



## President's Introduction to the 2023/24 Annual Report

As the incoming President I have the honour of introducing the annual report for 2023/24 reflecting on the year as in my capacity as APTUK Vice President. The Annual Report has been structured under the headings of the APTUK strategy for both ease of reference and clear accountability of organisational progress against each part of the strategy. On behalf of the APTUK Executive Committee, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the APTUK Fellows for their support and engagement with a review of the 2023/24 Annual Report prior to publication.

The 12 months between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 saw progress based on years of campaigning and championing of the Pharmacy Technician profession, by APTUK and leading Pharmacy Technicians in key strategic roles, as well as our professional allies. This progress was demonstrated through the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) running multiple consultations on expanding the scope of Pharmacy Technician practice as noted in section 1.2 of the report. APTUK welcomed the announcement by the DHSC in March 2024 of the positive outcome from the consultation and was a landmark moment for the Pharmacy Technician scope of practice.

In 2023/24 there has been significant growth in our membership, and landmark updates to legislation. We celebrate personal and collective developments and successes at our conferences each year. The sold out APTUK 2023 conference – highlights included the highest poster abstract submissions, 3 fellowships being awarded, and an honorary membership issued to Professor Mahendra Patel OBE who is a relentless advocate for professional equity, supporter of Pharmacy Technicians and a tireless campaigner for health inequalities and research.

There have been changes to our Executive Committee and Directors during 2023/24 including the APTUK Presidential transition.

With thanks to the following outgoing members of the APTUK Executive Committee:

**Claire Steele** – APTUK President, March 2022 – February 2024

**Dafydd James** – Director of Digital Strategy

**Oliver Jones** – Business Development Director

**Claire Sutton** – Membership Director

**Donna Bartlett** – Professional Lead for England

**Claire Williams** – Branch liaison Executive

I am delighted to take on the role of President, and welcome also new incoming members to the Executive Committee, along with existing members progressing to new roles within the team:

**Amy Laflin** – APTUK Vice President

**Joe Myers** - Membership Director

**Philip Jones** - Education Director

**Andrew Woods** – Business Director

**Trudy Krysta** – England Professional Lead

**Laura Harrison** – Social Media Executive

**Diane Torry** – Editor, Pharmacy Technician Journal

**Elizabeth Harland** – Education Advisor

**Atif Akhtar & Leighton Thompson** – APTUK Member Observers

**Kristy Garton** – Branch Liaison officer

We have also recruited to our supportive roles within the APTUK Education Panel and the Pharmacy Technician Journal Editorial team, we welcome you all and thank you for your contributions already to member benefits and organisational outputs. Please see Appendix 1 for the full Executive Committee staff list.

As the UK wide Professional Leadership Body for Pharmacy Technicians, we look forward as an Executive Committee to the next year. With the preliminary work in 2023/24 following the commissioning of the newly formed *UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board* APTUK will continue to work in collaboration on a transparent leadership journey to strengthen the pharmacy voice in the multi-disciplinary healthcare landscape.

The APTUK Executive Committee recognises that many of the points in the APTUK 2022-26 strategy are due for review and updating, particularly with the significant changes for the scope of the profession already having been announced. The Executive Committee and I commit to beginning the review of the strategy in the latter half of 2024/25 and look forward to APTUK continuing to shape the future of the Pharmacy Technician profession on behalf of our members.

Thank you for your ongoing support of APTUK, your professional leadership body and our profession.

Nicola Stockmann, *MA Pharm T*

*APTUK President*

*“Through strong, influential, and professional leadership we will ensure that the voice of the Pharmacy Technician is heard. We will develop a valued profession recognised in its own right, extending scope of practice to improve pharmacy services to benefit patients’ lives.”*

- APTUK mission statement

## 1. Promote Pharmacy Technicians (and APTUK) at every opportunity

### 1.1. Clear communications articulating the role of the Pharmacy Technician to patients and employers to drive value and recognition for the profession.

Pharmacy Technicians must be recognised for the autonomous healthcare professionals that we are. In 2023/24 we communicated the role of the Pharmacy Technician to the Health and Social Care select committee, recognising that acknowledgement and awareness of the profession should be with the government as well as patients and employers. There will be further focus on this in 2024/25.

### 1.2. Driving legislation changes to ensure the profession can support pharmaceutical and patient services utilising the full scope of practice. In particular, Patient Group Directions and supervision

2023/24 was a pivotal time for potential legislation changes, with multiple Department of Health & Social Care consultations announced and subsequently going live:

- [Patient Group Directions \(PGDs\)](#) - a consultation to include Pharmacy Technicians on the list of registered healthcare professionals able to supply medicines and operate under patient group directions (PGDs). APTUK also welcomed the outcome of the PGD consultation on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 with a [position statement](#).
- [Supervision](#) – a consultation setting out proposals to amend the *Medicines Act 1968* and *The Human Medicines Regulation 2012* with significant proposals regarding Pharmacy Technician scope of practice.
- Expanding access to take home [Naloxone](#) supplies – a consultation following on from the previous consultation in 2021, one of the proposals includes an amended list of named professionals that can supply take-home naloxone – including Pharmacy Technicians.

Please see section 4.4 for the support APTUK provided to the profession. There were also organisational updates on activity of working groups and legislative updates through presentations at pharmacy conferences.

### 1.3. Supporting Pharmacy Technician registration in Northern Ireland (NI).

APTUK were commissioned to support with the mapping process of education to enable and guide NI Pharmacy Technicians to be able to register with the regulator *Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI)*; this tender was won in January 2023 but due to the pending government the work was paused. Since the power

sharing agreement was updated and agreed in January 2024 after a 12-month hiatus, APTUK can reignite the conversations to support with the process as outlined by the contract and tender signed to begin the mapping and educational work for Pharmacy Technicians based in NI, this will support with scope of practice and further autonomy of working practices. A Northern Ireland branch is being explored with our branch liaison officer and professional lead for NI.

## 2. Lead and represent the profession

### 2.1. Active representation at country and national levels

Following a direct challenge from APTUK, the *Health and Social Care Committee* invited APTUK to give evidence at the ongoing [pharmacy inquiry](#). Nicola Stockmann, APTUK President, represented the organisation and profession, alongside the *General Pharmaceutical Council* and the *Pharmacist Defence Association*. APTUK were the only Pharmacy Technician representatives to give evidence during the inquiry.

Additionally, the professional leads for each of the home countries represent and attend national meetings supporting work including workforce plans, strategic development and policy:

#### England

Donna Bartlett who held the role of Professional Lead for England during 2023/24 represented APTUK at the NHS England *Chief Pharmaceutical Officers' (CPHO) Pharmacy Technician Advisory Forum*.

The professional lead for England also was present throughout the Supervision working group meetings along with Business Director 2023/24 Oliver Jones & Nicola Stockmann. More information is noted in section 2.2 of the report regarding this workstream and outputs, prior to the Supervision consultation launching.

#### Wales

Emily Guerin, Professional Lead for Wales attends the *Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales delivery board* which is held quarterly. The Board is made up of several organisations who update on their key areas of work. The delivery board also has themed working groups who track progress against the goals within the Pharmacy Delivering a Healthier Wales – the 2030 pharmacy vision for Wales. These working groups all feed into the delivery board on emerging priorities.

- APTUK has a standing item on the agenda for Welsh pre-registration trainee Pharmacy Technicians (PTPTs) induction days in collaboration with *University of East Anglia* and *Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)*. APTUK attend the initial induction days and present face to face and virtually to inform PTPTs of the benefits of becoming APTUK members. In addition to initial induction days APTUK also attends support days throughout their journey ensuring a consistent approach and a constant visibility to support our PTPTs. It is a pleasure to see them developing throughout their course and coming to the end of their journey whilst getting ready to prepare for registration.
- APTUK attends the *Welsh Pharmaceutical Committees meetings* and *Welsh Pharmacy Partnership groups* to ensure that the Pharmacy Technician voice is heard in collaborative forums for joined up approaches to pharmacy priorities.
- APTUK also attend a *subgroup of Welsh Pharmaceutical committee* which focuses on responding to consultations, together with other organisations viewpoints are heard and taken on board to formulate official responses to consultations on behalf of pharmacy teams and services in Wales.

- The Professional Lead for Wales also sits on the *Health Education and Improvement Wales Pharmacy Advisory Board* which is made up from various organisations. Here *HEIW* give key update on the strategic pharmacy workforce plan and an opportunity to discuss progress.
- We have been working with *Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW)*, *HEIW* and *Welsh Government* on resources and supportive documents to ensure that all Pharmacy Technicians in Wales are supported with their scope of practice to work under PGDs.
- APTUK work collaboratively with *Royal Pharmaceutical Society Wales*, meeting on a regular basis to discuss professional priorities and current issues building even stronger working relationships.
- APTUK continue to work closely with *Community Pharmacy Wales* in relation to the new community pharmacy contract framework.

### Scotland

Melanie Bryan, Professional Lead for Scotland represents APTUK at:

*National Pharmacy Technician Group Scotland (NPTGS) meetings.* Within Scotland, NPTGS provides professional leadership and develop professional practice for PTPTs and Pharmacy Technicians across Scotland and act as a consultative and expert advisory resource for matters relating to Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy support staff to the *Directors of Pharmacy group*. This includes working with the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and other key stakeholders/organisations such as the *Scottish Clinical Leadership Fellows*, *NHS Education for Scotland (NES)* and *Community Pharmacy Scotland*.

*Pharmacy Technicians Education & Training (PTET) Strategic Group* - Through engagement and consultation with members and key stakeholders, the Strategic Group are working to agree and develop a vision for education and training of Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy support staff, considering regulatory and professional standards.

Participated in the *UK Professional Leadership Board development meetings*.

APTUK work collaboratively with *Royal Pharmaceutical Society Scotland* alongside *NPTGS*, meeting on a regular basis to discuss professional priorities and current issues building even stronger working relationships.

Attendance at the *National Workforce Group* and linking in with the *General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) Director for Scotland* to discuss professional priorities and current issues building even stronger working relationships.

### Northern Ireland

There is representation by Warren Francis, Professional Lead for Northern Ireland at the following:

- *Pharmacy Technician Regulation and Development Oversight Board*
- *Pharmacy Technician Regulation and Development Workforce Subgroup*
- *All Pharmacy Advisory Group*
- *Pharmacy Workforce Review Steering Group*

The key areas of focus at these meetings fall under education, legislation, regulation & public consultation and workforce development.

- Education:  
An initial review document to understand the range of qualifications held across Northern Ireland has been produced and there is work ongoing to understand the projected number of Pharmacy Technicians expected to register in the next 2-5 years. Discussions continue on what the registration

qualification/practice requirements for Pharmacy Technicians will be in Northern Ireland, and the process to achieve this.

- **Workforce Development:**

Further engagement with *PSNI* regarding development of a Pharmacy Forum led to an 'Attract Recruit Retain' campaign for recruitment and retention of Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy support staff. Two draft career pathway models for hospital practice, covering Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy support staff are to be finalised for consultation and comment by Trust Heads of Pharmacy. A draft paper has been developed to help define the projected workforce requirements for Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy support staff over the next 1 year, 3 year and 5 year milestones. This reflects an aim to update the projection data detailed in the *Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020*. Initial input is being sought from Trusts, with the intention to subsequently engage community pharmacy and general practice staff.

- **Legislation, Regulation & Public Consultation:**

Initial *Office of the Legislative Council (OLC)* instructions have been shared with *Department Solicitor's Office (DSO)* for comments. The instructions will be presented to the Oversight Board once complete. *PSNI* have confirmed that Fieldfisher have been tasked with scoping all *PSNI* regulations. APTUK remain engaged with all legislative and regulatory activity.

#### International representation\*

APTUK was also represented internationally in October 2023 in Florida at the NCODA Fall Summit, through our colleagues from *Oncology Pharmacy Technician Association (OPTA)*, discussing the impact and sharing the vast skill set of Pharmacy Technicians to our American pharmacy colleagues and how we have developed our scope of practice thus far. The title of the panel session was: *An international perspective into the Pharmacy Technician's role*. There were representatives from Montreal, British Columbia and APTUK represented the United Kingdom perspective. The scope of practice for those on the panel were embedded in insurance claims and processing of healthcare administration as well as dispensing and supply functions. APTUK were able to showcase the clinical and leadership development of a Pharmacy Technician role in the UK.

APTUK was represented internationally in February 2024 in South Africa at the Sigma international conference, discussing community pharmacy and scope of practice of Pharmacy Technicians with our UK community pharmacy colleagues and contractors. The title of the APTUK session was *Strengthening the pharmacy workforce*. There was also a panel discussion with representatives regarding professional leadership with representation from APTUK and *Primary Care Pharmacy Association (PCPA)* along with Nigel Clarke, who was co-chair of the *UK pharmacy commission into professional leadership*.

## **2.2. Developing strong, impactful relationships with key stakeholders who impact Pharmacy Technician roles, education, and career pathways**

APTUK is represented nationally at the *Chief Pharmaceutical Officers' (CPHO) Pharmacy Technician Advisory Forum* the professional lead for England to ensure APTUK as the professional leadership body impact and engage in national activity relating to the advancement of the Pharmacy Technician profession.

We are currently participating in a working group with the *Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)* and *Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS)* to produce a repeat prescribing toolkit. This toolkit will be pivotal in ensuring the patient's medication journey is effective and efficient. As Pharmacy Technicians are embedded in both community pharmacy and primary care teams, we endeavour that this toolkit will be best utilised by Pharmacy Technicians. The toolkit will enable the streamline process of repeat prescribing for all patients nationally, reducing occurrence of waste and over supply. The toolkit is due to be launched later in 2024 and we hope that Pharmacy Technicians utilise this innovative toolkit.

### 2.3. Representation in decision-making forums which is not tokenistic; where our view is wanted and respected

#### Supervision practice group

APTUK are pleased that the *Supervision Practice Group* were able to publish a [report](#) through committed collaborative working between its members. The vision of pharmacy practice described in the report will enhance patient access to pharmaceutical services, ensure high levels of patient safety, and enable further development of the pharmacy team particularly in community pharmacy.

The consensus arrived at by the *Supervision Practice Group* informed a consultation by the *DHSC*, whereby additional considerations regarding technical services leadership were also proposed.

#### UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board (UKPPLAB)

The development of the *UKPPLAB* was a result of the outcome of the CPHO Commission into pharmacy professional leadership [report](#) (Welsh version of the report available [here](#)).



There are 12 ex officio places on the Board, and the post-holder of APTUK President holds one of those ex officio places. APTUK are committed to ongoing collaboration for the strengthening of the voice of the Pharmacy Technician in consideration of the future of pharmacy. Through transparency and role-modelling high professional standards and collaboration, we will continue to support this work. Board activity is shared on the [UKPPLAB website](#).

### 2.4. Delivery of pharmacy-led and healthcare projects

APTUK prompted the refreshing and subsequent significant update to the recently published *Patient safety professional standards: responding to patient safety incidents 2024* with *RPS*, *PSNI* and an expert steering group.

APTUK has been represented in the *Infusions Special Medicines Workforce Groups* with Philip Jones, APTUK Education Director, who is involved in a sub-group which looks at gap analysis of training in Technical Services. Philip has also been involved as chair of another sub-group where the focus is on career pathways, for current opportunities and the identification of enablers for Pharmacy Technicians to continue in their development and competency.

The workforce group is looking into the recruitment and retention of staff, including the wider Pharmacy teams and how they have a place in Technical services moving forward. With the set up and development of the hub and spoke models in Technical services, other educational pathways and career options are becoming available to staff working in these specialist teams. This includes the Science Manufacturing Process Operative, Science Manufacturing Technicians, Scientist Training Programme (STP) as well as the education available at a higher level for Msc Pharmaceutical Technology and Quality Assurance (PTQA).

- Inclusive Pharmacy Practice (IPP)

We continue to participate proactively in the IPP initiative and in encouraging the principles and priorities to be applied through the entire pharmacy workforce. The IPP is a significant policy driver that aligns to our strategic thinking as an organisation, and we are honoured to be collaborating with all the esteemed organisations involved in this important programme of work.

### **2.5. Encouraging professional growth by providing opportunities for members to lead and represent the profession in areas of subject matter expertise**

In 2023, APTUK recognised that we needed to strengthen the educational panel processes. Therefore, as we value the requirements and expertise needed to review and approve educational provisions, we recruited panel members into this role. This process has now been streamlined and includes the Education Director, Education Advisor and at least one panel member who will review any applications for the current frameworks available, accuracy checking and primary care. We have been able to successfully review training provider applications over the last 12 months and will continue to improve and support this provision within APTUK. We also recognise the need to continue to develop frameworks to support the Pharmacy Technician workforce and will therefore keep members informed of developments. APTUK recognise that expertise from the area of practice must be utilised and is essential to ensure a robust framework is delivered.

## **3. Enable access to education**

### **3.1. Visibility of personal development opportunities through career pathways**

APTUK has been successful in being commissioned by HEIW via Conference of Pharmacy Education Deans (COPED) to research and work on the development of the career pathways for Pharmacy Technicians that will provide standardisation across all four home countries of the UK. This work is currently under development and APTUK have agreed to collaborate with the *University of Bath* and *Pharmacy Workforce Development South* in the delivery of this. Amy Laflin in her previous role as Education Director has been leading on this work for APTUK and will continue in her new capacity as Vice President.

### **3.2. Promoting the use of robust education frameworks**

APTUK are promoting the Primary Care Framework and Accuracy Checking Framework to support the post-registration landscape for Pharmacy Technicians. The Accuracy Checking Framework was introduced to support individuals who may not have achieved their accuracy checking and have been registered prior to the updated 2017 Initial Education and Training standards (IETs).

The Primary Care Framework was developed with the RCGP and PCPA and supports the profession moving into primary care roles to be able to feel more confident to complete tasks and to demonstrate competence in an area that may not have been part of their IETs.

Therefore, APTUK will continue to lead on and hold the national frameworks for Pharmacy Technicians as this suite of frameworks will continue to grow and develop further.

### **3.3. Improving access to post registration education/training**

APTUK are continuing to work with training providers across the UK to promote awareness of the organisation and how we support Pharmacy Technicians as the professional leadership body. Over the last year we have seen an increase in membership from multiple areas of practice, and APTUK in response to this continues to promote webinars relevant to multiple areas of practice and monthly education on the website, available to all members.

By undertaking the work for career pathways and development of frameworks, APTUK will strive to collaborate further with organisations to improve the post registration opportunities for members.

Please refer to section 4.4 for further information on events held supporting continued professional development of members.

### **3.4. Supporting the profession with recognised education provision including robust quality assurance**

APTUK currently have two frameworks available which are the Accuracy checking for Pharmacy Technicians and Primary care. We are proud to announce that training providers have taken the opportunity to obtain APTUK approval on their Accuracy checking programmes and also their primary care provisions. This process for training providers allows and recognises assurance that the programme submitted for panel review is of the appropriate national standard for Pharmacy Technicians to obtain a transferable certificate of completion. These frameworks and the career pathway as highlighted previously, is being developed to ensure Pharmacy Technicians have a robust and quality career pathway and appropriate education.

### **3.5. Offering professional development packages to pharmacy support staff including assistants, dispensers, and medicines counter assistants**

APTUK will continue to expand the offering of professional development for pharmacy support staff and the wider Pharmacy Team. We are starting this by holding a Pre-registration trainee Pharmacy Technician event in July. This will allow trainee Pharmacy Technicians to network, obtain knowledge on the national and current policies pieces and how they can gain professional development.

In line with the strategy, APTUK support the educational offering available to Pharmacy support staff. APTUK are continuing to work with Science Manufacturing Technicians whilst they are in training to allow for access to the Technical Services branch meetings and webinars to support with their training and continued professional development. April 2024 will see the launch of the Science Manufacturing Process Operative programme which has an embedded qualification to support with service needs, which is a new apprenticeship for Pharmacy support staff working in Technical Services.

Currently APTUK membership is open to Pharmacy Technicians and PTPTs, however exploration of how APTUK membership and benefits can reach other members of the pharmacy team are being considered.

## **4. Provide value to our members**

### **4.1. Creating an aspirational membership with a sense of belonging and pride in the professional leadership body**

APTUK have provided opportunities to members to work on behalf of the professional leadership body as part of the Executive committee:

Atif Akhtar, Member Observer:

*“Being a member observer, it has created a sense of belonging and connection to the Executive Committee has shown me the hard work and dedication required and the commitment the team put in on our behalf in both regional and national levels. Being a member observer has also allowed me to gain confidence - I helped host a national webinar and plan to support the APTUK stand at the Clinical Pharmacy Congress in May 2024. I am so proud to be a APTUK member observer.”*

Leighton Thompson, Member Observer:

*“As an APTUK member observer, I have felt that there is so much that goes into supporting the profession. Being in a position to see this firsthand and take members' opinions back to the committee has filled me with a deep sense of pride and belonging to our professional leadership body. The dedication and hard work of APTUK in advancing our field and addressing the concerns of our members is truly inspiring. This experience has reinforced my appreciation for our collective efforts and made me proud to contribute to our profession's ongoing development and recognition.”*

#### 4.2. Providing easy access to local branches and networks

We have streamlined social media, rather than individual branch accounts, for the events to be advertised through the main APTUK social media accounts on each platform (X, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In) has a wider reach than multiple branch accounts with a smaller follower base. Furthermore, it advertises to all members for access to national branch events whilst protecting time for regional branches to have local meetings.

The APTUK Branches [website page](#) has been fully updated to ensure accessibility to scheduled events and contact details to join Branches.

#### 4.3. Regular and effective two-way communications with our membership

In 2023-2024 APTUK were in attendance at over 17 conferences, ensuring the visibility and presence of APTUK was recognised in various specialisms, locations and areas of practice (Conferences including: British Oncology Pharmacy Association, UK Clinical Pharmacy Association, Defence Medical Services, Clinical Pharmacy Congress, Clinical Pharmacy Congress North, RPS, Day Lewis and Pharmacy Show). Being present and visible at conferences allows valuable two-way communications with our members. APTUK will often provide sessions at conferences for updates on the profession and organisational priorities. At the majority of conferences there will be an APTUK stand for members to discuss with us any priorities and to make our Executive Committee accessible and approachable. It also allows us to challenge and contribute as required in other sessions where the Pharmacy Technician perspective is required, or the profession needs championing.



In addition to the physical presence at events, we have also continued with our monthly membership newsletter, inviting comments and questions through our website and direct contact with members of the executive committee as needed.

We recognised the benefit of a role for a social media executive in March 2024, to improve accessibility and increase social media engagement and have subsequently recruited into this in April 2024.

Following digital publication of the PTJ winter edition, we sent out a feedback questionnaire to get a sense of how members felt about this significant change, to provide the opportunity to request a printed version, and to gain feedback on how members felt about the PTJ in general and if it is meeting their expectations.

98% of respondents thought that digitising the PTJ was a good idea especially with regard to sustainability, environmental impact and cost. We have also acknowledged feedback explaining that readability on mobile devices was reduced, and therefore we will explore improvement or alternative digital solutions going forwards.

93% of respondents rated the quality of the PTJ as *Excellent* or *Good*, with no respondents rating it *Poor* or *Very Poor*. We will continue to ask for feedback, to inform the decision around printing the PTJ, and to also gain useful insights into topics our readers are interested in so that we may continue to provide APTUK members with a newsworthy and educational journal in the best possible format.

#### **4.4. Delivering relevant, interesting events, seen as highlights and essential to attend**

APTUK supported the Pharmacy Technician profession with separate consultation events specifically for the three major consultations as noted in section 1.2. APTUK provided webinars, response aids/ templates and Q&A opportunities for all consultations to empower and support informed responses. We recognised that with expansions to scope of practice, this may generate more questions from individual Pharmacy Technicians and employers and so we will support with resources as needed in 2024 and beyond.

The APTUK branches have been organising and delivering a number of branch meetings and national webinars covering a variety of topics and agendas over the past year. With the support and guidance of Kristy Garton, Branch Liaison, they have planned and delivered events to provide interesting engaging and topics of relevance to the Pharmacy Technician profession. Additionally, there have been sessions provided on wellbeing support and each session provides peer networking opportunities.

APTUK have worked collaboratively with several stakeholders and organisations including *Pharmacy Technicians of colour (PTOC)*, *RPS*, *British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA)*, *UK Black Pharmacist Association*, *Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP)* and many more, to deliver a variety of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) events over the course of the past year. In August 2023, Shamma Baig, EDI executive collaborated to organise the *South Asian Heritage Month* celebration, followed by a *Black History Month* event in October 2023 and most recently *International Women's Day*, March 2024. We continue to explore new and exciting events for members to learn about and celebrate. As well as proudly collaborating we also delivered a webinar during *Race Equality Week 2024*, exploring details of the *NHSE Pharmacy Workforce Race equality standards*. In addition to this an informative *Ramadan webinar* was arranged to help improve knowledge, understanding and practice for our members of the holy Islamic month, which is accessible on the website.

#### **4.5. Creating an easy-to-use website with interesting up-to-date content providing key reference points**

In March 2024 the APTUK Executive Committee created a questionnaire out to members to seek feedback on the current website to understand user satisfaction from members and ease of navigation of the content. This was sent out in April 2024, further updates will be provided in the membership newsletter and the 2024/25 report.

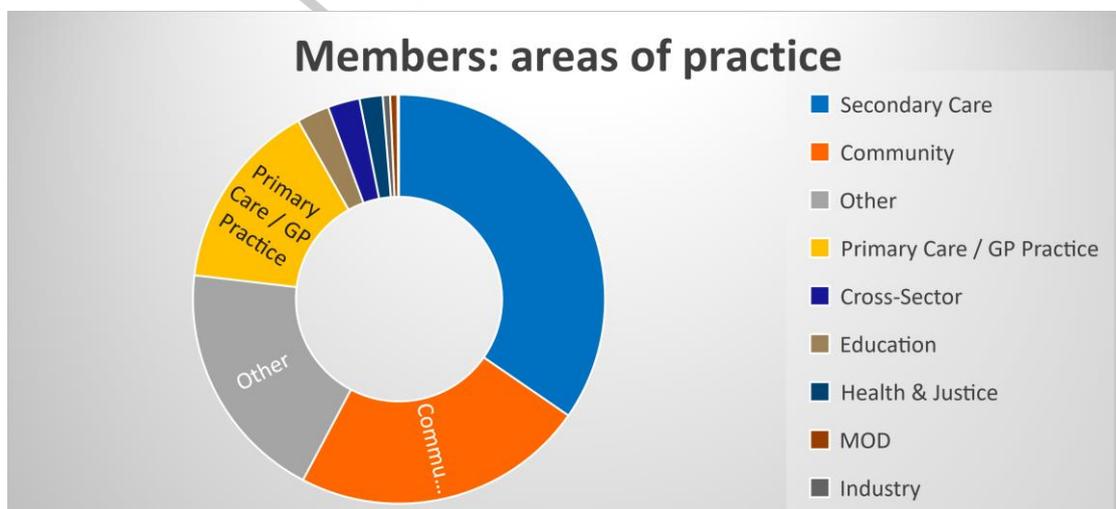
## 5. Run an efficient and sustainable organisation

### 5.1. Developing a membership growth strategy including Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians conversion to full membership, enabling reinvestment in member benefits and Association sustainability

APTUK membership continues to grow, with a conversion rate of PTPT membership currently at 14%. We continue to promote membership to pre-registration training Pharmacy Technicians through introductory sessions delivered by APTUK and supported by education providers.

There has been a marked increase in community Pharmacy Technician membership in 2023/24.

SECTOR	2023	2024
Secondary Care	1108	1145
Community	665	763
Other	442	633
Primary Care / GP Practice	345	496
Cross-Sector	102	83
Education	100	84
Health & Justice	63	60
MOD	20	19
Industry	15	19
CCG	5	4
	<b>2865</b>	<b>3306</b>



## **5.2. Increased funding through sponsorship for events and activities**

The 2023/24 conference was successful in gaining sponsorship and exhibitors present at our conference. It was a priority to have succession planning during changeover of the Business Director post-holder and introductory meetings are ongoing. For 2024/25 Andrew Woods, Business Director will be supporting ongoing business and commercial opportunities throughout the year as well as for APTUK annual conferences to support increased funding through sponsorship for events and activities.

## **5.3. Reviewing non-member terms for attending branch meetings**

There is work being led by Kristy Garton, Branch Liaison, supporting active oversight of attendees both members and non-members, whilst managing data securely. There is a drive from branches to increase attendance from non-members to engage and promote APTUK member benefits and membership and we take the opportunity to thank them for this and their ongoing hard work in delivering membership benefits.

There is an ongoing review of conversion data of non-members to membership following attendance at branch meetings. Non-members have the opportunity to attend one branch meeting only and this is being monitored centrally by our Branch Liaison Officer.

## **5.4. Operating systems that really work**

The APTUK executive have identified that a review of the website and ensuring it is as accessible as possible for members to navigate. User feedback is planned to be collated to ensure the best user experience possible.

Within the organisation due to remote working the Executive Committee utilise MS products for shared documents in SharePoint, and to reduce carbon footprint and maximise efficiency, the use of Microsoft Teams for meetings and recording of webinars and meetings for wider accessibility for those who are unable to attend.

## **5.5. Integration of digital technology wherever appropriate, including virtual working and introduction of a digital app**

The APTUK executive reviewed this in 2023 and have concluded that the digital app at this stage is to be put on hold, pending a review of the APTUK website and features.

## **5.6. Responsible organisational management – promoting sustainability, good practice, equality/diversity/inclusion, wellbeing, environmental sustainability etc.**

Environmental sustainability is prevalent in all organisational choices where possible. The 2023 conference was planned with the consideration of the *Pharmacy Declares Sustainable Conferencing Action Checklist* as will all future large-scale APTUK events. Examples at the 2023 conference included minimal freebies, with pens being made from recycled aluminium cans and a reusable cup to support continued sustainable activity for all member delegates.

Additionally, one of the key-note speakers at the 2023 APTUK conference was on the topic of sustainability in healthcare linking to the conference theme of *Making An Impact*.

# **6. Develop high performing teams**

## **6.1. Providing mentoring and professional development opportunities at every level of the Association whilst facilitating succession planning for executive committee posts**

The member observer role has been a key opportunity to support development opportunities for members who would like exposure to the APTUK Executive Committee and activity. During April 2023 – March 2024 there was 1 member observer in post.

Through the Member Observer role, we have facilitated succession planning for the executive committee post of PTJ editor, as Diane Torry returns to the executive committee in this new capacity.

### **6.2. Increasing attraction to committee / project posts so opportunities align with individual career aspirations**

We regularly complete skill mix workforce reviews of the Executive Committee roles to ensure the relevance to current demand/requirements of a professional leadership body in this climate. This led to an expansion of our project posts to include an editorial team and education panel to support with opportunities for Pharmacy Technicians who would like experience in a different format to an executive committee role.

### **6.3. Ensuring functions integrate and we work together well**

The monthly Board of Directors meetings and fortnightly Executive Committee meetings are run virtually, which supports sustainability and reduces carbon footprint. However, whilst the Executive Committee work remotely, APTUK recognises the value of face-to-face opportunities to build good working relations and use the opportunity to review key organisational priorities. There is a minimum of two executive committee member away days per year to support relationship building.

Whilst events such as conferences also provide opportunities for face-to-face working, this is not conducive for strategic planning, when the focus is on member interactions.

### **6.4. Increasing the number of paid posts so we are not solely reliant on individuals or goodwill, linked to membership growth strategy**

APTUK have recruited to the role of Education Advisor who has been able to support with attending at meetings and completion of educational work for APTUK. This includes supporting the educational panel approval process, supporting the *GPhC* with the mapping of international educational courses to the UK requirements and supporting the preparation of PGD information [fact sheets](#).

APTUK will continue to review the need for future paid posts to ensure full utilisation of investment from the organisation.

### **6.5. Strengthening engagement with APTUK branches to provide a sense of ownership and integration with the executive committee whilst enabling creativity from branch members**

The branch liaison role provides executive meeting updates and information to branches to ensure organisational priorities can be supported in branch activity, and that support for branches can be provided from the executive committee via the branch liaison executive. Through streamlining the communications through the central APTUK social media accounts the executive committee are directly supporting the reachability of branch events.

## **7. Future plans**

- Building on our organisational values and reflective of the trajectory of the Pharmacy Technician profession, APTUK will be setting professional standards for Pharmacy Technicians. We will outline best practice and the high standards pharmacy technicians should demonstrate in their practice. The regulator sets minimum standards, and the role of the professional leadership body is to set best practice behaviours.

- The APTUK executive will review the existing 2022-2026 strategy in 2024/2025 ensuring it is reflective of the aspirational direction Pharmacy Technicians can expect from their professional leadership body. There will be a consultation on this to gather member views and priorities.
- APTUK have begun and commit to delivering career pathways for Pharmacy Technicians, showing development opportunities and clear routes for development and specialist roles.
- APTUK have begun and commit to develop post-registration frameworks for Pharmacy Technicians, supporting and underpinning career pathways, in collaboration with COPED.
- In 2024 – 2025 APTUK will also explore reciprocal/reverse mentoring for the executive team to understand experiences of Pharmacy Technicians from a minority ethnic background and/or share lived experiences.

## 8. Finances

The APTUK financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> April.

The 2022/2023 end of year accounts were submitted to *HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)* and *Companies House* on time, before the deadline of January 31<sup>st</sup> 2024, ensuring we remain compliant with our legal obligations. The formal end of year accounts for 2023/24 will be prepared before the end of 2024, in advance of the HMRC submission deadline of January 2025.

A snapshot of the finances at time of publication for 2023/24 are detailed below:

Income from membership fees has grown by 5.7%, which is lower than the growth in membership numbers. This is due in part to the greater number of members now taking advantage of monthly rather than annual fees, meaning that income is spread over 12 months, not received all at once at time of signing up. In addition due to an external issue with the bank, membership payments from Stripe were delayed by approximately 10 days at the end of April, meaning May 2024 will capture the delayed payments.

APTUK are in receipt of an anonymous bursary, to facilitate opportunities for community-based Pharmacy Technicians to attend a conference. We thank the anonymous donator for their generosity.

APTUK welcome a new partnership with conference organisers Starkevents and have amended operational processes as conference sponsors are being invoiced directly by APTUK for 2024, which is evident in the 2023/24 finances. Sponsorship is significantly higher than in previous years which we anticipate will offset rising venue costs; Starkevents are managing ticket sales and associated revenue. Please note, a couple of companies have requested direct billing for ticket purchases, so these numbers are also included in the income figures.

To reflect the conference income in this year's accounts, we have also offset the income through the expenditure line. The different between income and expenditure shown in the accounts is primarily the timing of the APTUK end of financial year, as ticket sales are still ongoing.

Other increases in costs this year include salaries, due to the recruitment the Education Advisor as a third employee and a 5% increase in salaries to reflect the NHS pay award. IT costs have risen due to the purchase on a new laptop and associated insurance, and travel has seen the largest increase. This is due to a greater number of face-to-face meetings with external organisations in 23/24 as COVID restrictions have lifted. Furthermore, APTUK has had a presence at a greater number of conferences and events in 2023-2024.

Core savings have been achieved through digitising the PTJ, resulting in significant print savings, and we have moved our document storage facility due to reduced cost and accessibility. APTUK continue to look for savings on expenditure, through contract reviews (such as Regus rental agreement, and annual insurance quotes) ,

undertaking due diligence and negotiation when looking for new suppliers. E.g., three different vendors submitted proposals for the conference organisers, with the final chosen supplier identified through evaluation of their offer and value for money.

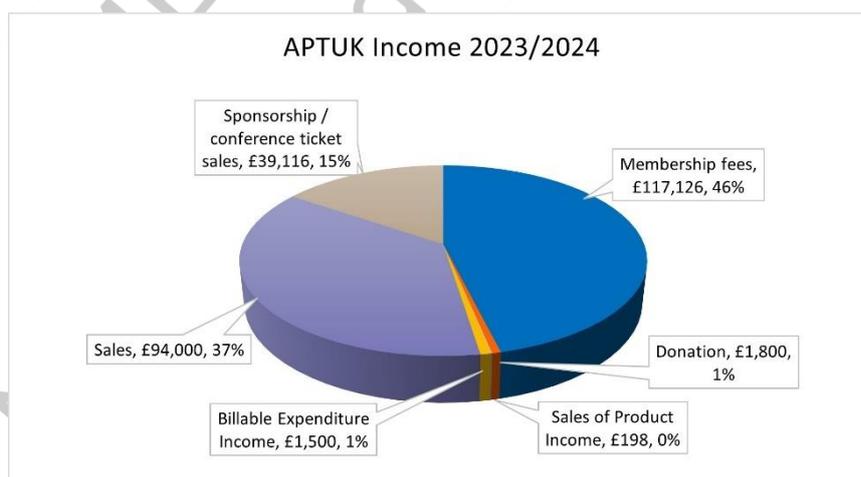
APTUK currently have a reserve of approximately £21,600 which we are planning to use to review and redesign the website to ensure it continues to meet member needs and support efficiencies within APTUK administration.

Finances are tracked and reported regularly to the Board of Directors. New requests for expenditure are presented, evaluated and signed off by the Board before commitment.

## Income 2023/2024

Income	2023/4	2022/3
Membership fees	£117,126	£110,807
Billable Expenditure Income	£1,500	£3,000
Sales of Product Income	£198	£833
Donation	£1,800	£1,000
Sales	£94,000	£0
Sponsorship / conference ticket sales	£39,116	£0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£253,740</b>	<b>£115,640</b>

Income category	Description
Membership fees	Direct debit, standing orders, direct payment via Stripe
Billable Expenditure Income	Educational framework advisory panels
Sales of Product Income	APTUK 70 <sup>th</sup> anniversary badges
Donation	Bursary donation, Bank poor service compensation
Sales	Education project - Development of a UK Post-Registration Career Pathway for Pharmacy Technicians
Sponsorship / conference sales	APTUK 2024





## Expenditure 2023/2024

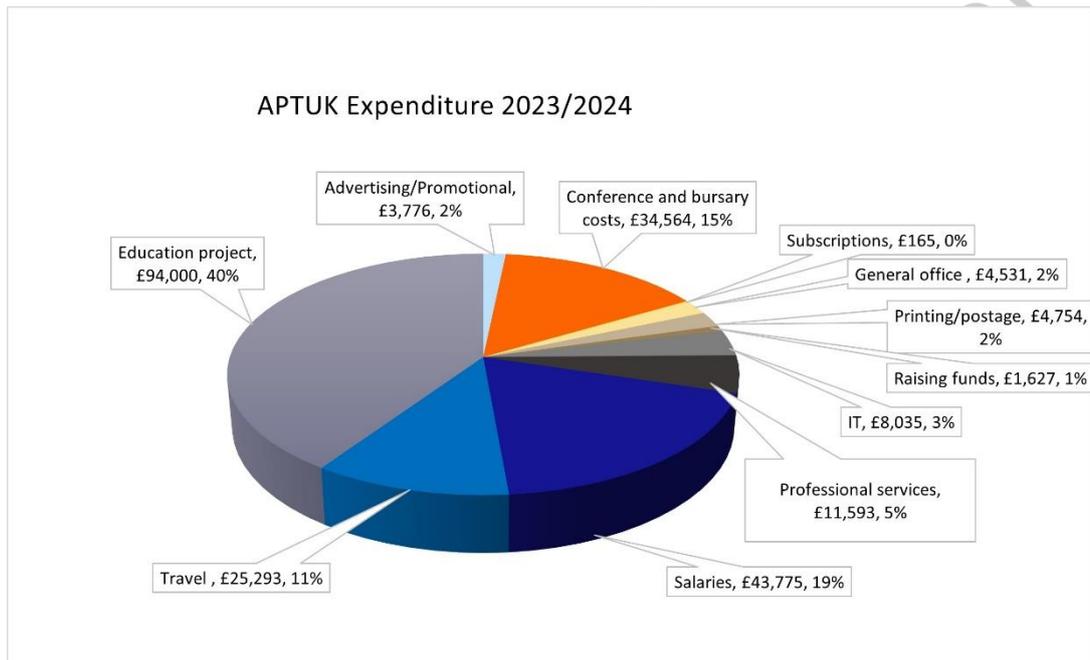
Expenditure	2023/4	2022/3
Advertising/Promotional	£3,776	£5,915
Conference and bursary costs	£34,564	£23,425
Subscriptions	£165	£252
Office/ General administrative costs	£4,531	£5,014
Printing/postage	£4,754	£10,603
Raising funds	£1,627	£1,557
IT	£8,035	£6,710
Professional services	£11,593	£13,379
Salaries	£43,775	£37,247
Travel*	£25,293	£11,494
Education project**	£94,000	£0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£232,112</b>	<b>£115,596</b>

Expense category	Description
Advertising/ Promotional	APTUK promotional materials including posters / banners / animation
Conference and bursary costs	Bursaries and conference production fees
Subscriptions	Companies House, NCVO, ICO
Office / General administrative costs	Indemnity insurance, general administrative costs, rent, storage
Printing / postage	New member packs, PTJ print and postage

Raising funds	Direct debit fees, Stripe fees
IT	Microsoft, equipment, phone, website hosting & maintenance fees
Professional services	Accountant fees, Human Resources support, GDPR compliance
Salaries	Salaries, pension, PAYE
Travel	Travel and accommodation expenses
Education project	Development of a UK Post-Registration Career Pathway for Pharmacy Technicians

*\*NB: for international representation in 2023/24 all international travel, accommodation and food was solely funded by the conference providers, not APTUK.*

*\*\*NB: The Education monies were all allocated at the start of the project, so have been accrued as an expense to ensure the income doesn't show as profit at year end (it is a not-for-profit project) and therefore incur 19% corporation tax.*



#### Bank account summary

	Current account	Reserve account
Opening balance - 30.4.23	£83,121.25	£29,071.92
Closing balance - 30.4.24	£184,180.72	£29,478.17

## Appendix 1

### Executive Committee & Substantive roles

President	Nicola Stockmann	<a href="mailto:president@aptuk.org">president@aptuk.org</a>
Vice President	Amy Laflin	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@aptuk.org">vicepresident@aptuk.org</a>
Membership Director	Joe Myers	<a href="mailto:membershipdirector@aptuk.org">membershipdirector@aptuk.org</a>
Education Director	Philip Jones	<a href="mailto:educationdirector@aptuk.org">educationdirector@aptuk.org</a>
Business Development Director	Andrew Woods	<a href="mailto:businessdevelopment@aptuk.org">businessdevelopment@aptuk.org</a>
Operations Lead	Vicky Hope	<a href="mailto:operations@aptuk.org">operations@aptuk.org</a>
Membership Coordinator	Lynn Ali	<a href="mailto:membership@aptuk.org">membership@aptuk.org</a>
Professional Lead, England	Trudy Krysta	<a href="mailto:England@aptuk.org">England@aptuk.org</a>
Professional Lead, Wales	Emily Guerin	<a href="mailto:wales@aptuk.org">wales@aptuk.org</a>
Professional Lead, Scotland	Melanie Bryan	<a href="mailto:Scotland@aptuk.org">Scotland@aptuk.org</a>
Professional Lead, Northern Ireland	Warren Francis	<a href="mailto:NI@aptuk.org">NI@aptuk.org</a>
Branch Liaison Executive	Kristy Garton	<a href="mailto:branchliaison@aptuk.org">branchliaison@aptuk.org</a>
EDI Executive	Shamma Baig	<a href="mailto:EDI@aptuk.org">EDI@aptuk.org</a>
Editor, Pharmacy Technician Journal	Diane Torry	<a href="mailto:editor@aptuk.org">editor@aptuk.org</a>
Social Media executive	Laura Harrison	<a href="mailto:media@aptuk.org">media@aptuk.org</a>
Member Observer	Leighton Thompson	<a href="mailto:Leighton.memberobserver@aptuk.org">Leighton.memberobserver@aptuk.org</a>
Member Observer	Atif Akhtar	<a href="mailto:atif.memberobserver@aptuk.org">atif.memberobserver@aptuk.org</a>
Education Advisor	Elizabeth Harland	<a href="mailto:Education.advisor@aptuk.org">Education.advisor@aptuk.org</a>

Full biographies of the Executive Committee can be located on the [APTUK website](#).