



Department of  
**Health**

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# PHARMACY TECHNICIAN REGULATION & DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

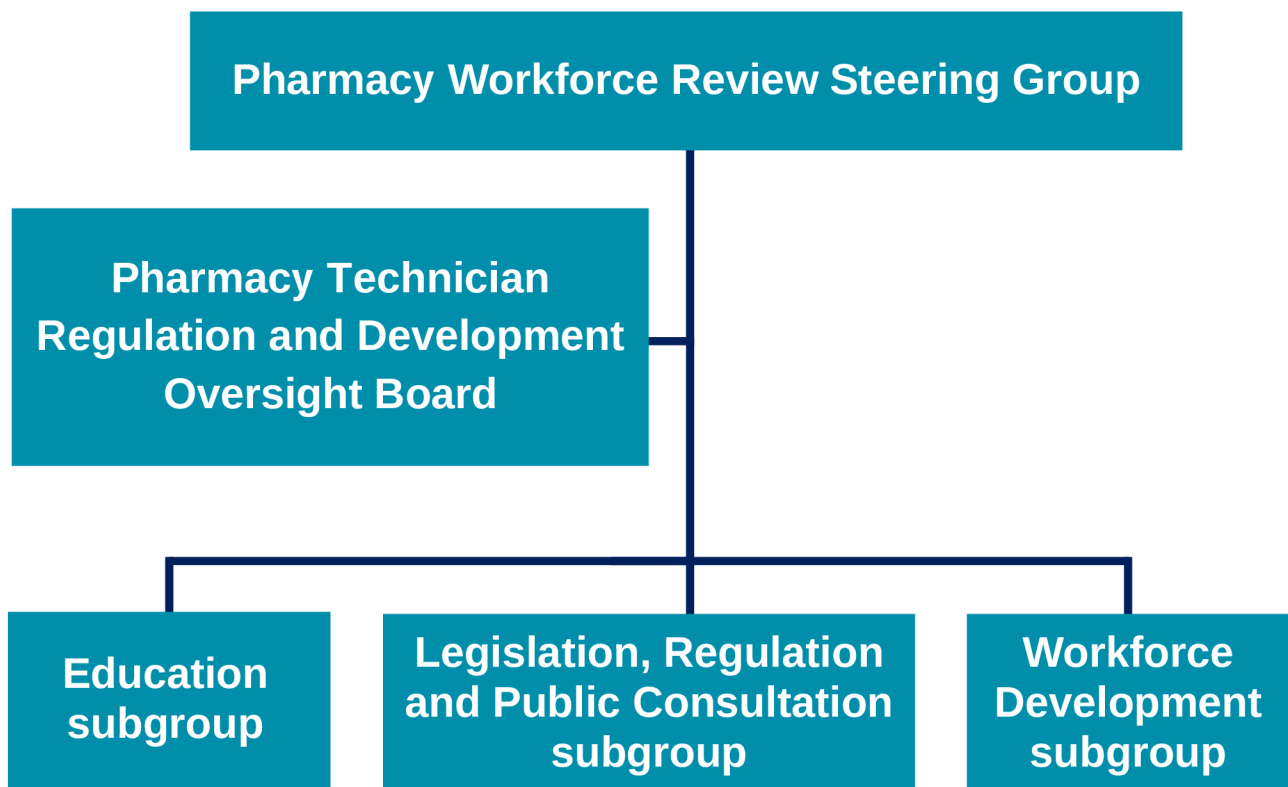
NEWSLETTER  
JUNE 2026



## **BENEFITS FOR PHARMACY**

Progressing the registration and regulation of pharmacy technicians as healthcare professionals in their own right will support the transformation of pharmacy services by optimising skill mix and will help to maintain public safety and confidence in the pharmacy profession.

## **PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE**



## DETAILS OF OVERSIGHT BOARD ROLE AND OBJECTIVES

A Pharmacy Technician Regulation and Development (PTRD) Oversight Board and project infrastructure has been established to introduce the necessary changes to policy and legislation to enable the regulation and development of pharmacy technicians in Northern Ireland.

### CO-CHAIRS

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Professor Cathy Harrison and Canice Ward, Chief Executive Officer, Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.



*Professor Cathy Harrison,  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer,  
Department of Health*



*Canice Ward,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
PSNI*

## PROJECT UPDATE

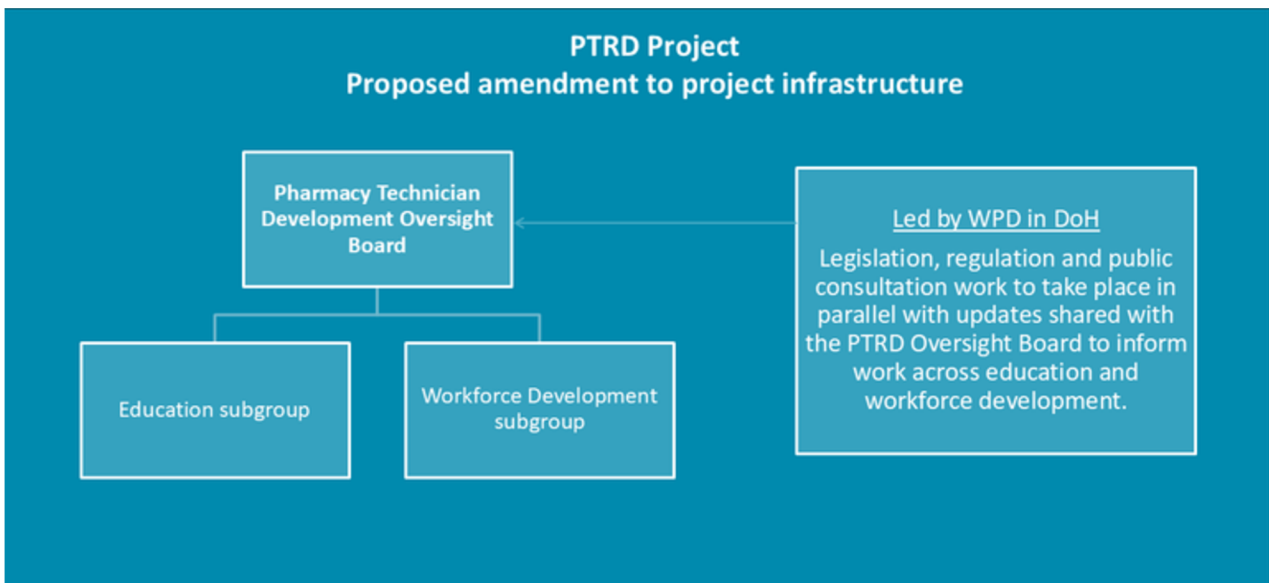
A letter was issued by the co-chairs of the PTRD Oversight Board in October 2025 advising that the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (the Society) had written to the Department to raise concerns regarding its financial sustainability. The Society further advised that, with regret, its input to the PTRD project had to be paused at that time.

At the Society's Annual General Meeting on 16 October 2025, attendees were informed that the Health Minister had asked the Department to engage formally with the Society to explore options for the future sustainability of pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland. This work is being led by the Department in partnership with the Society and will culminate in a Departmental consultation on future models of regulation for the pharmacy profession, including both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

At the March meeting of the PTRD Oversight Board, it was agreed that the Board would continue to directly oversee the work of the Education Subgroup, which is progressing work to ensure the availability of appropriate levels of education for Pharmacy Technicians to meet projected workforce demands. The Board will also continue to oversee the Workforce Development Subgroup, which is developing a career progression pathway for Pharmacy Technicians across all sectors of practice.

In light of the changes outlined above, it was recognised that a new approach to legislation, regulation and public consultation is required. This work will now be led by the Department's Workforce Policy Directorate, which will provide regular progress updates to the Oversight Board to help inform the ongoing work relating to education and workforce development.

To support consideration of this revised approach within the current context, a PTRD Oversight Board workshop has been scheduled for June 2026. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share perspectives, reflect on progress and learning to date, and help shape the next phase of the programme, with a particular focus on education, training, and workforce development.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Dear colleagues,

We are writing to provide an update on the current position regarding the regulation and registration of Pharmacy Technicians in Northern Ireland.

At the outset, we wish to be clear that the current position is not where we want to be. We recognise that the absence of fully established regulatory arrangements for Pharmacy Technicians does not reflect our ambition for the profession or the important role Pharmacy Technicians play within the health and social care system.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (the Society) has advised that, due to financial pressures, regrettably its input to the Pharmacy Technician Regulation and Development (PTRD) project work has had to be paused at this time. This is a disappointing development for the workforce and for all involved in progressing this important work.

The Department is continuing to engage formally with the Society to explore options to ensure the future sustainability of pharmacy regulation in Northern Ireland. This work is being taken forward in partnership and will culminate in a Departmental consultation in 2026 on future models of regulation for the pharmacy profession, encompassing both Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians.

Notwithstanding these challenges, we want to reaffirm our strong commitment to progressing both the development and regulation of Pharmacy Technicians as an integral part of the pharmacy workforce. Pharmacy Technicians are highly skilled and make a significant contribution to medicines optimisation, service delivery, and patient care across all sectors. Securing appropriate recognition through regulation remains a key priority.

To support the transition to a revised approach for the PTRD project, and to take stock of progress to date, a PTRD Oversight Board workshop has been scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026. This will provide an important opportunity for stakeholders to share perspectives, reflect on learning, and help shape the next phase of the programme, with a particular focus on education, training, and workforce development.

In closing, while we recognise that progress has not been as anticipated. The Department and the Society remain firmly committed to delivering sustainable and effective arrangements for the regulation and registration of Pharmacy Technicians. This is essential to support the future pharmacy workforce and to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality, safe care for the population of Northern Ireland.

Further updates will be provided as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Cathy Harrison  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer  
Northern Ireland



Canice Ward  
Chief Executive Officer  
Pharmaceutical Society NI

# CONTACT

## **DoH website**

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/pharmacy-workforce-review-2020>

## **Email address contact for queries**

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