



## APTUK position statement on the Pharmacy Workforce Race Equality Standard report

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On September 27th 2023, NHS England released a report on Pharmacy Workforce Race Equality Standard (PWRES) which is based on pharmacy data collected via the 2022 NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard programme.

According to David Webb, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England and Chair of the Inclusive Pharmacy Practice (IPP) Advisory Board, the publication of a PWRES report is a significant step in creating an evidence base to reveal racism, discrimination and inequality in career progression in the NHS pharmacy workforce and is an important deliverable from the IPP initiative. **He states:** *“The ultimate aim is for all employers across all settings to bring about the positive change we wish to see in people’s experiences of career progression, discrimination and racism, to ensure all colleagues are treated with the respect and fairness that they deserve, and that we retain the skills and maximise the potential of our diverse pharmacy workforce.”*

### **In response to the publication of this report, APTUK have issued the following statement:**

*APTUK welcomes the release of the PWRES report on the 27th of September 2023, and acknowledges the stark findings and disproportionate experiences and barriers faced by a number of our diverse pharmacy workforce. The data within the report taken from March 2022 outlines an unacceptable lived experience for our colleagues across both pharmacy professions in terms of progression, achievement and remuneration correlating negatively with their protected characteristics.*

*As the professional leadership body for pharmacy technicians, we acknowledge our role in enforcing positive and sustainable systemic change.*

*APTUK will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders for the development of additional indicators capable of illuminating racial inequalities in the pharmacy workforce and challenge as required. Timely release of future PWRES data bi-annually is welcome and essential to ensure this informs future activity, including the collaborative Inclusive Pharmacy Practice workstream which APTUK co-chairs.*

*The limitations are clearly set out in the report, highlighting that this is NHSE data taken from NHS trusts, and acknowledges as APTUK did earlier in 2023 that there is no central register of trainee pharmacy technicians. Subsequently, there is no data on the attrition and barriers faced by this group and the future workforce diversity also remains unknown. The consequence therefore is that targeted improvements may not be as impactful as intended. APTUK wrote to the General Pharmaceutical Council in June 2023 to request collaborative work on this data gap and we continue to await their response.*

*According to the PWRES data, 64% of pharmacy technicians (of 20,768) identified as being white and female. As highlighted by the report, many Black, Asian & minority ethnic pharmacy technicians are in lower Agenda for Change bandings. There has been considerable and effective challenge from pharmacy technicians and professional allies calling for job descriptions to be reviewed to allow both pharmacy professional groups to be eligible for application for higher banded roles. The professional barriers faced by pharmacy technicians are compounded for those from Black, Asian & minority ethnic backgrounds. APTUK has recruited into the education*

*provision within the executive team in order to support workstreams thus helping to develop career pathways and frameworks to support equal career progression opportunities.*

*APTUK commit to continuous and collaborative review of equal, diverse and inclusive priorities which will support both patient experience and the pharmacy team.*

A full statement from David Webb and details of the PWRES report can be found [here: https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/pharmacy-workforce-race-equality-standard-report/](https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/pharmacy-workforce-race-equality-standard-report/)

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On behalf of the APTUK Executive Committee