

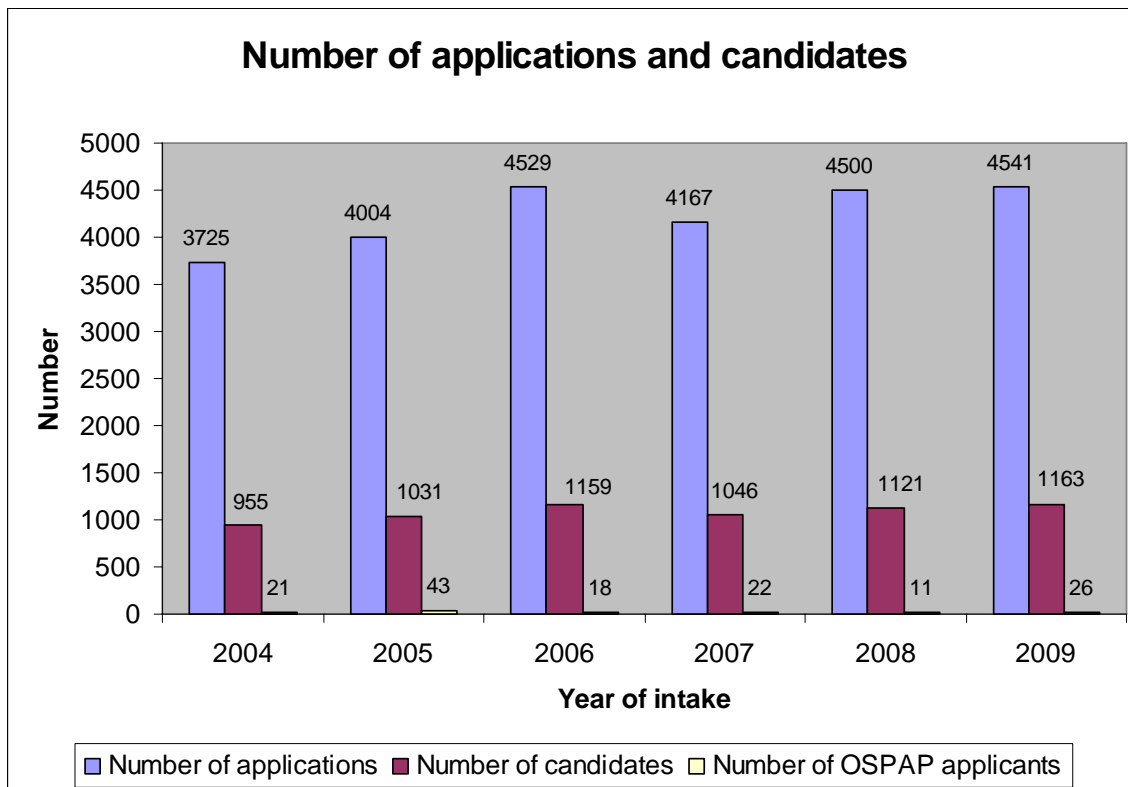
## Report on the first round of recruitment for the 2009 intake of NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacists (England & Wales)

### Introduction

The National Recruitment Scheme is the system through which pharmacy undergraduates apply for pre-registration trainee pharmacist posts in NHS hospitals in England and Wales. This report provides a summary of the activity in the first round of recruitment in 2008 for the 2009 intake, and suggests aspects of the scheme that the NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee (NHS PEDC) may wish to discuss.

### Number of applications

There were a total of 4541 applications for posts, from 1163 candidates for the 2009 intake of NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacists. This is a very slight increase compared with the 2008 intake (4500 applications and 1121 candidates). 26 candidates were from the Overseas Pharmacist Assessment Programme (OSPAP course) compared with 11 for the 2008 intake. These statistics are shown in the graph below.



197 candidates were not from the UK/EEA, and required permission to work in the UK for the 2009 intake (compared with 168 in the 2008 intake and 142 in the 2007 intake).

There was an average of 25.5 applications per site (range 1 – 173). The average number of applications was similar to last year's figure of 25.8.

633 pre-registration training positions were advertised for the 2009 intake. On average there were 7.17 applications per advertised post (compared with 7.3/post last year). There were a total of 1163 candidates for 633 advertised posts (1.83 candidates per post compared with 1.67 candidates per post last year).

As in previous years, Guy's & St Thomas's received the highest number of applications. Two non-London hospitals were in the top 10, and 5 were in the top 20. All hospitals had at least one application.

### Timing of applications

5.1% of applications (235) had been made by the end of June. 58.7% (2666) of applications were made in the last three days. The numbers of "last minute" applications were similar to last year when the figure was 60%.

An additional 10 "late" applications were made after the closing date in September. This number is lower than last year (n = 49). Webstar Health telephoned candidates who had draft applications in the system, but had not submitted them by the deadline, to see if they wanted to submit them. This accounts for the 10 late applications.

### Applicants from Schools of Pharmacy

Applications were made from the following Schools of Pharmacy. Two new schools of pharmacy (Hertfordshire and Reading) will produce their first graduates in 2009.

Intake	Number of applicants						
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>MPharm course</b>							
Aberdeen	36	36	31	43	45	43	45
Aston	65	82	66	92	90	62	68
Bath	63	83	70	87	70	52	67
Belfast	6	2	3	7	9	8	6
Bradford	8	8	25	41	33	48	42
Brighton	55	57	70	69	80	75	85
Cardiff	62	68	58	66	61	67	44
Hertfordshire							22
Kingston						30	47
Leicester	41	45	48	59	54	65	47
Liverpool	40	68	56	66	48	42	77
London Kings	59	83	62	71	52	72	50
London School of Pharmacy	93	103	155	112	126	116	99
Manchester	75	64	73	98	99	107	89
Medway						47	42
Norwich (UEA)					28	53	43
Nottingham	84	89	94	98	85	82	79
Portsmouth	50	70	82	91	58	46	67
Reading							20
Strathclyde	18	11	14	22	18	8	10
Sunderland	71	65	81	94	90	87	77

Intake OSPAP course	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
International *	15	21	43	21	22	11	
Aberdeen							0
Aston							9
Brighton							11
Sunderland							6
<b>Total number of applicants (MPharm + OSPAP)</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>1031</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>1121</b>	<b>1163</b>

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

A more detailed analysis of applicants per Schools of Pharmacy can be found in Appendix 1.0.

### Academic references

References were not requested for a total of 99 candidates. In addition, 40 references were requested but not received by the deadline, making a total of 139 candidates with missing references. This compares with a figure of 102 last year and 31 the year before.

Candidates were told they needed to register by 30<sup>th</sup> June in order for their referee to be contacted. In practice, references were requested for any candidate who registered on the system up until 1<sup>st</sup> August (over a month after the stated deadline). A number of referees were uncontactable, either because the candidate had given an incorrect e-mail address, or in a number of cases the referee had left the institution. Referees and, candidates were contacted on 8<sup>th</sup> August to chase outstanding references. In addition a list of outstanding referees was sent to the pre-registration co-ordinator at each school of pharmacy to ask them to follow up the referees or find a replacement referee if necessary.

### Validity of applications

Webstar Health confirmed the validity of all applications. One student had applied to 8 hospitals using 4 different email addresses. This was not noticed by Pharmalife as the second set of applications was not made until 31<sup>st</sup> August. The Lead for the National Recruitment Scheme noticed the multiple applications when checking the statistics. The School of Pharmacy and the hospitals that this student applied to were contacted as soon as this was identified.

### Conclusions

The scheme appears to have performed well with hospitals receiving their application details in the agreed timescales and with no major problems being reported. Pharmalife has been efficient and responsive and has agreed to all service improvements requested. These include:

- A review of the online application form resulting in changes to the questions
- Uploading of job descriptions and person specifications on the website
- Rewriting the FAQ section for students and a new FAQ section for employers
- An online questionnaire to obtain students opinions of the National Recruitment Scheme booklet

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Communication and referral of queries by Pharmalife to the National Recruitment Scheme lead has improved and all queries are answered within 2 working days.

**Suggested areas for discussion by NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee**

An analysis of these statistics and a review of enquiries dealt with by the National Recruitment Scheme lead highlights a number of issues that the committee may wish to discuss including:

- Availability and timing of academic references
- A complaint from an academic about Pharmalife chasing academic referees
- Acceptance of late applications

**October 2008**

**Helen Middleton**

**Lead for the National Recruitment Scheme for NHS pre-registration trainee pharmacists  
(England & Wales)**

## Appendix 1.0

The table below compares the numbers of expected graduates per year and the number of students applying to hospital pharmacy per year. This has then been calculated as a percentage in order to show trends. N.B. Data on OSPAP applicants per School of Pharmacy was not available prior to the 2009 intake. N.B. expected numbers of graduates are based on the numbers of students enrolled on these cohorts. Most Schools expect some attrition before these cohorts graduate.

	<u>No expected to graduate 2006</u>	<u>No of hospital pharmacy applicants 2006</u>	<u>% students applying to hospital pharmacy 2006</u>	<u>No expected to graduate 2007</u>	<u>No of hospital pharmacy applicants 2007</u>	<u>% students applying to hospital pharmacy 2007</u>	<u>No expected to graduate 2008</u>	<u>No of hospital pharmacy applicants 2008</u>	<u>% students applying to hospital pharmacy 2008</u>	<u>No expected to graduate 2009</u>	<u>No of hospital pharmacy applicants 2009</u>	<u>% students applying to hospital pharmacy 2009</u>
<b>MPharm</b>												
Aberdeen	134	43	32.09%	99	45	45.45%	135	43	31.85%	165	45	27.27%
Aston	141	92	65.25%	165	90	54.55%	170	62	36.47%	170	68	40.00%
Bath	98	87	88.78%	110	70	63.64%	122	52	42.62%	122	67	54.92%
Belfast	130	7	5.38%	130	9	6.92%	144	8	5.56%	144	6	4.17%
Bradford	55	41	74.55%	69	33	47.83%	103	48	46.60%	92	42	45.65%
Brighton	100	69	69.00%	131	80	61.07%	132	75	56.82%	140	85	60.71%
Cardiff	92	66	71.74%	101	61	60.40%	121	67	55.37%	121	44	36.36%
Hertfordshire										52	22	42.31%
Kingston							40	30	75.00%	75	47	62.67%
Leicester	100	59	59.00%	100	54	54.00%	170	65	38.24%	140	47	33.57%
Liverpool	131	66	50.38%	130	48	36.92%	140	42	30.00%	140	77	55.00%

London, Kings	80	71	88.75%	85	52	61.18%	102	72	70.59%	110	50	45.45%
London, SoP	160	112	70.00%	190	126	66.32%	195	116	59.49%	210	99	47.14%
Manchester	150	98	65.33%	180	99	55.00%	180	107	59.44%	180	89	49.44%
Medway							80	47	58.75%	80	42	52.50%
Norwich				68	28	41.18%	90	53	58.89%	90	43	47.78%
Nottingham	142	98	69.01%	135	85	62.96%	155	82	52.90%	155	79	50.97%
Portsmouth	130	91	70.00%	140	58	41.43%	145	46	31.72%	130	67	51.54%
Reading										43	20	46.51%
Strathclyde	113	22	19.47%	106	18	16.98%	122	8	6.56%	122	10	8.20%
Sunderland	150	94	62.67%	170	90	52.94%	130	87	66.92%	130	77	59.23%
<b>OSPAP conversion courses</b>												
Aberdeen										25	0	0.00%
Aston										60	9	15.00%
Brighton										30	11	36.67%
Sunderland										50	6	12.00%

Percentage of MPharm students applying to Hospital Pharmacy

