having been removed from the register voluntarily or for other reasons, are seeking restoration to the pharmacy register.

These fees have remained static since 2011.

Any proposal to increase premises retention fees will have the greatest impact on community pharmacies as these account for the majority of pharmacies which are registered with the Society, although a small number of hospital pharmacies are also registered.

Under section 129(6) of the Medicines Act 1968 it is the responsibility of the Department to consult with interested organisations when setting Premises Fees, and this includes current registered premises holders.

#### **4. Development of Options for Consultation**

To inform the development of the options included in this consultation document and given the Society's strong links with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), we have considered the premises fee amounts currently being charged in Great Britain (GB). As a result, of our consideration, GB fee amounts are included in 3 of the options in section 5.

We also considered the premises fee amounts charged in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) by the Pharmacy Society of Ireland (PSI) as we consider it to be a comparable relatively small Regulator, and like the Society, is a single Regulator for registered pharmacists/pharmacies, and its primary source of income is also from the fees that it charges. ROI fee amounts are included in 2 of the options in section 5.

As already highlighted above, the Department also worked closely with the Society in the development of the consultation options.

## 5. Current Premises Fees Comparison Table

Table 1: Current Premises Fees for Great Britain (GB), Republic of Ireland (RoI) and Northern Ireland (NI)

Region/ Regulator	Registration	Retention	Restoration
<b>GB<sup>1</sup> General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)</b>	<b>£1088</b> (£672 Processing Fee £416 Registration Fee)	<b>£416</b>	<b>£935</b>  See table 5 for calculation.
<b>*RoI<sup>2</sup> Pharmaceutical Society Ireland (PSI)</b>	<b>£2898 (€3325)</b> (as of 21/01/26)	<b>£1861(€2135)</b> (as of 21/01/26)	<b>£5,542 (€6,371)</b>  see table 8 for calculation.
<b>NI<sup>3</sup> Pharmaceutical Society NI (the Society)</b>	<b>£113</b>	<b>£155</b>	<b>£472</b> (retention fee of £155 plus a penalty of £317)

\*The PSI has recently carried out a consultation on increasing pharmacy Premises Fees following an independent review of its funding model which recommended that for the PSI to operate on a cost-recovery basis, an increase in registration-related fees is required.

<sup>1</sup> [Applying-to-register-a-new-pharmacy-premises-December-2025.docx](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Registration Fees | PSI](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Information for Premises Registration, Retention and Nomination of a Superintendent – Pharmaceutical Society NI](#)

## **6. Proposed Options and Revenue Estimates for Fee Increase**

The Society's 2024-25 annual report recorded a financial deficit for a fourth consecutive year. In 2024-25 the deficit was £294,819 compared to £225,351 in the year 2023-24.<sup>4</sup>

As can be seen in Table 1 above, fees in NI continue to be set at a much lower level than in GB and RoI, with no increase in NI premises registration, retention and restoration fees in the last 15 years.

There are currently 537<sup>5</sup> registered pharmacies subject to payment of premises retention fees and this accounts for the largest amount of annual revenue from Premises Fees. The retention fee increases in revenue calculations which is included in each of the options below is based on 537 registered pharmacies retaining their registration although the number may vary slightly from year to year.

Over the last 5 years there has been an average of 31 fees charged per year related to premises registrations. Registration fees are charged when a new pharmacy premises is opening, where a pharmacy is replacing existing premises due to a local move, or due to technical changes such as changes to the area registered in the building or ownership changes. Whilst difficult to accurately predict, the Society does not envisage as many changes in future years. Registration fees account for a relatively small amount of revenue.

No restoration fees have been collected by the Society in the last 5 years, therefore the annual revenue generated from these fees has been nil during this period and is likely to be negligible going forward. However, it is considered important that when applying uplifts to Premises Fees, that we do so across all of the fee categories and this is reflected in options 2 – 6 below.

The Department has set out 6 options for increasing the 3 categories of Premises Fees in Northern Ireland.

Your views are sought on these options, except for option 1, "do nothing" which maintains the fees at their current rate.

- **Option 1 - do nothing, fees remain the same.**
- **Option 2 - apply a percentage increase equal to the annual rate of inflation since 2012.**
- **Option 3 - increase NI fees to align with GB fees.**

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<sup>4</sup> [Consultation-Registration-and-Retention-Fees-for-Pharmacists-31\\_01\\_2025\\_14\\_00.pdf](#)

<sup>5</sup> As of January 2026

- **Option 4 – Increase NI Fees to align with GB Fees in year 1 followed by an increase equal to the rate of inflation (2%)\* over each of the following 2 years**
- **Option 5 - increase NI fees to the mid-way point between GB and Rol fees.**
- **Option 6 - increase NI fees to align with Rol fees.**

## **Option 1 - Do Nothing, Fees Remain the Same**

### **Registration fee.**

Retaining the current fee of £113 would generate no new revenue which is not sustainable in light of the financial challenges highlighted by the Society above. The total revenue generated from registration fees over the past 5 years is £17,628.

### **Retention fee.**

Based on 537 registered pharmacies paying a fee of £155 the revenue generated by retaining this fee at its current amount would be the status quo amount of £83,235. As highlighted above this is an insufficient amount to assist the Society in delivering on its statutory functions which has led to this consultation on different fee increase options. The Society is unable to operate within its current financial income as demonstrated above and over recent annual reports. The income from the annual retention of premises fees was less than 6% of the Society's income in 2024/25.

### **Restoration fee.**

As there have been no restorations of pharmacies to the pharmacy register in the last 5 years restoration fee revenue has been nil during this period and future revenue, if the fee is increased will be negligible.

Table 2: Option 1

Option 1 – Do Nothing					
Northern Ireland	Current	Increased to	Increased Revenue per fee	Increased Annual Revenue	Overall annual Fee Revenue
	£	£	£	£	£
Registration	113	n/a	n/a	n/a	3,526 on average (based on 17, 628 over 5 years)
Retention	155	n/a	n/a	n/a	83,235*
Restoration	472 (317 penalty plus 155 retention fee)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Based on 537 registered pharmacies as at 1 January 2026

### **Option 2 - Apply a Percentage Increase Equal to the Annual Rate of Inflation since 2012**

#### **Registration Fee.**

If registration fees had been increased annually at the same rate as inflation since 2012, according to the [BoE Inflation Calculator](#)<sup>6</sup> the current fee amount of £113 for premises registration in NI would now be £174, an increase of £61 per fee. As highlighted above, on average 31 premises have been registered per year in the past 5 years, creating a potential additional annual increased revenue of £1,891 for this fee category.

#### **Retention Fee.**

If retention fees had been increased annually at the same rate as inflation since 2011, the current retention fee amount of £155 would now be £239, an increase of £84. The estimated additional annual revenue that could potentially be generated by this fee increase for 537 pharmacy premises is £45,108.

<sup>6</sup> Figure calculated using BoE Inflation Calculator up until 31/12/25 then a further estimated 3% rise for 2026.

### Restoration fee.

If restoration fees had been increased annually at the same rate as inflation, the current restoration fee amount of £472 would be £728.

As highlighted above, no premises have been restored to the register in the past 5 years, therefore the fee revenue for this category has been nil during this period and future revenue, if the fee is increased, will be minimal.

Table 3: Option 2

<b>Option 2 – Apply a % increase equal to the Annual Rate of Inflation Since 2012</b>					
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Increased to</b>	<b>Increased Revenue per fee</b>	<b>Annual Increased Revenue</b>	<b>Overall Fee Revenue</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Registration	113	174	61	<b>1,891</b>	<b>5,394</b>
Retention	155	239	84	<b>45,108*</b>	<b>128,343*</b>
Restoration	472 (£317 penalty plus £155 retention fee)	728	256	-	-

\*Based on 537 registered pharmacies as of 1 January 2026

### **Option 3 - Increase NI Fees to Align with GB Fees**

#### Registration Fee

In GB an applicant must pay 2 fees to register a pharmacy premises, an application/processing fee of £672, plus a £416 registration fee, a total of £1088.

As the Society does not collect a processing fee, in this option we have increased the NI registration fee of £113 to align with the GB registration fee only of £416. This will result in an increase of £303 per registration fee.

As highlighted above, on average 31 premises have been registered per year in the past 5 years, creating a potential additional annual increased revenue of £9,393 for this fee category.

### Retention Fee

If the current retention fee of £155 is aligned with the GB retention fee rate of £416, this is an increase of £261 per fee. The potential annual increased revenue based on 537 retention fees is £140,157.

### Restoration Fee

The cost of restoration of premises to the Register in GB varies depending on the reason for removal from the register with failure to renew registration costing the highest processing fee. See table 4 below.

In NI the equivalent restoration fee is currently £472 (£155 retention fee plus a £317 penalty as set out in the 2010 Regulations).

In this option the NI increased restoration fee of £743 is created using the GB retention fee of £416 plus the NI penalty fee of £327 (£317 uplifted by the current rate of inflation).

As highlighted above, no premises have been restored to the register in the past 5 years, therefore fee revenue for this category has been nil during this period and future revenue if the fee is increased will be negligible.

**Table 4: Example of the range of restoration fees in GB.<sup>7</sup>**

Fee	Amount (£)
<b>Application processing fee</b> after previously leaving the register voluntarily	<b>154.00</b>
<b>Application processing fee</b> after previously leaving the register due to failing to renew registration	<b>814.00</b>
<b>Re-entry fee</b> Charged to re-enter the register, following an approved application	<b>121.00</b>
<b>Resubmitted application</b> (first revision)	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Resubmitted application</b> (each further revision)	<b>55.00</b>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/pharmacies/registration-and-renewal/managing-pharmacys-registration/restoring-pharmacys-registration>

Table 5: Option 3

Option 3 – Increase NI Fees to Align with GB Fees						
Fee Type	GB Fee	NI Fee	NI Fee Increased to	Increased Revenue per Fee	Increased Annual Revenue	Overall Annual Fee revenue
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Registration	416 (Process fee of £672 not included for the purpose of this consultation)	113	416	303	9,393	12,896
Retention	416	155	416	261	140,157*	223,392*
Restoration	935 (based on failure to pay retention fee, (814, plus entry in register fee 121)	472 (retention fee of 155 plus a penalty of 317)	743 (Retention fee of £416 plus the uplifted penalty of 317 to 327)	271	-	-

\*Based on 537 registered pharmacies as at 1 January 2026

**Option 4 – Increase NI Fees to align with GB in year 1 followed by an increase equal to the rate of inflation (2%)\* over each of the following 2 years**

**Year 1: Align with GB Fees**

This option would result in an increase in revenue for the year of £9,393 for registration fees and £140,157 for retention fees.

**A total revenue increase of £149,550 though retention revenue is more certain than registration revenue.**

**Year 2: Increase equal to the rate of inflation (2%)**

This option would result in an increase in revenue on year 1 of £248 for registration fees and £4,296 for retention fees.

**A total increased revenue of £4,544.**

**Year 3: Increase equal to the rate of inflation (2%)**

This option would result in an increase in revenue on year 2 of £248 for registration fees and £4,296 for retention fees.

**A total increased revenue of £4,544.**

As highlighted above, no premises have been restored to the register in the past 5 years, therefore fee revenue for this category has been nil during this period and future revenue if the fee is increased will be negligible.

**Table 6: Option 4**

<b>Option 4 - align with GB in year 1 followed by an increase equal to the rate of inflation (2%)* over each of the following 2 years</b>				
<b><u>Fee Type</u></b>	<b><u>NI Fee</u></b>	<b><u>Year 1</u></b>	<b><u>Year 2</u></b>	<b><u>Year 3</u></b>
		<b><u>NI Fee Increased to Align with GB</u></b>	<b><u>NI Fee Increased by 2% from 1/1/2028</u></b>	<b><u>NI Fee increased by 2% from 1/1/2029</u></b>
	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>
<b><u>Registration</u></b>	<b><u>113</u></b>	<b><u>416</u></b>	<b><u>424</u></b>	<b><u>432</u></b>
<b><u>Increase Revenue Per Fee</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>303</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>
<b><u>Increased Annual Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>9,393</u></b>	<b><u>248</u></b>	<b><u>248</u></b>
<b><u>Retention</u></b>	<b><u>155</u></b>	<b><u>416</u></b>	<b><u>424</u></b>	<b><u>432</u></b>
<b><u>Increased Revenue Per Fee</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>261</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>
<b><u>Increased Annual Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>140,157</u></b>	<b><u>4,296</u></b>	<b><u>4,296</u></b>
<b><u>Restoration</u></b>	<b><u>472</u> <b><u>(155 for retention plus 317 penalty)</u></b></b>	<b><u>935</u></b>	<b><u>954</u></b>	<b><u>973</u></b>
<b><u>Increased Revenue Per Fee</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>463</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>

\* Calculated using the 2% standard bank of England inflation target rate, which is the target rate that the bank aim to achieve for each year. It is acknowledged that the actual inflation impact in these years may be higher/lower than forecast. If necessary, adjustment will be made for the 2030 fee amounts.

## **Option 5 – Increase NI Fees to the Mid-Way Point Between GB and Rol Fees**

### **Registration Fee.**

A mid-way point between the GB and Rol registration fees has been used to calculate an increase for an NI premises registration fee to £1,657.

As highlighted above, on average 31 premises have been registered per year in the past 5 years, creating a potential additional annual increased revenue of £47,864 for this fee category.

### **Retention Fee.**

A mid-way point between the GB and Rol retention fees has been used to calculate an increase for the NI premises retention fee to £1138. The estimated additional revenue that could potentially be generated by this increase is £527,871.

### **Restoration fee.**

In this option, the mid-way point for the retention fee of £1138 is used, plus a penalty of £327 (£317 uplifted by the current rate of inflation) to calculate a total NI restoration fee of £1465. This follows the process for calculating a restoration fee as set out in the relevant legislation.

As highlighted above, no premises have been restored to the register in the past 5 years, fee revenue for this category has been nil during this period and future revenue if the fee is increased will be negligible.

**Table 7: Option 5**

<b>Option 5 – Increase NI Fees to Mid-Way point between GB and ROI fees</b>					
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Increased to mid-point</b>	<b>Increased Revenue per fee</b>	<b>Increased Annual Revenue</b>	<b>Overall Annual Fee revenue</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Registration	113	1,657	1,544	47,864	51,367
Retention	155	1,138	983	527,871*	611,106*
Restoration	472 (155 retention fee plus £317 penalty)	1,465 (mid-way retention fee of 1,138 plus uplifted penalty of 327)	993	-	-

\*Based on 537 registered pharmacies as at 1 January 2026

## **Option 6 - Increase NI Fees to Align with Rol Fees**

### **Registration Fee**

Aligning the registration fee NI to the Rol fee of \*£2898 (€3325)<sup>8</sup>, is an increase of £2,785 per fee.

As highlighted above, on average 31 premises have been registered per year in the past 5 years, creating a potential additional annual increased revenue of £86,335 for this fee category.

### **Retention Fee**

The current Premises Retention Fees in Rol is \*£1861 (€2135). If the current retention fee in NI of £155 was increased to £1861, (a difference of £1,706), the estimated increase in revenue generated for the Society by this fee, based on 537 retention fees being paid, would be £916,122.

### **Restoration Fee**

Depending on the reason for removal from the register the Rol current fee for application received before 1 April 2027 is £2644 plus a registration fee of £2,898 making this a total amount of £5,542.

<sup>8</sup> <https://markets.ft.com/data/currencies>

If an application for restoration received within 6 months of the date when an unpaid fee became due, a fee of £1058 (€1228) is also payable in addition to a registration fee of £2898 making this a total amount due of £3,956.

**In this option the NI Restoration fee is calculated in line with NI legislation. Using the Rol retention fee of £1861 plus the NI penalty fee of £327 (£317 uplifted by the current rate of inflation) giving a total fee of £2188.**

As highlighted above, negligible revenue is estimated as a result of an increase in this fee category as no premises have been restored to the register in the past 5 years.

\*Please note currency conversion in this option from Euros to Sterling date is 21 January 2026

**Table 8: Option 6**

<b>Option 6 – Increase NI Fees to Align with Rol Fees</b>						
<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Current Rol Fee</b>	<b>NI Fee</b>	<b>Fee increased to</b>	<b>Increased Revenue per Fee</b>	<b>Increased Annual Revenue</b>	<b>Overall Annual Fee revenue</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Registration	2,898	113	2,898	2,785	<b>86,335</b>	89,838
Retention	1,861	155	1,861	1,706	<b>916,122*</b>	999,357*
Restoration	<b><u>5,542</u></b>  <b><u>3,956 reduced where application for restoration received within 6 months of the date when an unpaid fee became due</u></b>	472 (155 retention fee plus uplifted penalty of 327)	2,188 (using 1861 retention fee plus uplifted penalty of 327)	1,716	-	-
TOTAL increase Revenue					<b>1,002,457</b>	

\*Based on 537 registered pharmacies as at 1 January 2026

**Table 9: examples of the range of restoration fees in ROI dependent on date application received<sup>9</sup>.**

<b>Fee for restoration of the registration of a retail pharmacy business in ROI</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Application received before 1 April 2027	€3069/£2644 <sup>10</sup>
Application received between 1 April 2027 and 31 March 2028 (inclusive)	€3218/£2772
Application received after 31 March 2028	€3367/£2900
<b>Fee if application for restoration is made within six months of the date when the unpaid fee became due, and which fee shall be payable in addition to the unpaid fee</b>	
Application received before 1 April 2027	€1228/£1058
Application received between 1 April 2027 and 31 March 2028 (inclusive)	€1287/£1109
Application received after 31 March 2028	€1347/£1160

## 7. Summary of Options

The following tables show: increased NI Premises Fees; increased annual revenue per registration and retention fees; and total increased annual revenue for both registration and retention fees combined. For options which increase fees for 1 year, an overall increased fee revenue (current fee plus increased fee revenue) is also shown.

*(See relevant tables above for a detailed breakdown of each option)*

*The figures used below have been calculated on the basis that in the past 5 years there has been an average of 31 new premises registrations per year, no restoration fees paid and, as of January 2026, there are 537 registered pharmacy premises subject to retention fees. The current fees in NI are: £113 for Registration, £155 for Retention and £472 for Restoration.*

**OPTION 1: DO NOTHING** – Fees and revenue remain unchanged.

**OPTION 2: APPLY THE ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION SINCE 2012** – If the annual rate of inflation (as per [BoE Inflation Calculator](#)) had been applied to each fee from 2012 to 2025, the figure would have increased as follows:

	<b>Current NI fee</b>	<b>NI fee increased to</b>	<b>Increased revenue per fee</b>	<b>Annual increased revenue</b>	<b>Overall increased fee revenue</b>
<b>Registration</b>	113	174	61	1,891	5,394
<b>Retention</b>	155	239	84	45,108	128,343
<b>Restoration</b>	472	728	256	-	-
<b>Total increased annual revenue</b>				46,999	133,737

<sup>9</sup> [PSI Fees Rules from 01 April 2026](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Currency convertor as on 4 February 2026](#)

**OPTION 3 - INCREASE NI FEES TO ALIGN WITH GB FEES**

	Current NI fee	Current GB fee	NI fee increased to	Increased revenue per fee	Annual increased revenue	Overall increased fee revenue
<b>Registration</b>	113	416	416	303	9,393	12,896
<b>Retention</b>	155	416	416	261	140,157	223,392
<b>Restoration</b>	472	935	743*	271	-	-
<b>Total increased annual revenue</b>					149,550	236,288

\* In NI the current restoration fee is £472 (£155 retention fee plus a £317 penalty as set out in the 2010 Regulations). In this option the NI increased restoration fee amount of £743 is created using the GB retention fee of £416 plus the NI penalty fee of £327 (£317 uplifted by the current rate of inflation).

**OPTION 4 – INCREASE NI FEES TO ALIGN WITH GB IN YEAR 1 FOLLOWED BY AN INCREASE EQUAL TO THE RATE OF INFLATION (2%)\* OVER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING 2 YEARS**

	Current NI fee	Year 1	Annual increased revenue	Year 2	Annual increased revenue	Year 3	Annual increased revenue
<b>Registration</b>	113	416	9,393	424	248	432	248
<b>Retention</b>	155	416	140,157	424	4,296	432	4,296
<b>Restoration</b>	472	935	-	954	-	973	-
<b>Total increased annual revenue</b>			149,550		4,544		4,544

\* Calculated using the 2% standard bank of England inflation target rate, which is the target rate that the bank aim to achieve for each year. It is acknowledged that the actual inflation impact in these years may be higher/lower than forecast. If necessary, adjustment will be made for the 2030 fee amounts.

**OPTION 5 – INCREASE NI FEES TO MID-WAY POINT BETWEEN GB AND ROI FEES**

	Current NI fee	Increased to mid-point	Increased revenue per fee	Annual increased revenue	Overall increased fee revenue
<b>Registration</b>	113	1,657	1,544	47,864	51,367
<b>Retention</b>	155	1,138	983	527,871	611,106
<b>Restoration</b>	472	1,465	993	-	-
<b>Total increased annual revenue</b>				575,735	662,473

**OPTION 6 - INCREASE NI FEES TO ALIGN WITH ROI FEES**

	Current NI fee	Current Rol fee	NI fee increased to	Increased revenue per fee	Increased annual revenue	Overall increased fee revenue
<b>Registration</b>	113	2,898	2,898	2,785	86,335	89,838
<b>Retention</b>	155	1,861	1,861	1,706	916,122	999,357
<b>Restoration</b>	472	5,542	2188*	1,716	-	-
<b>Total increased annual revenue</b>					1,002,457	1,089,195

\* Calculated using £1,861 retention fee plus uplifted penalty of 327

## **7. Proposals Related to Fees Administration**

**Proposal 1:** Your views are sought on a proposal to introduce a change to the method of notification of pharmacy premises fees from post, to having the option to receive notification via post or email. This would see a change from the existing notification system which is by post only to having the option to receive notification either via post or email. If this proposal is agreed, an amendment will be required to 2010 Regulations to facilitate the email option.

**Proposal 2:** Your views are also sought on a proposal to enable retention fees to be collected in instalments by Direct Debit at intervals to be specified by the Society in its payment request notification. This is a proposed change to the existing administrative payment policy on the method of collection of fees to allow pharmacies the option to pay the annual retention fee in instalments agreed with the Society, via Direct Debit, which may assist pharmacists by spreading the cost of the annual retention fee throughout the year. No legislative amendment is required to introduce this change.

## **8. Legislative Changes Required**

Following analysis of the consultation responses, and if the preferred option is to increase the Premises Fees, the Department will draft a NI Statutory Rule (SR) to amend The Medicines (Pharmacies) (Applications for Registration and Fees) Regulations (NI) 2010 accordingly, to reflect the agreed increase in fees. The SR will be subject to the negative resolution legislative process.

The retention fee process opens in early December with completion by 31 December therefore the legislation will need to be in operation before then, to allow for an increase in Premises Fees to commence from 1 January 2027.

## **9. Consultation Process**

The Department is seeking your views on the proposals contained within this consultation document. The Department acknowledges that the proposals set out in this consultation document will have a direct impact on community pharmacy sector and it recognises the need to keep both the business sector and representative bodies informed to allow them the opportunity to comment on these policy proposals.

This consultation is available on the Department's website at: [www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations) and invites answers to a number of questions in relation to the proposals, including in relation to whether an increase to Premises Fees is reasonable in the context of the Pharmaceutical Society for Northern Ireland's need to generate additional income in order to carry out its statutory functions. Other questions are posed throughout the document.

If you wish to comment on the proposals contained within this consultation, please complete the Citizen Space online response questionnaire using the link below:

LINK

The proposal to increase pharmacy Premises Fees has been subject to an interim equality impact screening in line with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and this interim screening document is available alongside this consultation on the Department's website. It would be the intention, however, to rescreen the policy and consideration given as to whether a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is required once this public consultation has been completed and a preferred charging regime, if any, is identified.

The Department acknowledges that there may be an impact on pharmacy businesses due to an increase in pharmacy Premises Fees. The Department is obligated to complete a Regulatory Impact Assessment where this is deemed appropriate. In order to do this effectively, this consultation will provide an opportunity to gather direct evidence on the impact that an increase in pharmacy Premises Fees will have on businesses.

The Department has completed a Rural Needs screening exercise and has concluded that there may be an impact on pharmacy businesses as a result of an increase in pharmacy Premises Fees, particularly for smaller businesses and those located in rural areas. We welcome views, particularly from those pharmacies in rural areas on the impact that an increase in pharmacy Premises Fees will have on their business. The evidence gathered as a result of the consultation will be used to further inform the Rural Impact Assessment.

A data protection impact assessment screening has also been carried out and a full data protection impact assessment is not considered necessary.

Article 2 of the Windsor Framework has been considered, and it is not envisaged that the policy will engage a right (or equality of opportunity protection) included in the relevant part of the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

All of the above screening documents can be found [here](#).

This consultation is targeted at all registered pharmacies in Northern Ireland and those pharmacy representative bodies with an interest in the consultation proposals. Should you require the response questionnaire in an alternative format please request this by email to be input ahead of the closing date above. Email responses should be sent to [insert mailbox address].

The consultation will run for 8 weeks, starting 8 June 2026 and closing 3 August 2026.

## **10. Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses**

For this consultation, we may publish all responses except for those where a respondent indicates that they are an individual acting in a private capacity. Therefore all responses from pharmacy businesses and pharmacy representative bodies will be published. We will remove email addresses and telephone numbers from these responses; but apart from this, we will publish them in full. For more information about what we do with personal data please see our [consultation privacy notice](#).

Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may also be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however, all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.