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**Report on applications for NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacist places in  
England & Wales for the 2013 intake (1<sup>st</sup> round of recruitment)**

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**Introduction**

The National Recruitment Scheme is the system through which pharmacy undergraduates and OSPAP students apply for pre-registration trainee pharmacist posts in NHS hospitals in England and Wales. The application stage of recruitment is handled by Pharmalife (Webstar Health) with all other stages of recruitment handled by the hospitals or regional panels. Recruitment for the 2013 intake of trainees took place in 2012. This report provides a summary of the application stage of recruitment for the first round of recruitment for the 2013 intake of trainees.

**Number of places advertised**

There was a reduction in the number of pre-registration training positions compared to last year (n = 642 for the 2013 intake and n= 660 for the 2012 intake).

**Number of applications**

There were a total of 6026 applications from 1559 students for the 2013 intake. This is a **14.1% increase** in applications compared with the 2012 intake (5280 applications and 1358 students) and a 9.30% increase in applications compared with the 2011 intake (5514 applications and 1416 students).

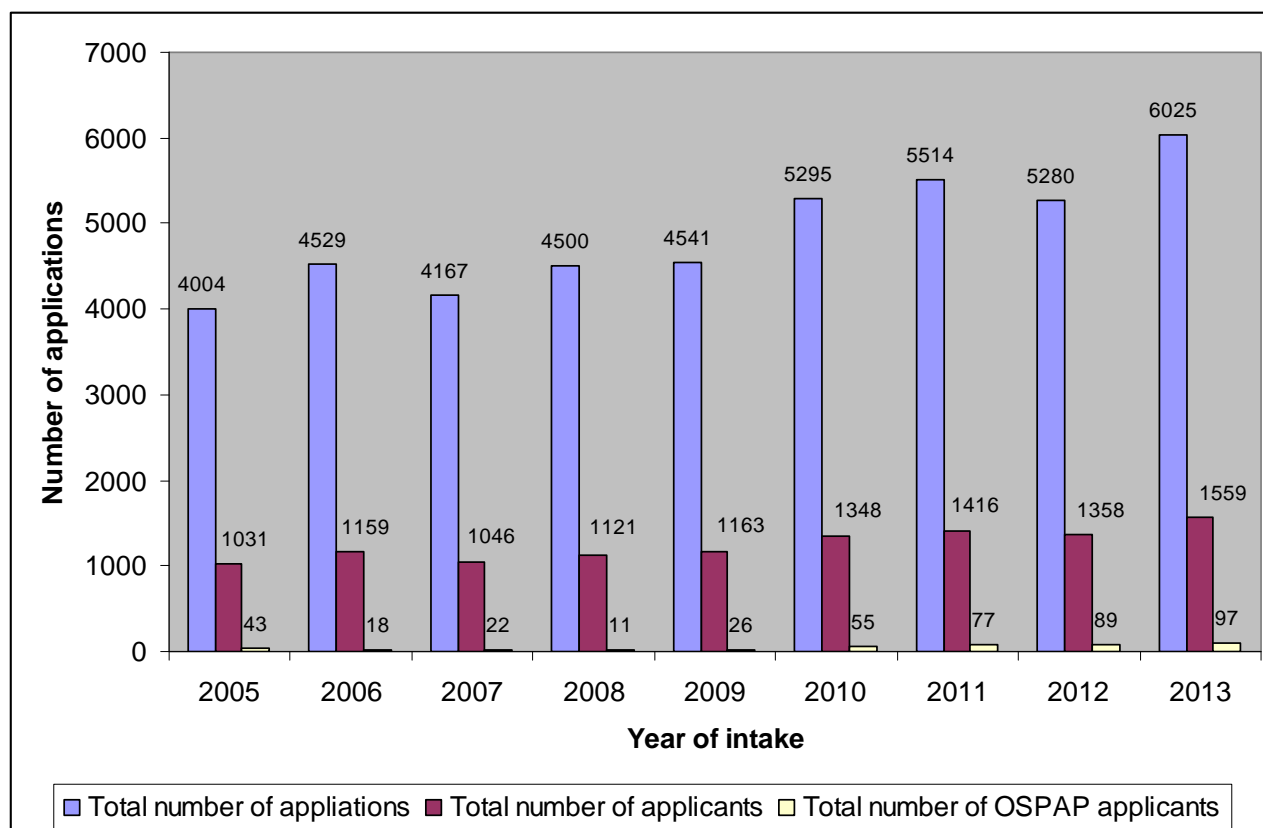
97 applicants were from the Overseas Pharmacist Assessment Programme (OSPAP course) compared with 86 for the 2012 intake and 77 for the 2011 intake. There were also applications from 6 EEA Pharmacists who were required by the GPhC to undertake pre-registration training.

The application statistics are shown in the figure 1.0 on page 2.

**Timing of applications**

1.9 % of applications (n = 115) had been made by the end of June. The majority of applications were made in August 90.0% (n= 5746) with 38.2 % (n = 2304) of applications were made in the last three days. The numbers of "last minute" applications was much **lower** than the last 2 years when the figure was 69% (2012 intake) and 65.9% (2011 intake). No late applications were accepted and students who missed the deadline were advised to apply in the second round.

Figure 1.0: Applications and applicants



### Applications per hospital

With the increase in student numbers, there was more competition for posts than last year. There was an average of 35.44 applications per hospital (range 3 – 197) compared with 30.7 applications per hospital last year.

On average there were 9.4 applications per advertised post (compared with 8 applications per advertised post last year). There were a total of 1559 students applying for 656 advertised posts (2.38 students per advertised post for the 2013 intake, which is **higher** than last year when there were applications from 2.05 students per advertised post).

University College London, Royal Free, Whittington and St Pancras Hospitals received the highest number of applications  $n = 197$ . Three non-London hospitals were in the top 10 (compared with one last year), and ten were in the top 20 (compared with seven last year).

The average number of applications per hospital and the average number of applications per post advertised were **higher** than last year.

### Applicants from Schools of Pharmacy

Applications were made from the following Schools of Pharmacy. The University of Ulster will produce their first MPharm graduates in 2013. Brighton, Aston and Sunderland will produce their first MSc OSPAP graduates in 2013.

| Intake                    | Number of MPharm applicants |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                           | 2005                        | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
| Aberdeen                  | 31                          | 43   | 45   | 43   | 45   | 39   | 53   | 36   | 32   |
| Aston                     | 66                          | 92   | 90   | 62   | 68   | 65   | 61   | 39   | 43   |
| Bath                      | 70                          | 87   | 70   | 52   | 67   | 64   | 77   | 50   | 61   |
| Belfast (Queens)          | 3                           | 7    | 9    | 8    | 6    | 5    | 2    | 7    | 4    |
| Bradford                  | 25                          | 41   | 33   | 48   | 42   | 58   | 31   | 34   | 37   |
| Brighton                  | 70                          | 69   | 80   | 75   | 85   | 65   | 74   | 51   | 42   |
| Cardiff                   | 58                          | 66   | 61   | 67   | 44   | 66   | 72   | 63   | 63   |
| Central Lancashire        |                             |      |      |      |      |      | 18   | 32   | 33   |
| Hertfordshire             |                             |      |      |      | 22   | 49   | 60   | 44   | 64   |
| Huddersfield              |                             |      |      |      |      |      |      | 29   | 38   |
| Keele                     |                             |      |      |      |      | 23   | 27   | 34   | 40   |
| Kingston                  |                             |      |      | 30   | 47   | 52   | 59   | 43   | 90   |
| Leicester                 | 48                          | 59   | 54   | 65   | 47   | 44   | 40   | 49   | 44   |
| Liverpool                 | 56                          | 66   | 48   | 42   | 77   | 45   | 54   | 55   | 53   |
| London Kings              | 62                          | 71   | 52   | 72   | 50   | 69   | 55   | 64   | 60   |
| London School of Pharmacy | 155                         | 112  | 126  | 116  | 99   | 98   | 99   | 95   | 128  |
| Manchester                | 73                          | 98   | 99   | 107  | 89   | 94   | 82   | 100  | 85   |
| Medway                    |                             |      |      | 47   | 42   | 88   | 84   | 56   | 62   |
| Norwich (UEA)             |                             |      | 28   | 53   | 43   | 56   | 55   | 48   | 63   |
| Nottingham                | 94                          | 98   | 85   | 82   | 79   | 111  | 108  | 116  | 124  |
| Portsmouth                | 82                          | 91   | 58   | 46   | 67   | 64   | 47   | 50   | 64   |
| Reading                   |                             |      |      |      | 20   | 54   | 60   | 44   | 56   |
| Strathclyde               | 14                          | 22   | 18   | 8    | 10   | 17   | 24   | 36   | 51   |
| Sunderland                | 81                          | 94   | 90   | 87   | 77   | 49   | 57   | 67   | 91   |
| University of Ulster      |                             |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 1    |
| Wolverhampton             |                             |      |      |      |      | 17   | 11   | 26   | 27   |

|  | Number of OSPAP applicants |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|--|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Intake   | 2005                       | 2006        | 2007        | 2008        | 2009        | 2010        | 2011        | 2012        | 2013        |
| International **   | 43                         | 21          | 22          | 11          |             |             |             |             |             |
| Aberdeen OSPAP PgDip   |                            |             |             |             | 0           | 2           | 6           | 7           | 6           |
| Aberdeen MSc OSPAP   |                            |             |             |             |             |             | 3           | 4           | 6           |
| Aston OSPAP PgDip  |                            |             |             |             | 9           | 35          | 30          | 36          | 17          |
| Aston MSc OSPAP  |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 9           |
| Brighton OSPAP PgDip   |                            |             |             |             | 11          | 11          | 20          | 19          | 22          |
| Brighton MSc OSPAP   |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 5           |
| Hertfordshire OSPAP PgDip  |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             | 2           | 3           |
| Kingston OSPAP PgDip   |                            |             |             |             |             |             | 0           | 7           | 14          |
| Sunderland OSPAP PgDip   |                            |             |             |             | 6           | 8           | 17          | 12          | 2           |
| Sunderland MSc OSPAP   |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 13          |
| Number of EEA Pharmacist applicants***                                       |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Intake   | 2005                       | 2006        | 2007        | 2008        | 2009        | 2010        | 2011        | 2012        | 2013        |
| EEA*** Schools of Pharmacy   |                            |             |             |             |             |             |             | 3           | 6           |
| <b>Total number of applicants<br/>(MPharm + OSPAP + EEA<br/>Pharmacists)</b> | <b>1031</b>                | <b>1137</b> | <b>1068</b> | <b>1121</b> | <b>1163</b> | <b>1348</b> | <b>1416</b> | <b>1358</b> | <b>1559</b> |

\*\* The 2009 intake was the first time that we had a breakdown of the Schools of Pharmacy for the OSPAP course.

\*\*\* EEA Pharmacists with notification from the GPhC to undertake pre-registration training (adaptation training)

### Academic references

Academic references were not requested for a total of 52 MPharm students who submitted their academic referee details after the 30<sup>th</sup> June deadline. In addition, 8 references were requested but not received by the deadline, making a total of 60 students with missing references. Referees and students who met the deadline were contacted during August to chase outstanding references. In addition a list of outstanding references was sent to the pre-registration co-ordinator at each school of pharmacy to ask them to follow up the references or find a replacement referee if necessary. If no reference has been collected for the student the application specified the reason e.g. No reference because academic referee details submitted late. Or – academic referee details submitted on time but referee did not submit reference.

The validity of all applications and academic references were confirmed and applications from anyone who was not eligible to apply were removed.

### Discussion and conclusions –

A new website was developed for the 2013 intake. Overall the new website has performed well with hospitals receiving their applications on the agreed date (Saturday 01.09.2012). There were a few technical problems which were identified by the hospitals and these were resolved promptly by Pharmalife.

The new functionality to make offers online and for students to respond online worked well on the whole. The majority of students responded to an offer within 72 hours. An in depth analysis on offers and student responses will be provided at a later date. If a student was on a reserve list they were more likely to keep an offer at another hospital on hold until they had a final outcome from all of their hospitals. Hospitals were slow to update their reserve lists and despite frequent reminders from Pharmalife some hospitals filled all their places but left some students on reserve lists or with uncoded interview outcomes. This impacted on student responses as they tended to keep offers on hold for longer as they were waiting to see if they were offered a place from a preferred hospital.

On the whole the new website has been a significant improvement over the old website. Some functionality worked better than other functionality and therefore some fine tuning will be needed for the 2014 intake. There is ongoing development work to improve the reporting, communication and monitoring functionality of the website. After completion of the second round of recruitment regional leads will be asked to provide feedback on behalf of their regions and we will hold some webinar meetings to discuss how to fine tune the website for future intakes.