

**Digital-First Primary Care: Policy consultation on patient registration, funding  
and contracting rules**  
**Royal Pharmaceutical Society response**

Whilst we have no specific comments on the questions asked in this consultation we would just like to highlight that primary care is wider than general practice. Community pharmacies also support those patients who are registered with a GP and offer a range of services and care to people which may mean that they do not see a GP. Community pharmacies are more prevalent in under-deprived areas and already address the inverse care law. As well as investing in general practice in terms of digital advancements, consideration should be given to the wider primary care team and how they can provide care to people, particularly in under-doctored areas.

Digitisation should be about supporting the task and enabling clinicians to spend more time with patients and not just focus on providing efficiencies in a process. A digital first primary care system needs to make sure that it is still accessible to all, including those who are unable to use technology. It should not increase health inequalities. The impact of digital first providers needs to be monitored and evaluated in terms of their impact on the distortion of the market and causing instability for the provision of primary care in a neighbourhood.



Prof. Claire Anderson  
Chair, English Pharmacy Board

**About us**

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is the professional body for every pharmacist in Great Britain. We are the only body that represents all sectors and specialisms of pharmacy in Great Britain.

The RPS leads and supports the development of the pharmacy profession to deliver excellence of care and service to patients and the public. This includes the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy and the provision of professional standards and guidance to promote and deliver excellence. In addition, it promotes the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums.

Its functions and services include:

**Leadership, representation and advocacy:** Ensuring the expertise of the pharmacist is heard by governments, the media and the public.

**Professional development, education and support:** helping pharmacists deliver excellent care and also to advance their careers through professional advancement, career advice and guidance on good practice.

**Professional networking and publications:** hosting and facilitating a series of communication channels to enable pharmacists to discuss areas of common interest, develop and learn.