

Meeting report for RCPharm Science and Research Committee

Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 11.00am – 1.00pm

Held via MS Teams

Attendees: Andy Fox, Bryony Franklin, Christine Bond, Christopher Remmington, Cristina Voicu, Gillian Hawksworth, Hend Abdelhakim, Jayne Lawrence, Ka-Wai Wan, Luigi Martini, Mar Estupiñán Fernández de Mesa, Margaret Watson, Matthew Shaw, Oisín Kavanagh, Olaolu Oloyede, Rachel Palmer, Roger Knaggs, Ryan Donnelly, Sophie Harding, Stephen Husbands

Umar Hatia

Amira Guirguis, Jegak Seo, Kate Ryan, Rebecca Braybrooks

Apologies: Barrie Kellam
Karen Baxter, Tase Oputu, Louise Goldring
Louise Dunsmure (AmEAG), Sunayana Shah (IPEAG)

1: Introduction

Title	Item 1. Introductions, apologies, declarations of interest and Developments (Chair)	Time of item: 11:00
Description	Introduction to the meeting and matters arising/developments since the last meeting	
Purpose	To review significant developments since the last meeting Welcome to all members Apologies Agree minutes/ notes from the previous meeting/matters arising Declarations of interests (Dols)	
Outcomes	Members were welcomed to the meeting, and the Chair provided a brief overview of the agenda. Apologies were noted from those unable to attend. The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.	

2: Relevance

Title	Item 2. SRC matters	Time of item: 11:10
Description	SRC to hear an update on all SRC matters	
Purpose	To hear Introductions from new SRC members • 10 new members	
Outcomes	Introductions were completed, including welcoming new members to the group. The high number of strong applications was noted, indicating the strength of interest in science and research amongst the profession. It was noted that a review of the Terms of Reference will follow once the College returns to business-as-usual after the current transition phase, as wider governance reviews are underway. The main discussion focused on establishing an expert network to support workload distribution, including engaging applicants who were not selected for SRC membership, creating a pool of experienced individuals with identified specialisms that the SRT could draw upon as needed. SRC members supported the proposal and highlighted potential interest, while emphasising the need for clear expectations for both the network and SRC. It was also noted that SRC reports directly to Senate and operates independently of other RCPharm groups, and that there is broader interest in reviewing how Expert Advisory Groups function. A draft proposal for the network development will be developed and taken through governance and approval processes to ensure a robust framework for the network. ACTION: Plans for a network to be progressed AG/CB	

Title	Item 3. Science & Research Update (Chief Scientist – Prof Amira Guirguis)	Time of item: 11:40
Description	An update from the Science and Research Team (SRT)	
Purpose	• Recruitment of a new Science and Research Manager (Part time) • Update of New Medicines, Better Medicines, Better Use of Medicines Guide (Presentation by Umar Hatia (MD) 10 mins presentation + 5 mins QnA) • 2026 RCPharm Annual Conference and Harrison Memorial medal (Presentation by Dr Jegak Seo) 10 mins presentation + 5 mins QnA • SRC feedback on the Science and Research Stream proposed programme themes and speaker invitations	

	• RCPHarm-JPAG Joint Summit 2026 (mid-October) programme proposal • Pharmacist AI Use & Impact survey results
Outcomes	The group were asked to share the SRT job advert widely – this had been previously sent to SRC by Rebecca. For notes on Umar Hatia presentation see under Working Groups. Jegak provided updates on the Annual Conference abstracts and the Harrison Memorial Medal, and SRC members were invited to nominate speakers on the theme “Leading Excellence in Pharmacy,” with submissions due to Rebecca by the end of next week; selections will be made in collaboration with the events team and SRT. ACTION: All to send suggested speaker names to AG/ RB Work is also underway on a project exploring the impact of AI in pharmacy, led by policy leads with data analysis completed by SRT. Plans to reinstate the Science Summit are progressing as a joint RCPHarm/JPAG event scheduled for 15 October, with a steering group established to guide content focused on areas such as weight management and weight loss medicines in practice. Members are encouraged to propose speakers and topics for this event and to share details of strong subject matter experts to support wider collaboration and help raise the profession’s profile. ACTION: All to send suggested speaker names for science and research summit to AG/ RB Jegak presented an overview of the Annual Conference abstract submission process and website. The group highlighted previous challenges with the reviewer experience, particularly around usability and workflow of the STOVA platform. The process will follow the same timeline as last year, with a session for abstract reviewers to be arranged for early June and recorded so those unable to attend the meeting can watch in their own time. Early poster submission requirements were discussed, driven by app development needs, alongside a need to improve the organisation of poster presentations, including locations and timings. With a planned limit of 110 abstracts for publication, due to budgetary restrictions, approaches to managing oversubscription will include grading and prioritising the strongest submissions. Emphasis was placed on ensuring a smooth, well-organised process under the new RCPHarm structure, balancing inclusivity

	with maintaining quality and reputation. There were also discussions around capacity for on-the-day assessment of posters, minimising administrative burden, and ensuring clear communication, strong planning, and effective expectation management throughout.
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Title	Item 4. SRC Update from Working Groups (Chairs)	Time of item: 12:10
Description	SRC to hear from working group Chairs and ratify decisions	
Purpose	To hear an update from the working groups– • New Medicines and Emerging Technologies WG (Rachel Palmer 5 min) • Research across the Profession WG, PRAG and Incubator (Christine Bond 5 min) ◦ RCPPharm Conference support for Abstract marking • Safer Medicines and Safer Medicines Usage WG (a new Chair is needed) • To engage new SRC members	
Outcomes	New Medicines and Emerging Technologies WG: An update was provided on the development of the Better Meds/New Medicines document, which is intended to be a comprehensive, evidence-based resource underpinned by the evolving science of pharmacy practice and roles. A short presentation was given by Umar Hatia who was a post graduate Master's student at UCL supervised by Hend Abdelhakim. He had already updated some of the sections of the original document. Project objectives focus on ensuring accuracy, currency, and alignment with current evidence across all sections. Key considerations raised included clarifying the target audience and scope, with suggestions to incorporate areas such as deprescribing, biologics, post-Brexit supply challenges, environmental impact, alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals, and inclusion of at-risk populations. There was also discussion regarding clarity of professional roles within the content to ensure alignment with existing guidance. Going forward section headings, including any new areas will be circulated, with members invited to indicate whether they could either update, or review updated content of the different sections. The proposed wider network may support the review process. The document will be a key Royal College resource and an early draft was planned for September. ACTION: All to respond to request for support with updating the New Meds document	

	Research across the Profession: Updates were provided on the RAP group's activities, which focus on supporting professionals to meet competencies and standards across research domains. Plans are being progressed by Joseph's team to support those who are seeking credentialing to meet the criteria for the research domains of the career frameworks. There is collaboration with the UKPRAG, which has the objective of building research capacity and capability across the profession. A draft research strategy is currently progressing through the NHS publication process. CB and AG had provided feedback on the REF Unit 3 Assessment 3 criteria to Carmel Hughes (Chair of Unit 3) and Delyth James (member). CH/DJ will be invited to next SRC meeting to provide further details to SRC members. , The RAP group will also oversee the abstract review process and is seeking additional reviewers from the wider SRC. ACTION: all to consider volunteering to review conference abstracts Safer Medicines and Safer Medicines Usage; Plans were shared to reinvigorate the Medicines Safety Group to strengthen collaboration with other RC and external groups. Governance considerations are being checked. Kate Ryan joined and introduced herself as the RCPharm Patient Safety Manager who is keen to work closely with SRC. Members were encouraged to join working groups, with Rebecca to circulate a sign-up table. ACTION: All to respond to request to sign up to one of the Working Groups
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Title	Item 5. Media updates (Chief Scientist – Prof Amira Guirguis)	Time of item: 12:35
Description	SRC to hear from the Chief Scientist and update of the SRC on media enquiries and response to consultations since the last meeting	
Purpose	To hear an update– General Pharmaceutical Journal (PJ) Chief Scientist's monthly blog 1. Pharmacy research must help shape the profession's next chapter – The Pharmaceutical Journal 27 April 2026 2. Interview held with Cathrine McKenzie 30th April (draft in-progress) 3. Interview held with Jayne Lawrence 5th May Media enquiries	

	1. Codeine-containing medicines and dependence-related safety concerns. Apr 2026. 2. Commercial clinical trials, participant safety and public-facing interpretation of medicines research. Apr 2026. 3. Nitazenes and emerging synthetic opioid-related public health risks. Apr 2026. 4. IV vitamin drips, wellness claims and evidence-based consumer safety considerations. Apr 2026. 5. Nasal decongestant sprays, prolonged use and rebound congestion risk. ITV News. Apr 2026. a. Gov.UK 30 Apr 2026 b. ITV online 30 Apr 2026 c. Sky News 30 Apr 2026 d. Daily Mail 1 May 2026 e. The Sun & The Scottish Sun 1 May 2026 6. GLP-1 receptor agonists, weight-loss drug safety, side effects and wider public health implications. BBC. May 2026. 7. GLP-1 medicines, weight-loss treatment options, safe use, regulation and patient counselling. ITV News. May 2026. 8. Obesity drugs replace oncology as highest value area for drug development - The Pharmaceutical Journal. 7 May 2026 Response to consultations 1. Smoke-free, heated tobacco-free and vape-free places in England. 27 April 2026 – evidences passed to policy team 2. Pharmacist AI Use & Impact. 8 May 2026
Outcomes	Chief scientist blog, inspiring research in pharmacy is ongoing. Interest in specific research methods – signposting to examples.

3: Any Other Business

Title	Item 6. AOB, Chair	Time of item: 12:40
Description	Any other business beyond the agenda for wider discussion	
Purpose	To hear any other business items, and horizon scanning	

Outcomes	Oisín reminded the group that there was a NICE Consultation open (at the time of meeting) to review the process by which the cost-effectiveness of medicines was assessed.
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Reminder of dates of next meetings:

Meeting 3 – Tuesday 8th September 11am – 1pm via MS Teams

Meeting 4 – Thursday 5th November 11am – 2pm in person

Proposed joint RCPHarm/JPAG science summit 15th October, London

RCPHarm Annual Conference – Friday 6th November, London