

## **Tase Oputu FRPharmS -Candidate for President of the Royal College of Pharmacy**

### **Why I am standing**

I am standing to be the first President of the Royal College of Pharmacy because this is a crucial moment for our profession. Pharmacy is rapidly evolving, with pharmacists soon qualifying as independent prescribers, teams delivering clinical care embedded in neighbourhoods, and advances in digital innovation and pharmacogenomics reshaping practice.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset expectations and build a body that truly represents, supports and advocates for pharmacy across GB and eventually across the UK.

This moment demands leadership that is credible, inclusive and grounded in practice. I care deeply about pharmacy and the future of the Royal College and believe I can help ensure it starts strong and delivers on its promise.

### **Leadership through change**

I bring experience not only of senior leadership, but of leading through challenge and transition. As Chair of the English Pharmacy Board, I have served during one of the most turbulent periods in the Society's history. Working closely with Assembly colleagues and the executive, I have helped navigate uncertainty while contributing to the governance and constitutional reforms that have made the Royal College possible.

This experience means I understand both the decisions that brought us here and the responsibilities that come with becoming a Royal College. The early years will require steadiness, judgement and the ability to lead with confidence while bringing people with us.

### **The scale of the task ahead**

The early years of the Royal College will not be easy. We face an ambitious and complex agenda: unifying different sectors of pharmacy, bringing together specialist groups, considering the future place of pharmacy technicians, and developing a clear five-year strategy.

That strategy must translate ambition into delivery. It must bring career frameworks, credentialling and professional standards to life in ways that support safe, confident practice at every stage and in every sector.

At the same time, we must rebuild engagement with members and demonstrate why belonging to a professional college matters.

A central part of this will be ensuring the Senate works well, bringing together the voices of England, Scotland and Wales in a way that is genuinely collaborative, not hierarchical. Each nation brings different strengths, challenges and policy contexts, and the Senate must be confident in reflecting those differences while shaping clear, shared positions.

These challenges will require thoughtful leadership, strong governance and the ability to bring people together, even when perspectives differ.

The first President will set the tone for the College's culture, confidence and credibility, shaping whether it feels inclusive, relevant and outward-looking, and whether it is experienced as something genuinely new.

### **What I would bring**

The President is a high-profile leadership role: representing pharmacy nationally and internationally, chairing the Senate, contributing as a trustee, and acting as a visible advocate for the profession. I am well placed to do that.

My career spans nearly thirty years across frontline hospital pharmacy, system leadership and national professional representation. In my current role, I lead medicines optimisation and medicines value work across an integrated care system, keeping me closely connected to the realities of practice, workforce pressures, patient safety, medicines complexity and the responsibility pharmacists carry every day.

I sit at the intersection of frontline practice and system leadership and I know how to bring those perspectives together to deliver meaningful change. That grounding is essential. The President must speak with credibility about both aspiration and reality.

Alongside my NHS career, I have taken on voluntary roles including volunteering in Tanzania (early career), Trustee at Pharmacy Research UK, school governor, and participation in national policy through the multidisciplinary NHS Assembly. I have also served on the RPS Assembly and Audit and Risk Committee, strengthening my understanding of governance, strategy, finances and accountability.

### **A strong national voice for pharmacy**

The Royal College needs a President who is confident, accessible and authoritative. Representing pharmacy externally in government, across the health system, with other Royal College, health professionals and in the media.

As EPB Chair, I have built those relationships. I have represented pharmacy in parliamentary settings, national conferences and policy discussions, and I am comfortable articulating the profession's contribution to patient care, prevention and health inequalities.

As President, I would ensure the Royal College is a respected and influential voice that advocates with confidence and earns its place at the table.

### **Bringing the profession together**

One of the Royal College's key challenges is uniting a diverse and fragmented profession through inclusive leadership and strong relationships. As EPB Chair, I focused on building trust, improving communication, and fostering psychological safety for open debate.

As President, I will emphasise collaborative leadership, ensuring that Councils, Senate, and broader leadership work together, incorporating all three national perspectives into our decision making and actions.

Engaging with membership is crucial. We must rebuild trust, listen closely, and reflect the realities of practice. I aim to empower Council members as visible advocates, making the College both responsive and proactive.

### **A profession that is changing**

Throughout my career, I have been dedicated to inclusion, diversity, and equity, with a proven track record in addressing barriers to progression and promoting inclusive leadership. As President, I will make inclusion a standard practice in decision-making and leadership development, ensuring that under-represented voices are amplified and everyone can thrive.

With the evolving demographics of our profession and the new expectations from emerging generations, the Royal College must adapt to remain relevant while upholding professionalism and public service.

### **Closing statement**

The establishment of the Royal College of Pharmacy presents a unique chance to shape our profession's future.

As President, I will focus on establishing the College as a confident national voice; delivering a bold five-year strategy; rebuilding engagement and championing inclusion.

This is a pivotal moment that requires leadership grounded in our history, current challenges and with clarity to take us forward.

I believe I bring that leadership, and I would be honoured to have your support.