



Impact Report 2022



PHARMACIST
SUPPORT

Contents



Our Impact & Achievements

Welcome	4 - 5
Why we exist	6 - 7
Our Values	10 - 11
Why our support is needed	12 - 13
How we help	14 - 17
2022 achievements and impact	20 - 31
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	32 - 33
Our commitment to environmental sustainability	34
We can't do it alone	35 - 39
What's next	40 - 41



Welcome

2022 proved to be a pivotal year for Pharmacist Support. As we move into the post-pandemic era, we have taken the learnings from the challenging times our profession faced, strengthened our existing relationships with professional bodies and continued to build connections that will both support and enhance the services we offer. Pharmacists continue to play a crucial role in meeting the demands of a stretched NHS and remain a key 'face to face' point of contact for patients. It is recognised that our pharmacy family's wellbeing is linked to the safety of patients and, as our Workplace Wellbeing Survey held jointly with the RPS indicated, there is still much that could be done to support this.

As Trustees we are immensely proud of the support that the charity has provided during 2022 and how the charity has used the challenging circumstances of the last 2 years to adapt and grow. As examples, individuals are now able to apply for financial assistance directly through the website which expedites the overall process, and the number of beneficiaries receiving support from our counselling service has tripled compared to 2021; an increase which is likely to continue during 2023. As a board we have continued to evolve and, following some end of term departures, we welcomed 5 new trustees that have strengthened our skill base and brought diversity as well as refreshing new insights to our team. (A 6th new trustee also began his term in January 2023.)

This year the board took the opportunity to consider the question around Pharmacy Technicians potentially becoming part of our beneficiary pool in the future. This is not a new consideration for the charity, but given significant planned changes that will impact the role of the Pharmacist and further increase in the professional autonomy of the Pharmacy Technician, we felt it appropriate to revisit this question at this time. Our next steps will be guided by and aligned to the outcome of the UK Commission's report on the future for Pharmacy Professional Leadership including that of the prospective Pharmacy Leadership Council.

In the spirit of good governance, we took the opportunity this year to review our investment manager, Investec. An independent partner reviewed the performance of our investments under Investec and we were reassured that they were aligned with our strategy. This review aligned well with our discussions about the charity's approach to responsible investment and we have now retained Investec as our investment managers and divested from all producers of fossil fuels.

Our investment portfolio exists to fund the day-to-day operational costs of the charity and combined with our fundraising efforts, funds the services and financial assistance we deliver. We want to ensure we will always be there for our beneficiaries, so our objective is to at least maintain the portfolio's real term value after management expenses. In common with many charities this has been a real challenge over the last 12 months, and we recognised that our fundraising strategy needed to evolve. Building on our approach which focuses on marketing, communication and partnership, we will focus on enabling individuals and organisations to support us more easily. We will do this by creating new fundraising campaigns, redeveloping our fundraising pack and developing a new corporate supporter pack. We believe this will help us meet a fundraising goal of raising £1m over the next 4 years, so the real term value of our portfolio enables Pharmacist Support to exist in perpetuity.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your interest in the charity and we hope we can count on your continued support in the future.

Esther Sadler-Williams

Chair of Trustees
Pharmacist Support

Anita Cawley

Vice-Chair of Trustees
Pharmacist Support

Why we exist

Pharmacist Support champions the wellbeing of our pharmacy family. Our vision is that no one in our pharmacy family will face challenging times without us by their side!

As the profession's independent, trusted charity, we exist to support the health and wellbeing of our pharmacy family by providing a wide variety of support services to current and former pharmacists and their families as well as students and trainees who are working towards registration as a pharmacist. Our support aims to meet their wellbeing needs, whether those be financial, physical, mental or social.

The charity's connection to the profession is deep. Existing as an independent charity since 2006, we were initially established by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain in 1841, and thus we have spent more than 180 years supporting members of our pharmacy family through difficult times. We've evolved from a small benevolent fund, mainly providing financial assistance to those in the profession who had fallen on hard times, into a modern-day independent charity. Today, as well as providing monetary support, we are focused on championing the wellbeing of our pharmacy family through the provision of a wide range of confidential services. We continue to be responsive and proactive, adapting to the profession's needs, and we listen carefully to individuals across the profession to understand and empathise with the issues affecting pharmacy today.



Our legal Objects define 'our pharmacy family' and are specifically restricted to the relief of financial need or other distress, and the advancement of general health and wellbeing of:

- any individual whose name is or ever has been on the Register of Pharmacists maintained by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) (formerly maintained by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain), and their dependents;
- any Trainees* in Great Britain; or
- any Pharmacy Students** in Great Britain.

We're proud to be able to support people from such a caring profession, and we'll never give up on what we like to call our pharmacy 'family'!

* A Trainee is defined as a person in Great Britain who has successfully completed a course accredited by the GPhC, is eligible to enter training to become a pharmacist, and intends to seek registration as a pharmacist.

** A Pharmacy Student is defined as a person undertaking a GPhC accredited course in Great Britain leading to eligibility to enter accredited foundation training and register as a pharmacist.

CASE STUDY

“I genuinely don’t know if I would be sitting here writing this if it wasn’t for the counselling sessions and financial support”

Imani* is an overseas qualified pharmacist enrolled at one of the universities offering the Overseas Pharmacists Assessment Programme (OSPAP) course in the UK. Imani shares their story and experience of using the Pharmacist Support services.

“Outside the UK, apart from working as a licensed pharmacist in a busy community pharmacy, I’ve worked in the pharmaceutical sales industry and the health insurance industry. During one of my monthly virtual meetings with my RPS mentor, I broke down crying when she asked how I was coping with my OSPAP course, my part time job at a hospital pharmacy and my personal life. I wasn’t attending lectures, I had stopped going in to work and did not want to leave my bed. It was also the first time in my life when I was living by myself and wouldn’t see anyone for days.

“I was clearly not managing stress very well and looked like I needed professional help. My RPS mentor asked me to look into counselling sessions but, being a student, I wasn’t making enough money to

afford therapy and NHS services had a long waiting list. My mentor suggested I approach Pharmacist Support since they were offering free counselling sessions to people working and studying in pharmacy.

“I was a bit hesitant at first since, in my experience, most organisations aren’t aware that OSPAP students are just like MPharm students. However, I was desperate for help and decided to contact the charity. Accessing support from Pharmacist Support was straight forward. Their website had all the information I needed to access the counselling service. After giving my availability, I was matched with a counsellor and started my sessions within a few weeks. The counselling sessions were extremely focused and helped me deal with my problems at hand.



“My counsellor created a safe space for me where I could talk to her and come up with a solution for everything by myself. It was a very cathartic experience. I felt in control of my own life for the first time and felt confident to live my life in the way I wanted. I cannot put into words how much the weekly sessions have helped me. My thought process has changed. I am more positive, I am prioritising myself, I am making a conscious effort to look after my mental health and to assess my emotions instead of ignoring them and letting them build up as I used to before.

“Additionally, I was going through a difficult time in my personal life and was dependent on someone financially who was affecting my mental wellbeing. I wanted to remove

that person from my life but was financially tied to them. Through their Financial Assistance service, Pharmacist Support helped me pay a month’s worth of rent so I could start my foundation training year without worrying about where to live. It gave me the peace of mind that I needed to start a new chapter of my life.

“I genuinely don’t know if I would be sitting here writing this if it wasn’t for the counselling sessions and financial support. It’s true to say I was in a dark place and didn’t see a way out. I will be forever grateful to Pharmacist Support for being there in my time of need”.

*We have used a pseudonym to protect Imani’s identity.



Our values

Wellbeing is embedded into everyday activities at Pharmacist Support. Our services put people first, create positive impact and deliver on our aspiration as a charity for an empowered and resilient pharmacy workforce.

As a charity, our values are important to us and guide the way we work. If and when a beneficiary contacts us for support, they can expect to be treated in a compassionate and empathetic way.

People First

We are **compassionate**.
We **listen**. We are **empathetic**.
We bring people **together**.



Empowerment

We make **good things** happen.
We encourage and build **resilience**.
We create **positive** impact.



Positivity

We believe in **better**.
We champion our pharmacy **family**.
We **never** give up.



Fairness

We are **non-judgemental**.
We are **independent**.
We work **with integrity**.



Why our support is needed

To ensure that our support meets the needs of those we are here to help, each year we collaborate with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to carry out an annual Workforce Wellbeing Survey. A total of 1,496 responses were received from those working within pharmacy, with 1,295 of those responding within our beneficiary pool (89%). Whilst this is a snapshot, it provides a good indication of the issues facing the pharmacy workforce and our beneficiaries.



88%

OF ALL RESPONDENTS

at high risk of burnout.*



96%

OF RESPONDENTS

working in community pharmacy at high risk of burnout.*



37%

OF RESPONDENTS

stated that their mental health was poor or very poor.

The top issues identified as having a negative impact on respondents' mental health and wellbeing in the last year were:

70%

Inadequate staffing

53%

Lack of work-life balance

48%

Lack of protected learning time

47%

Lack of colleague or senior support

42%

Long working hours

41%

Lack of rest breaks



17%

OF RESPONDENTS

reported that they had taken time off work or study in the past year due to the impact of their work on their mental health and wellbeing; 27% had wanted to take time-off but had not felt able to.



16%

OF RESPONDENTS

were concerned about addiction or addictive behaviours including increased alcohol consumption, drug use, an unhealthy relationship with food, and gambling, but none had sought support.

* as measured by the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti, 2010), a standardised tool for measuring burnout in healthcare professionals.



Read the full report of our joint 2022 workforce wellbeing survey findings.

How we help

Throughout our history it has been critical that we listen to the profession to evolve our services. We continue to develop and adjust our services to meet the changing needs of the profession through seeking regular feedback from not only our beneficiaries but the wider profession, which in turn informs any developments to our services. This process has designed the suite of services we offer today.



Information & Enquiries



Financial Assistance



Counselling & Peer Support



Specialist Advice



Wardley Wellbeing Service



Addiction Support



Counselling & Peer Support

Through our counselling service, we provide timely access to direct psychological support for those who are experiencing mental health issues. The counsellors are there to help our beneficiaries cope with a variety of issues. Counselling sessions can be accessed via phone, online or face-to-face and are available in several different languages including Urdu, Punjabi, and Hindi. The counselling service sits alongside the well-established Listening Friends service. Our Listening Friends service provides the opportunity to speak over the phone and in confidence to a trained volunteer pharmacist who understands the pressures of the profession and can provide a listening ear.



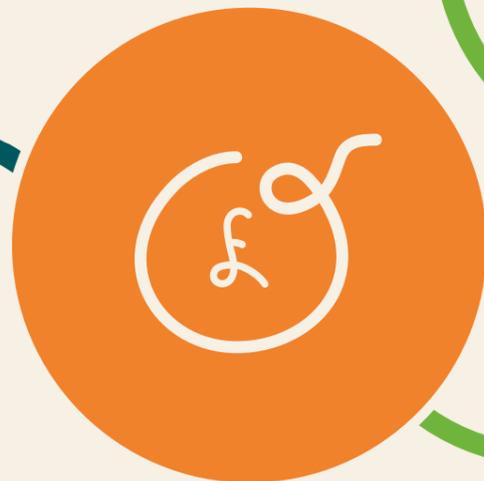
Information and Enquiries

We provide a host of information and resources on our website covering a range of topics, including mental health and wellbeing, physical health, family and personal life, finances and work life. In each section we provide guidance, resources and tips on topics ranging from managing stress and anxiety, help with sleep, and coping with bereavement or bullying, right through to building positive workplace relationships. The enquiries part of the service is delivered by team members with expert knowledge of the sector and is open every weekday (except Bank Holidays) between 9am and 5pm.



Specialist Advice

The Charity partners with Citizens Advice Manchester to provide the specialist advice service. This accelerates beneficiary access to advisors for tailored high-quality advice and information on employment, welfare benefits, debt, housing issues and immigration.



Financial Assistance

We offer financial support to those experiencing financial difficulty. For example, we can help with a one-off cost linked to an unexpected bill or minor household repair or support those who are struggling on a reduced income. Once a year the charity opens its national bursary scheme to all fully accredited pharmacy schools in Great Britain. Bursaries of between £3,000 and £5,000 are awarded to help MPharm students entering their final year of study. To apply, students must demonstrate financial hardship as a result of unexpected or life changing events outside of the applicant's control; outstanding or exceptional qualities to overcome an ongoing adversity, and an expectation by the applicant's school of pharmacy that they will make a positive contribution to pharmacy in Great Britain.



Addiction Support

Our addiction support assists and supports individuals and their families experiencing problems with a range of dependency issues including alcohol, drugs, gambling, and eating disorders. This service provides access to a fully qualified addiction specialist, and we can facilitate and support access to residential treatment where appropriate. We provide ongoing support through an 'Addiction Recovery Group' comprising a small group of pharmacists who have benefited from this service and are in advanced long-term recovery. In December 2022, we launched a pilot for a peer support service that will run to September 2023. This pilot service offers those who may be uncertain about contacting the addiction support helpline, the option, prior to talking to a qualified addiction specialist, to speak anonymously and in confidence with one of our trained pharmacist volunteers from the 'Addiction Recovery Group' who have been through addiction themselves.



Wardley Wellbeing Service

The Wardley Wellbeing service provides evidence-based, practical information and guidance on wellbeing. We provide a range of free resources including videos, workshops and printable posters on topics such as managing stress, anxiety and developing skills such as assertiveness, resilience and time management. Our Wellbeing Learning Platform, launched in 2021, enables individuals to access online learning related to wellbeing.

CASE STUDY

“I am in an incredibly good position in my life which would have been markedly more difficult to achieve without this bursary.”

Natasha was a student pharmacist studying at Liverpool John Moores University when she received a bursary from the charity. Natasha shares how receiving this financial support positively impacted her.

“I have been financially independent since I moved out of home at 18, I am now 24. During these years there have been times when I have been completely homeless, having to move in with amazing friends who had the heart to take me in when I was at my lowest. Alongside not having a place to call home, I had to work multiple jobs to be able to afford and put myself through university.

In 2017 I was accepted into Liverpool John Moores University and after explaining the situation I was in, I wasn't eligible for extra funding. Meaning I had to continue to work a part-time job alongside my studies to keep a roof over my head and pay the bills. Doing this caused my disability, chronic fatigue syndrome, to badly relapse. Flare-ups can leave me collapsing whilst I am at work or I am bed-bound for days, two things I couldn't afford to happen as I needed to work to live.

In my second year of university, my friends and I were targets of a brutal attack outside of my flat. Not only was I hospitalised, but I suffered for two weeks with a concussion unable to work or attend university. I was also petrified to leave my flat after dark which sent my wellbeing into a downward spiral. Even though this was all during exam season, I managed to pass all my exams and come out of second year with a first. This year taught me I am a very resilient person and no matter what I am going through, I will keep doing the right things to steer my career in the right direction.

With the support from my friends and university tutors, I was encouraged to apply for the Pharmacist Support Bursary. After being turned down for university funding through my academia, I had limited hopes about anything coming from the application.

To me, the Pharmacist Support bursary means an active facilitation of the future pharmacist workforce. The bursary assists in providing a level playing field for students who have had a more challenging route to achieving their pharmacy degree. I received the bursary in my final year which provided stability both inside and outside of university. I was able to reduce my hours at work which had a positive impact on my wellbeing and made sure I was able to get my disability into a more manageable position. I was able to attend all university classes and allow more time for revision. By providing me with financial stability, I was able to achieve what I wanted in my ORIEL exam and accept a trainee pharmacist position at Leeds Hospital which was my 1st choice in ORIEL. I also achieved a 1st class masters in pharmacy.

Receiving the bursary also meant I could afford to start wearing contact lenses, improving the quality of my life in all aspects. I was previously wearing out-of-date prescription glasses because I couldn't afford to update them, which meant I had to strain to see and in turn, gave me constant headaches. These have now subsided as I was able to afford my new prescription. Another part of my life the bursary has helped me with is that I am now able to afford driving lessons, which will open opportunities throughout my career, and when I make the move to Leeds in the following months, the bursary will facilitate the logistics of moving across the country and setting up there.

I am in an incredibly good position in my life which would have been markedly more difficult to achieve without the financial support from the charity. This bursary has been life changing!”



Summary of 2022 achievement and impact



One of eight charities recognised at the 2022 Association of Charitable Organisations Annual Awards.



49% increase in sign-ups to our annual ACTNow wellbeing campaigns.



911 counselling sessions funded during 2022, a

214%

increase compared to 2021.

44%

increase in the number of grants awarded compared to 2021, with

114 GRANTS AWARDED

TOTALLING

£107,901

during 2022.



100%
SATISFACTION

with the charity's services according to respondents of the charity's services survey with **75% of respondents very satisfied** and **25% of respondents satisfied** with the service received.

50

applications received for the charity's student bursary with

£27k

awarded to

SEVEN

applicants.



Increased awareness of the charity, with

70%

of student, trainee and pharmacist respondents to our joint workforce wellbeing survey with the RPS saying that they were aware of Pharmacist Support.



Over 2,000 new likes/followers on social media.



36% increase in the value of our corporate donations.



OF RESPONDENTS TO THE CHARITY'S SERVICES SURVEY

stated that they felt they could not access the support they needed elsewhere.



OF RESPONDENTS TO THE CHARITY'S SERVICES SURVEY

stated that the service had a positive impact on their level of knowledge.



CASE STUDY

“I felt a mental and emotional block with my work situation and concerned about future career opportunities. I felt extremely stuck.”



Chi is a pharmacist currently working as a university lecturer. After COVID challenged his mental health, making him feel anxiety over his future, he decided to contact Pharmacist Support.

“I was fortunate enough to do a PhD in clinical pharmacy and in August 2016 began my career as a lecturer in pharmacy. Everything was going very well until 2020 when COVID hit. Having to push all the in-person sessions into just a few weeks because of the imminent lockdown and implement the many changes to initial education and training (IET), my anxiety was significantly heightened. I managed to put on a brave face and continued as normal for as long as I could as I knew everyone was in the same position. During lockdown I decided to stay in Birmingham by myself, which ended up in me feeling deeply isolated. January 2022 came around and I just could not cope any longer. I felt a mental and emotional block with my work situation and concerned about future career opportunities. I felt extremely stuck.

“After contacting the relevant support services, I decided to seek emergency support to protect my mental health and decided to take some time off work. In February, with the encouragement of my local mental health team, I plucked up the courage to ask Pharmacist Support for extra help.

“My initial thoughts were ‘Surely the support available would just be for those pharmacists working in hospital or community pharmacies’. However, when I reached out, a member of the Pharmacist Support team contacted me and provided me with great tailored advice. They also put me in touch with a Listening Friend – someone who may not understand all my situation, but having worked in an academic environment themselves, was able to offer a listening ear.”

Strategic objective

Raise awareness of Pharmacist Support.

Why? So that more potential beneficiaries are aware of who we are and what we do - enabling more people within our pharmacy family to seek support.

What we achieved during 2022

Building on the last two years, we continued to focus on raising awareness and developing strong partner relationships to increase our reach. We continued to adopt a coordinated approach to our marketing and communications activities, using a mix of promotional tools such as PR, social media, digital marketing, direct marketing, events, and partnerships to reach our specific audiences with targeted information. Towards the end of the year, we focused our activity on highlighting the support available via the charity and elsewhere in the face of the cost of living crisis. We provided information on managing energy bills, money management and self-care and showcased the support available via the charity.

2022 saw us further utilise our partner networks to reach, interact and engage with our pharmacy family, attending a variety of events and delivering several face-to-face and online presentations

and workshops. Events attended included the Clinical Pharmacy Congress and Pharmacy Show, at which we held charity partner status. Across these two events thousands of people had the opportunity to find out more about the charity by visiting our stand or attending one of our wellbeing focused presentations. At the Pharmacy Show we also hosted a panel chat with representatives from Teva UK and the Pharmacists' Defence Association (PDA) focused on workplace culture and wellbeing.

In November 2022 we attended the RPS conference which had a dedicated Pharmacist Support wellbeing zone where we were able to showcase our wellbeing support and deliver wellbeing focused activity including breathing workshops. We also presented a new Mental Health Champion Award at the Day Lewis Conference and Awards. Recognising that not everyone was able to attend the face-to-face events

held across the year, we delivered several online presentations and workshops, the most successful being wellbeing workshops held online in conjunction with the PDA.

We continued to invest in digital development, completing phase two of the charity's new website, that saw the integration of our wellbeing hub into the main site. The website is now a 'one stop shop' of information and resources which can be accessed 24/7. Significant developments in our online information and signposting, have enabled our beneficiaries to make informed choices. This has been very successful, with high levels of traffic to the newly developed 'I need help managing my...' area of the website and a reduction in enquiries to our Information and Enquiries team.

The impact this had:

70%

AWARENESS OF THE CHARITY WITHIN THE PROFESSION.

 **144 MENTIONS** of the charity across pharmacy and charity press- taking the total to **420 since 2020.**

 **20% decrease** in **direct enquiries** to the charity compared to 2021 as **information is now available on the website.**

 **AN INCREASE IN WEBSITE SESSION DURATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS.**

 **9% increase** in **e-newsletter subscribers** in the last year.

Strategic objective 2

Enable pharmacists to manage their wellbeing.

Why? So that pharmacists are empowered to improve their wellbeing, creating a more resilient pharmacy workforce.

What we achieved during 2022

Considerable development was undertaken in this area during 2022 which focused on both proactive wellbeing support and development of our services. Our mental health and wellbeing support continues to grow, with many individuals and teams benefitting from the abundance of guidance and resources available on our website, team training through our Wellbeing Workshops, and individual training through the Wellbeing Learning Platform. Thanks to funding from the COVID-19 Health Support Appeal, the charity was able to respond to high demand and continue to provide free direct psychological support through our counselling partnership, for those experiencing mental health issues. We also invested in additional training for our Listening Friends to bolster our capacity to support those in need of a listening ear. In addition, we carried out a large piece of research focused on building a workplace culture which supports positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. This has

resulted in development of a new training course for managers and leaders which will launch in 2023.

During the year, we reviewed our Addiction Support Service. The review concluded that this long-standing service was highly impactful, unique and extremely valuable. However, it highlighted that more needs to be done by the charity to reiterate its independence so that more people feel able to reach out for support. The review of this area led to the launch of the addiction peer support pilot. This is a volunteer-led service offering individuals who may not be ready to contact the addiction support helpline a safe space to speak anonymously and in confidence to one of our trained volunteer pharmacists who has been through addiction themselves and experienced the journey. The charity also started to review its Financial Assistance service, with a view to identifying any potential barriers to support and ensuring that the charity is supporting people in the best way possible.

The impact this had:

 **133**

people were referred for counselling during 2022, with **1,201 sessions of counselling funded** since the service launched in April 2021.

 **65 support calls provided**

by the charity's addictions counsellor to

13 people via the **addiction support service**.

 **£64,155**

was accessed by our beneficiaries through claiming benefits and successfully appealing against DWP decisions (£35,412 confirmed financial gains and a further £28,743 projected gains).

£382,135

in gains were achieved for our beneficiaries as a result of our specialist employment advice. Gains included where discrimination practices were changed, harassment or bullying was stopped and retention of salaries where dismissal was averted. (£372,000 estimated gains and £10,135 actual gains).

 **963**

enquiries were received which resulted in **1,704 support outcomes**.

31 individuals

were provided with a Listening Friend, delivering

51 hours of peer support.

 **170**

SPECIALIST ADVICE REFERRALS

were made supporting individuals with employment, benefits, debt and immigration advice. (73 Employment, 29 Debt, 36 Welfare benefits, 1 Housing and 31 Immigration).

78% of respondents

to the charity's services survey stated that the support received via our services had a positive impact on their sense of wellbeing.

Strategic objective 3

Increase awareness of the issues impacting our pharmacy family's wellbeing.

Why? To see our sector is actively working together to improve the wellbeing of our pharmacy family.

What we achieved during 2022

Pharmacist Support collaborated with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society to run our fourth joint annual workforce wellbeing survey. This, alongside our own data, has provided a wealth of information giving us a deep understanding of the challenges faced by those studying and working in pharmacy. We've used this to continue to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues within the profession and promote the importance of investment in wellbeing sector-wide. To influence change, we continued to provide data to key organisations on trends within the sector and responded to several consultations. We successfully influenced a positive change to the foundation training manual, highlighting to the GPhC that specific wording around

contracts had caused stress and anxiety to several of our trainee enquirers.

Following its launch in 2020, this year saw the success of the charity's ACTNow wellbeing campaign continue to grow. For the second year running, the ACTNow campaign was segmented into three targeted and tailored campaigns aimed at our main audiences: students, trainees and pharmacists. The student campaign ran from the 30th March – 6th April and the trainee ACTNow campaign ran from 25th May – 1st June. Both focused on the needs of these individual groups with the trainee campaign split into three key categories: assessment resources; transition to pharmacy resources; and general mental health and wellbeing resources.

"Great timing coming up to the exam and it's nice to have a campaign directly aimed at trainees, feels like the charity is really rooting for us"

The Pharmacist ACTNow campaign ran from 25th September – 22nd October and was the longest of the three campaigns. Week one "Breaking the silence" focused on personal stories of mental health and wellbeing from across the pharmacy sector with huge engagement. The following weeks provided practical support and resources on workplace culture, developing teams and prioritising individual wellbeing.

"I think I'm much better at prioritising as a direct consequence of this campaign"

The impact this had:

 **2,135** sign-ups to the **#ACTNOW**

wellbeing campaigns, including **1,646 pharmacists.**

 **197% overall increase** in social media engagement with the campaign compared to 2021.

 **86%** of survey respondents reporting that the **ACTNow** campaign had supported them to **prioritise their wellbeing.**

 **98%** increase in trainee sign ups for the **ACTNow** campaign (from 2021), with **95%** of survey respondents saying a similar campaign would be useful in the future.

 **100%** of respondents stated that they were **more resilient** because of our **workshops/using the wellbeing learning platform.**

 **55** mentions of wellbeing in the pharmacy press.

Strategic objective 4

Manage the charity effectively to ensure we meet current and future demand.

Why? So that we increase our impact as a charity whilst ensuring long term financial sustainability.

What we achieved during 2022

Digital development was highlighted as a key priority within our strategy to enable us to manage increased demand and meet the changing needs of our pharmacy family including that of a 24/7 society. During 2022 we have launched phase two of our website and customer relationship management system enabling us to reach and support more individuals. The new customer relationship management system has enabled the charity to improve and streamline delivery of its support, data collection, and monitoring and evaluation. The impact of this development has been clear to see within the charity and on our beneficiaries. Thanks to our digital development, our beneficiaries can now:

- Access a wealth of information via our 'I need help managing my' area of the website.
- Submit a grant application via our secure portal, including the ability to upload documents to support an application and monitor the progress of the application.

- Self-refer for a range of services via our website.
- Complete e-learning via our Wellbeing Learning Platform, enabling beneficiaries to develop their knowledge and skills at a time and in a location that suits them, contributing to their continued professional development as well as providing them with a space to focus on their own wellbeing.

During 2022, to manage growing demand, the charity has focused on increasing income and developing our volunteer base. The way in which we fundraise has changed significantly since 2020, as we are now focussed on working with key partners across the profession. In a similar way, we have been developing new ways of engaging volunteers to support our work. We carried out a review of the ambassador programme during the year, identifying areas to redevelop the role and target areas of underrepresentation in our volunteer pool.

Following changes in working arrangements because of COVID-19, the charity implemented a new hybrid working policy and started to review its Manchester office requirements, as the lease is due to expire in late 2023. The charity also carried out a review of its investment managers in line with best practice and updated its investment policy to include the exclusion of direct investment in fossil fuel producers. This forms part of a wider environmental plan developed during 2022.

The impact this had:



INCREASE IN FUNDRAISING FROM CORPORATE DONORS.



Recognised by the Association of Charitable Organisations annual awards with the **2022 digital transformation award.**



DIVESTMENT IN FOSSIL FUEL PRODUCERS AHEAD OF 31ST DECEMBER 2022 TARGET DATE.



Five new Trustees recruited and supported in their new roles.



SEVEN new Listening Friends volunteers inducted and trained, taking the **total to 14.**



Two addiction peer support volunteers recruited and trained.



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Pharmacist Support is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, and creating an inclusive environment for all who work with or access its services. We want to ensure people are treated fairly, equitably and are offered equal access and opportunities. This applies to our beneficiaries and supporters as well as our staff, volunteers and Trustees.

During 2022, we implemented an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

strategy and action plan. We recognise that we still have a lot to learn, and it will take time to apply that learning. However, we are committed to continually improving our practices and listening to those we are here to help. As a charity we put people at the centre of all that we do. We are particularly mindful of the diverse needs of the people we are here to support and are committed to understanding and responding to their needs.

The EDI strategy has three objectives:

Objective one:

To develop and deliver services that are inclusive, accessible and free from discrimination and bias.

Objective two:

To develop organisational policies and practices that encourage diversity, equality, and inclusion and which proactively help tackle discrimination.

Objective three:

To attract and retain a diverse group of staff, Trustees and volunteers who reflect the beneficiaries we serve and put them at the centre of our decision-making processes.

What we have done so far:

- Developed a clear understanding of why EDI is important and needed.
- Reviewed the changes to the EDI principle in the charity governance code and reflected this in our own governance practices.
- Improved the knowledge of both staff and Trustees through two courses delivered by the Diversity Trust.
- Invested in additional extensive training for one Trustee (MI 7 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Programme) and the Chief Executive (NCVO EDI training).

- Acknowledged that a diverse Board contains a broad mix of skills, knowledge and experience which should give it greater flexibility to overcome challenges. The Board has actively worked to ensure that the Trustee Board is representative of the profession.
- Recognised that discrimination and unconscious bias might exist within our charity and taken steps to identify and tackle this.
- Continued to build relationships with other pharmacy organisations to allow us to better understand barriers to service users and reach more potential beneficiaries.
- Identified gaps in data collection and worked to build EDI data collection across all our services.
- Embedded new flexible working and hybrid working policies.

We will continue this journey over the coming years and are committed to ensuring all voices are heard and to the continuous improvement and development of our services to meet our beneficiary's diverse needs.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability

Pharmacist Support exists to support our pharmacy family now and into the future. We recognise that the climate crisis is a global threat, impacting the health of our pharmacy family and the whole of humanity. Tackling this threat will require significant change and we believe we have a duty to do all we can to support the global effort that is required. As a charity, we believe we have a responsibility to act on climate change and during 2022 joined others across the profession to make a commitment to consider environmental sustainability across our work. Our commitment includes:

Strategy

We formally acknowledge there is a climate crisis and have committed to consider the impact of the decisions we make on the climate in line with Pharmacist Support's charitable objectives.

Investments

We are conscious of the impact our investment portfolio can have and we have put in place measures to achieve a more socially and environmentally responsible investment portfolio. We continue to work with our investment managers to measure the impact of our investments against several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and ensure that their environmental,

social and governance investment policies align with our values and commitment. A key part of our commitment was to divest in fossil fuel producers by 31st December 2022. This was achieved ahead of schedule.

Working practices

We recognise that as well as our investments, other aspects of how we operate (such as our offices, IT, meetings and events) affect the environment. We have committed to reviewing our internal processes and have produced an environmental policy which will seek to reduce our environmental impact. The implementation of the policy will embed the consideration of sustainability within our working practices and operational decisions.

We can't do it alone.....



Volunteers

Volunteers play a crucial role at Pharmacist Support and help us to increase our reach and impact. Our volunteers are based across the country and are supported by our staff. Regular updates and learning and development opportunities are delivered to all volunteers to ensure that they are kept abreast of any changes within the charity, to facilitate peer support activities and to enhance knowledge and skills in relevant areas so that they can carry out their roles effectively.

Our main groups of volunteers are Trustees, Listening Friends and Ambassadors. During 2022 we also launched a small 'Addiction Peer Support' pilot delivered by two pharmacist volunteers.

Trustees are also volunteers and are accountable for ensuring that the charity continues to thrive. Pharmacist Support has 11 Trustees, each appointed for an initial term of three years. Trustees may only serve a maximum of nine years consecutively, which provides an opportunity for fresh perspectives, skills and experience to be included on a regular basis. In line with our aim to have a Board that reflects the diversity of the pharmacy profession, following a successful recruitment process we recruited six new Trustees, five of whom were appointed and inducted during 2022

and one who was appointed on 1st January 2023. The Board is currently made up of eight pharmacist Trustees and three lay Trustees. Our lay Trustees are not pharmacists and bring a viewpoint gathered from outside the profession.

Listening Friends are current or retired pharmacists, and because of this shared professional background they are uniquely able to understand the specific pressures affecting pharmacists and their families as well as pharmacy students. The Listening Friends peer support has been available for 26 years.

Charity Ambassadors champion our work within their local pharmacy communities, such as at their place of work/study, local networks and organisations. This role is vital to Pharmacist Support's work and helps ensure that people who are eligible for support are aware of our charity and how to access our services. Another key part of the role is to help raise valuable funds so that the charity's support continues long into the future. A comprehensive review of the current make-up of Ambassadors was carried out during 2022, which will guide a focused recruitment drive during 2023.

Fundraising and Partnerships

As the profession's charity, we recognise that collaboration across the sector is key to supporting our pharmacy family to ensure it is well-equipped to face any challenges people may have. Our charity partnerships enable us to deliver much needed support to our pharmacy family. Our partners help us to raise awareness of the charity and our support services, champion the importance of wellbeing in pharmacy, deliver our support services and meet our strategic objectives and raise valuable income.

Our high-level partners during 2022



We have been working in partnership with the Pharmacists' Defence Association since

2017. The PDA and their members donate a minimum of £1 each year to the charity. As well as this financial support, the PDA helps us raise charity awareness through their vast network and develop charitable activities. Without their continued partnership, vital support and activities such as our ACTNow campaign, wouldn't be possible. Since launching this partnership, the PDA has provided more than £200,000 in donations.

"The PDA and our members donate more than £30,000 per year to Pharmacist Support to help fund activities that support pharmacists when they need it. We are delighted to be able to help the charity to help pharmacists improve and maintain their wellbeing."



In 2020, Teva UK committed to sponsoring our first ever ACTNow campaign. In 2022, we

worked even more closely with the team to raise awareness of the charity and our free and confidential support services amongst their vast networks. This included delivering live online wellbeing workshops to their Teva One members. They were also a headline sponsor for our 2022 Pharmacist ACTNow campaign and were involved with numerous ACTNow activities, including a panel chat on transforming workplace culture.

"Teva UK is proud to be partnering with Pharmacist Support. It's important to us to endorse the great work the charity does in supporting the pharmacy community, particularly around mental health and wellbeing, which are more invaluable now than ever. As a front-line service, pharmacy felt the full force of the pandemic, continuing to provide a valuable service in extremely challenging circumstances. And that is why, now more than ever, support from organisations like Pharmacist Support is needed."

Other 2022 partnerships

We would also like to recognise and thank the following organisations for their support and funding across the year:



How can you help?

As demands upon the profession increase, the demand for our assistance continues to grow. As an independent, non-membership organisation, we rely on the support of individuals and organisations to continue our important work. If you are an organisation, there are lots of ways to support our work. Opportunities range from raising money on

behalf of the charity, making a donation on behalf of your organisation right through to campaign sponsorship and high level mutually beneficial partnerships. If you are an organisation keen to support the profession's independent charity please get in touch with us via our website.

Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS)

At the end of 2022, the RPS committed to facilitating donations from their members. RPS President Professor Claire Anderson said "We work closely with the charity to better understand the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce, particularly through joint events and our annual workforce wellbeing survey. We've now made donating even easier by

providing an option of giving when you join or renew your membership of RPS. Your donation could help change the life of a colleague facing difficulty. I urge you to support the profession's charity which does such great work offering a helping hand at times of need and is needed now more than ever before."

"Many of our members have benefitted from services provided by Pharmacist Support, which relies solely on donations from individuals and organisations."

Core Prescribing Solutions

The team at Core Prescribing Solutions donated £1,000 to us in order to show their support and give back to the profession. Co-founders Sohail Ahmed, Layequr Rahman and Adeem Azhar said that ***"Being pharmacists ourselves, assisting pharmacy colleagues at such***

challenging times through Pharmacist Support was a natural choice. The charity has been doing great work in helping our pharmacist colleagues over the years, so we would like to support their altruistic efforts and be part of the amazing journey in helping our profession".

If you are an individual there are a number of ways you can help us support more people in need:

- **make a one off or regular donation**
- **hold a fundraising event**
- **leave a gift in your will (legacy)**
- **give through your work, using Payroll Giving**
- **even when you eat out or shop online, or by donating your used stamps!**

Whichever route you choose and no matter how large or small your donation, it will make a real difference to the lives of our pharmacy family in their times of need.

Your legacy could help us to change lives!

Joy Wingfield was one of the UK's leading figures in Pharmacy Law and Ethics, a former deputy superintendent for Boots and honorary professor at Nottingham Pharmacy school. She gave immense support to her profession during her life and continued to support her

peers through leaving a legacy to Pharmacist Support in her will. Thanks to Joy's legacy, during 2022 we have been better able to meet increasing demand for wellbeing support. Leaving a gift in your will will help us support our pharmacy family now and into the future.

What's next?

As we head into year four of the charity's five-year strategy, Trustees have taken time to reflect on the current approach and consider any changes within the internal and external environment.

As with many charities, our income took a considerable hit during the pandemic which was further impacted by the war in Ukraine and the knock-on effects on the cost of living. We operate at a deficit and rely on our investment portfolio to provide funds for the ongoing operational costs of the charity. Over the long term, this means that our investments must provide us the necessary returns to enable us to continue to deliver our activities annually whilst at least maintaining the portfolio's real term value (after management expenses) to ensure the financial viability of the charity. However, the charity has continued to see an increase in demand for its services, and therefore must

increase its income from other sources to meet this demand. The charity will therefore implement a new fundraising strategy during 2023 to secure the long-term future of the charity.

Timely adjustment of our fundraising strategy becomes even more crucial when we think about the direction of travel for the future profession. We have been increasingly asked to consider supporting Pharmacy Technicians and, as part of our strategic review cycle, we began a process during 2022 to review options around Pharmacy Technicians potentially becoming part of our beneficiary pool in the future. In light of the recent publication of the UK

Commission's report, on the future for Pharmacy Professional Leadership, the Board of Pharmacist Support has agreed during 2023 to re-evaluate our next steps so that the potential impact of the report, including that of the prospective Pharmacy Leadership Council, can be considered.

Since the launch of the strategy in 2020, we have seen a shift in the type of support required by our beneficiaries and a change in the needs of the profession, most of this as a result of Covid-19. Our plans for 2023 focus on continuing to examine our existing support to ensure it is fit for purpose and accessible to all in our pharmacy family, making use of our

improved equality, diversity and inclusion data to inform developments. This will include the reframing of the addiction service in line with the recommendations set out in the 2022 review and the conclusion of the financial assistance service review.

We will continue to raise awareness of the important work of the charity and the wellbeing agenda via the ACTNow campaign and through the recruitment of new charity ambassador volunteers. We're also launching a new training course for managers and leaders which will look at how to build a culture which supports positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.



What our users say...



"The charity helped me find information I could not obtain elsewhere. It was not easy finding out the steps to get back to work. This service was very useful."

"It was a reminder that I won't perform at my best in the exam without feeling at my best"



"I started counselling for a few reasons, however while undergoing counselling, I found myself in the middle of a crisis at work. Counselling so far has helped me to find a new job and move from the bullying environment that has been affecting my mental health and wellbeing and has helped me move on with both my crisis but also my emotional wellbeing. I communicate my emotions better and I stand up for myself better."



"I was in serious financial crisis after I finished my training year and my exams in July. I've tried everything possible to aid myself but failed. Finally, I decided I should seek assistance and that's when I contacted Pharmacist Support. The financial assistance I got from them will help me with the cost of living (food, bills, and rent). I was seriously depressed and anxious that I was going to be homeless. The financial support will help me massively until I find a job. The relief I have now is indescribable. I'm so grateful!"



"I have less mental/physical stress and am able to continue with my course."



"A sympathetic ear and timely referral to Citizens Advice."



"Before being offered support I had pretty much nothing in my bank account. Meanwhile, I had numerous bills and expenses coming up which were causing me a lot of stress, so the support helped alleviate my financial burden."



"The ACTNow campaign empowered me to speak up and seek help regarding a current workplace difficulty."



Get in touch.

Visit: pharmacistsupport.org

Email: info@pharmacistsupport.org

Call: **0808 168 2233**

Connect:     



Pharmacist Support is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales, company no 9237609 & charity no 1158974

