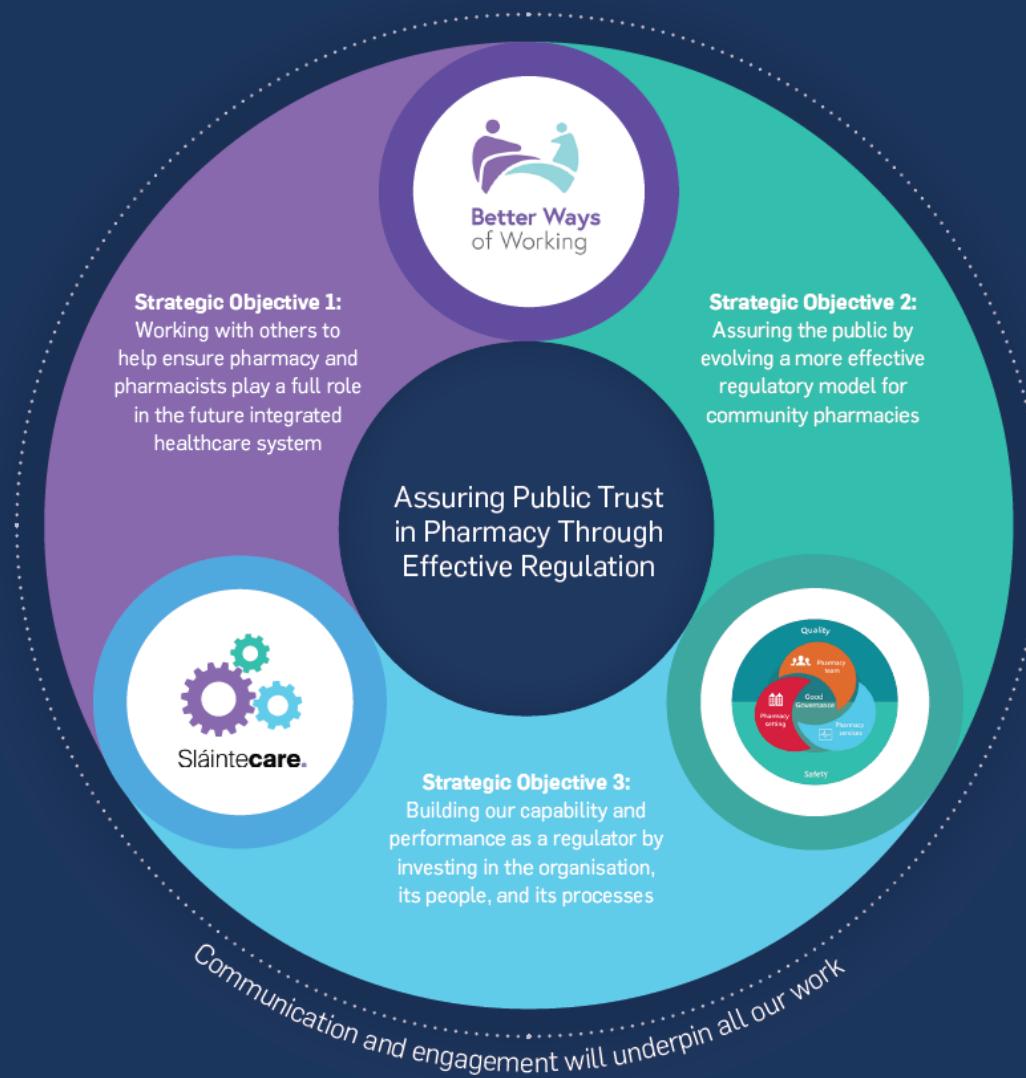


Service Plan

2024



"Assuring public trust in pharmacy through effective regulation"

PSI Corporate Strategy 2021 - 2024

Our mission, vision and values

Our Mission

We protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public by taking timely and effective action to ensure that pharmacists in Ireland are competent and that pharmacies are operating to high standards of safety and reliability.

Our Vision

That the public has access to trusted pharmacy services and that the PSI makes a clear and demonstrable contribution to the availability and quality of those services.

Our Values

Our values underpin how we deliver on our mission. They guide our behaviour, the expectations we set ourselves, and the experience of others who engage with us. They provide evidence as to our commitment to equality and human rights in how we fulfil our role.

Our values ensure that we meet with the high standards expected of public bodies and of the public servants who work within them.



Serve the public

The safety of the public is at the heart of everything we do, and we act to ensure that safety.



Everyone Counts

We value, appreciate and respect everyone we engage with.



Work Together

We work in partnership with our colleagues and all our stakeholders.



Lead by example

We behave with integrity and objectivity. Our actions are evidence-based and timely.



Embrace Change

We are innovative and we adapt to achieve results and continuously improve.

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1. Introduction

In December of each year, in accordance with applicable legislation¹ and in compliance with the provisions of the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*,² the PSI Executive develops a Service Plan which, in the context of our current Corporate Strategy, sets out the work programme and priority activities for the coming year. The proposed Service Plan is considered for approval by the PSI Council in December of each year. The approved Service Plan is a public document and is published on the PSI website.

Our Service Plan for 2024 provides an overview of our strategic development agenda for the year. It details the projects that will be carried out by the PSI during 2024, together with details of the supporting budget for the year.

In 2024, we are commencing the final year of our Corporate Strategy 2021-2024. This strategy, which follows on from our previous strategy for 2018-2020, defines our central organisational goal to be '***Assuring public trust in pharmacy through effective regulation***'. This is the key goal by which we will assess our decisions and actions during 2024 and is a measure against which the public and our stakeholders can hold us to account as a public body.

Our strategic agenda and projects in 2024 are intended to deliver concrete results under each of the three strategic areas in our Corporate Strategy. These are;

- Advancing the Role of Pharmacy and Pharmacists in the Future Integrated Healthcare System
- Evolving a More Effective Regulatory Model for Community Pharmacies³
- Building our Capability and Performance as a Regulatory Organisation

Looking back – Progress made during year three of our 2021-2024 Corporate Strategy

Significant achievements have been made during the course of the Corporate Strategy 2021-2024. In 2023, the PSI Council made the decision to extend the corporate strategy for an additional year, up until the end of 2024. This decision was made in consideration of the amount of change the PSI has undergone in the last number of years through the Business Transformation Programme, the implementation of a new organisation structure, a change in leadership and a change in moving from remote to blended working. These changes have

¹ Article 22 of Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Act, 2007.

² As published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2016/2020)

³ The Pharmacy Act refers to "Retail Pharmacy Businesses". In this document, we are using the term "Community Pharmacy" to refer to all pharmacies registered with PSI that provide medicines and other pharmacy services **directly to the public**, whether at community level or via hospital pharmacy departments.

had a significant impact on both staff and the ability of the organisation to implement the objectives outlined in the strategy in the time period assigned.

A number of objectives are multi-annual in nature. Significant work has been undertaken in relation to our Business Transformation Programme, which underpins the PSI's digital transformation agenda, which commenced with the launch of the new registration portal for PSI applicants and registrants in Autumn 2021. A further phase of the programme was launched in 2023, and to date, the new system has streamlined the application process for applicants and users and improved the processing times for applications in the system.

In 2023, we published a Workforce Intelligence Report in order to establish a baseline view of the pharmacy workforce in Ireland. This was committed to in the absence of any previous strategic workforce planning initiatives for pharmacy in Ireland, and the imperative to ensure that there are enough pharmacists available to meet patient needs and play a full role in the development of the future integrated health system. The Report assessed risks to the continued availability of the pharmacy workforce within community and hospital pharmacy and proposed mitigating actions for implementation with agreement from relevant health system and pharmacy stakeholders. Amongst the reasons for taking a strategic view on this matter were reports from stakeholders of difficulties that may be emerging concerning the availability of the pharmacist workforce in patient-facing roles. Progress on strategic workforce planning for pharmacy can only be achieved if it has input and commitment from stakeholders across the wider health system. We have obtained agreement and commitment on the actions, their owners and timelines from the organisations who were represented on the Working Group throughout this project. We would like to acknowledge the significant contribution of the individual membership of the Working Group, which included a wide range of stakeholders seeking to contribute to the evolution of policy and impact decisions relating to the future role of and demands for pharmacists in the health system. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders as we progress the recommendations and actions outlined in this report during 2024 and as part of the development of our next Corporate Strategy.

Another significant piece of work that was carried out in 2023 was the review of the CPD model for pharmacists and the development of a CPD model for pharmaceutical assistants. Work on the implementation of the recommendations of both reviews will be carried out in 2024.

PSI continued to work to assure robust frameworks were in place to support pharmacy involvement in the delivery of both influenza and COVID-19 primary vaccination and booster services to patients. We continued to approve all required new vaccination training programmes for pharmacists and to make available information to our registrants across a range of topics, including access to guidance and updates to support their practices and compliance with legislative provisions.

As COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, PSI recommenced in-person disciplinary inquiries at our offices in Dublin city centre, with hearings prior to that having been confined to a “remote” environment using technology. Assessing compliance continued through visits to pharmacies, much more of which has been in-person in 2023 than was possible over the previous two years.

We continued our engagement and collaborative activities with the Department of Health, the HSE, other health and social care regulators, Schools of Pharmacy, representative bodies and others throughout 2023 to support the healthcare system in line with our regulatory role and functions. We appreciate the input and feedback we receive from stakeholders across the range of our regulatory work.

Our role in the public interest is extensive. This Service Plan reaffirms PSI’s purpose and commitment to deliver on our strategic objectives for the final year of the Corporate Strategy 2021-2024.

Implementation and oversight

The PSI’s Executive Leadership Team develops detailed implementation and project plans for the work outlined in our Service Plan and keeps the delivery of the Service Plan under regular review. Progress towards achieving the objectives detailed in the four-year Corporate Strategy and against this annual Service Plan are reported at the regular meetings of the PSI Council and of its Advisory Committees.⁴ Recognising that risk is a constant in today’s world and a critical governance concern, the PSI’s Executive Leadership Team also ensures that the organisation is responsive to risk by reviewing and appropriately managing our organisational risks and, via the PSI Audit and Risk Committee, providing ongoing assurance to the Council in this regard.

Implementation of the Corporate Strategy 2021-2024

In 2024, PSI will continue its organisational development and business transformation journey. We will also renew our focus on strategic human resources management through the full implementation of the HR Strategy 2021-2024 and ensure we have sufficient skilled resources to carry out our regulatory functions and strategic objectives.

Communication and engagement play a vital part in all aspects of our work. We recognise the need to assess and evolve our consultation and engagement processes to ensure that our work priorities and decisions are informed by consultation with PSI registrants, pharmacy students, higher education institutions, patients, the healthcare sector, and the general public. In 2024, through the ongoing implementation of our Communications Strategy 2021-2024 and the launch of a new website, we will continue to develop our channels of engagement so that we are learning from a broad community and gaining from

⁴ The Performance & Resources Committee and the Regulatory & Professional Policy Committee.

their input, as well as finding new ways of raising awareness about our role and that of pharmacists and of pharmacy services in Ireland.

As part of our goal of *assuring trust in pharmacy through effective regulation*, we will continue to work closely with other regulators and public bodies to ensure that we share relevant information, achieve ongoing efficiencies in service delivery, support quality improvement within healthcare and play a full part in safeguarding public health and welfare.

Promoting legislative reform to enable improved regulatory models is a key concern of the PSI Council under its Corporate Strategy 2021-2024. Significant effort will continue to be invested during 2024 in making progress on this objective in dialogue with the Department of Health. As with all regulators, there is a stewardship responsibility on PSI to ensure that our grounding legislation remains relevant to current and evolving risks and fit for purpose. It is essential that the legislation responds to emerging and evolving pharmacy service delivery models, underpins an effective regulatory model for community pharmacies, supports a risk-based model of regulation, and promotes a strong culture of safety and learning in community pharmacies. We look forward to ongoing positive and proactive engagement with the Department of Health on this important agenda during 2024.

A significant focus for PSI in 2024 will be facilitating the appropriate implementation of recommendations emanating from the Ministerial appointed Expert Taskforce to Support the Expansion of the Role of Pharmacy. The focus of the Taskforce is to consider and examine ways in which pharmacists can expand upon their present scope of practice for the benefit of patients, the public and the wider health service. We welcome the commitment to expanding the scope of pharmacy services to alleviate pressure in the health system, improve patient access, health care delivery and ultimately lead to better patient outcomes. As part of our remit to ensure the public has access to trusted pharmacy services, our focus will remain on putting in place the appropriate regulatory and governance frameworks, underpinned by any necessary standards, education and guidance to facilitate the realisation of this work.

We continue to acknowledge the exceptional dedication of pharmacists and wider pharmacy teams during 2023 and their essential role in delivering healthcare in Ireland. We look forward to working with our registrants and wider stakeholders in 2024 to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in the Corporate Strategy 2021-2024 in our shared patient safety and public protection endeavours.

Joanne Kissane
Registrar (Chief Officer)

2. Planned activities and priorities for 2024

This 2024 Service Plan should be read in conjunction with the PSI [Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#), which provides the broader context for our programme of strategic change and ongoing development.

This plan contains an overview of our priorities for 2024, including:

- a. **our ongoing regulatory work**
- b. **our priority policy/programme of work initiatives and**
- c. **our strategic development projects.**

a. Our ongoing regulatory work

The PSI must ensure that we fulfil our primary statutory functions, in addition to pursuing a clear strategic agenda and envisioning new projects and fresh ways of working. The Pharmacy Act 2007 provides for a system of statutory regulation of pharmacists and retail pharmacies in Ireland. The Act, together with its supporting secondary legislation and related medicines law, places a clear responsibility on the PSI to regulate the pharmacy profession and community pharmacies in the interests of patient safety. Critical to our work and central to our mission are our ongoing areas of regulatory activity which we will continue to deliver to a high standard during 2024.

During 2024, we will continue to:

-  operate fair, transparent, and efficient registration procedures for all registrants (pharmacists, pharmaceutical assistants, and retail pharmacies), and maintain the statutory registers,
-  evaluate, for accreditation purposes, programmes of education leading to qualifications appropriate for practice as a pharmacist in Ireland
-  oversee the effective implementation of the mandatory system of continuing professional development (CPD) for pharmacists,
-  promote and support professional practice by pharmacists and share information for the benefit of patients and the wider health system,
-  communicate and engage with the public, the pharmacy profession, and our many other stakeholders to ensure our work is understood and informed by these stakeholders,
-  assure the public of the quality and safety of community pharmacy services through ongoing programmes of quality assessment and oversight of compliance with essential safety requirements,

undertake investigations into matters of serious concern regarding the actions of pharmacists and/or pharmacies and initiate enforcement actions, including prosecutions, where appropriate,

manage the statutory complaints process in accordance with the law, natural justice, fair procedures, and the requirement for accountability on the part of the profession,

contribute to the ongoing review of new and existing pharmacy/medicines legislation and contribute to public policy developments relating to our regulatory remit,

comply with our own external compliance obligations and with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, which provides assurance that the PSI acts in accordance with good practice in the management and governance of public bodies and

operate prudent financial management practices and continue to steward all PSI resources to maximise the resources available to deliver on PSI's statutory functions.

Ongoing programmes of work in 2024

In addition to our regulatory work and the implementation of strategic objectives, we will also carry out the following programmes of work:

Activity	Outputs
A. Development of PSI's next Corporate Strategy and underpinning Service Plans over the period of the strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy approved by Council by year-end with a clear focus on the PSI's development and future direction.
B. Operationalise the revised Third Country Qualification Recognition (TCQR) route process leading to registration as a pharmacist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised route commenced by end Q4.
C. Supporting higher education providers interested in delivering new MPharm programmes in the State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation of additional MPharm programmes to support the relevant HEIs to commence receiving applications in 2025.
D. Implementation of the PSI's Climate Action Plan/ Sustainability programmes of work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of staff. Recommendations implemented with clear targets and a roadmap to ensure the PSI remains engaged on climate issues.
E. Advance our actions to contribute to Ireland's second National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2021-2025 (known as iNAP2) to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of pharmacists in continuing professional development (CPD) and education on AMR, infection prevention and control (IPC) and antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) is

<p>advance Ireland's response to AMR by improving awareness and knowledge of AMR amongst the pharmacy profession, including pharmacy students, to ensure that it is an integral part of the delivery of pharmacy services.</p>	<p>encouraged by the promotion of resources and increased awareness of the importance of these areas for practice.</p>
<p>F. Take steps to ensure PSI is meeting our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of human rights and equality issues relevant to the functions and purpose of PSI. • Action plan to address issues raised in the equality and human rights assessment. • Information on developments and achievements regarding equality and human rights issues and actions is included in the Annual Report.
<p>G. Review of secondary legislation, Registration Rules for Pharmacists and Pharmacies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit for purpose Registration Rules drafted and consultation completed by the end of Q3.
<p>H. Review of the regulation of retail pharmacy businesses within a hospital setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the Review of the Regulation of retail pharmacy businesses in hospital settings to be submitted to the Department of Health by the end of Q2.
<p>I. Review and consolidation of training requirements for vaccinations and emergency medicines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National training and MPharm programmes updated.

Our regulatory activities will include the following outputs:

Regulatory activity	Task	Additional information	Metric (expected level of activity in 2024)
Registration (individuals)	Qualification Recognition and first-time registration of pharmacists	National route	160
		EU route	150
		Non-EU (including UK)	125
	Continued registration	Pharmacists	7600

		Pharmaceutical Assistants	190
Processing of cancellations	Voluntary (P&PA)	120	
	Involuntary (P&PA)	30	
Processing of applications to restore to register			40
Processing of applications for Certificates of Current Professional Status		Pharmacists	65
Registration (pharmacies)	First-time registration of pharmacies	New openings	30
		Relocations	5
		Transfers of ownership	95
	Continued registration		1985
	Processing of cancellations		95
	Processing of applications to restore to register		0
	Processing of nominations of superintendent pharmacists and supervising pharmacists		550
Internet Supply List	Processing of applications for the Internet Supply List	Registered pharmacies	200
		Other entities	185
Oversight of CPD engagement by pharmacists	E-Portfolio review	Pharmacists to be selected to submit an extract from their ePortfolio to the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IIOP) for review	1,400
	Practice review (limited to patient-facing pharmacists)	Pharmacists to be invited to participate in Practice Review events in April and October run by the IIOP	144
Customer Relations	Respond to pharmacy practice queries		350
Pharmacy inspection, quality	Inspections	Onsite (themed, risk-based, etc.)	200
		Registration-related	15
		Virtual	10

assessment and investigations	Investigations	Will be commenced	15
	Will be concluded	15	
	Management of concerns ⁵	Receipt and review of concerns	125
Fitness to practise	Processing and management of statutory complaints, inquiries and mediations.	Receipt of new complaints	65
		Fitness to practise inquiries	18
		Mediations held	2-3

*Figures are based on an illustrative sample calculation

b. Expected policy context in 2024

As a public health regulator, we operate within the broader health policy context. In planning for 2024, we are also very aware of the key aspects of our current operating environment to which we will input, participate or respond as required:

- The establishment of an Expert Taskforce to Support the Expansion of the Role of Pharmacy by the Minister for Health to consider and examine ways in which pharmacists can expand upon their present scope of practice for the benefit of patients, the public and the wider health system. The PSI will play a key role in ensuring that appropriate regulatory and governance frameworks, underpinned by any necessary standards, education and guidance, are in place to facilitate the expansion of a pharmacist's scope of practice.
- The ongoing need to engage with initiatives sponsored by Government, other public bodies, and our other stakeholders, where these are appropriate to our role as the public interest regulator of pharmacists and pharmacies.
- The eHealth Programme, which is a critical enabler of the Sláintecare Reform Programmes, and ePharmacy, which has been identified as a key element that will support better healthcare integration.
- Opportunities for innovation arising from the shift of care to the community; and,

⁵ Expressions of concern arise where a person does not wish to make a formal complaint but wants to bring something to the attention of the PSI.

- Streamlining of care pathways from prevention to discharge. Pathways that are agreed between GPs, primary/community care providers, community specialist teams and hospital-based specialists can provide better links across these care settings and will ensure that resources are used to provide the best care for patients and that services are provided in a timelier way.

c. Our strategic development projects for 2024

We are committed to advancing a number of strategic development projects during 2024. Many of these will build upon work commenced in previous years.

These projects for 2024 are organised under the three key strands of our Corporate Strategy.

Strategic Objective 1: Advancing the Role of Pharmacy and Pharmacists in the Future Integrated Healthcare System

Corporate Strategy Actions	2024 Activities	Outputs
1.1 Review our model of CPD to ensure it supports future pharmacist practice in all settings, that it is agile, adaptive, and sustainable, and that it delivers value for money (multi-annual project).	<p><u>Pharmacists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan developed to implement the recommendations of the review of the current CPD model. • Design and plan the delivery of infrastructure for the delivery of the revised CPD model. • Initiate any procurement processes or other, where appropriate. <p><u>Pharmaceutical Assistants</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalise self-declaration for pharmaceutical assistants at the point of continued registration. • Develop requirements to support the CPD model for pharmaceutical assistants • Develop and implement a communication strategy for the implementation of a CPD model for pharmaceutical assistants. 	<p><u>Pharmacists</u></p> <p>Plan developed for a fit for purpose, sustainable model for CPD that reflects best national and international practice and builds on successes and learnings gained from the current model.</p> <p><u>Pharmaceutical Assistants</u></p> <p>Plan developed for a new model for CPD for Pharmaceutical Assistants that is appropriate, fit for purpose, and has sought buy-in from the profession.</p>
1.2 Take steps to identify and mitigate risks to the continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the recommendations from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations to be completed during 2024 that

<p>availability of the professional pharmacist workforce (multi-annual project).</p>	<p>Workforce Intelligence Report that are within the PSI's remit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to host Workforce Stakeholder Group Meetings in conjunction with the Department of Health and engagement with other stakeholders on the recommendations. • Publish Workforce Survey Analysis Report 2024. • Repeat an adapted Workforce Survey in Q4 2024. 	<p>are within the PSI's remit to be implemented in 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 meetings of the Workforce Working Group held. • Workforce Survey Analysis Report published. • Amended Rules to permit the collection of data required to support workforce planning.
<p>1.3 Research and design a rolling patient experience programme to ensure we hear patient voices and understand key patient needs so that the PSI can help improve the quality and safety of pharmacy services provided to patients in Ireland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out further research and engagement activity in 2024 that will inform our ongoing work support the development of the next strategy, and the design of the rolling patient experience programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and supporting activities carried out will inform the implementation of a rolling patient experience programme under the next corporate strategy.
<p>1.4 Engage with the Department of Health on Expert Taskforce implementation with a focus on actions to facilitate evidence-based practice by pharmacists and advanced practice, where this is required by patient need and public policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to outputs from the Expert Taskforce to Support the Expansion of the Role of Pharmacy and subsequent policy decisions from the Department of Health. • Carrying out associated work in 2024 that falls within the function and remit of PSI and is considered necessary to facilitate safe and successful implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting research to support the work of the Taskforce established by the Minister for Health to support the expansion of the role of pharmacists in Ireland. The remit of the Taskforce is to identify and support the delivery of specific objectives, which will serve to align services and practices that can be delivered by pharmacists and pharmacies with the needs of the health service and patients.
<p>1.5 Work with the HSE to ensure that pharmacy at community level is integrated into the work on developing community healthcare networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue engagement on pharmacist involvement in national vaccination campaigns (COVID-19 and influenza). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of regulatory tools to support the profession e.g., guidance, and education to support the
<p>1.6. Work to identify and respond to new risks and challenges for pharmacists as emerging service delivery</p>		

models bring about potential new pharmacy services using new technologies.		implementation of the outputs from the Taskforce
1.7 Engage and collaborate with the Department of Health on other policy developments relating to pharmacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress work in relation to alternative routes of supply for prescription control products. Progress work to support the institution of a framework for the introduction of Medicines Substitution Protocols. Progress work to support the provision of controlled drugs on an emergency basis. Progress work to support the substitution of biosimilars by pharmacists. Engage with the Department of Health to provide support to inform the national position in respect of the revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation and other relevant European policy and operational requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deliver regulatory, governance and educational support necessary to give full effect to the policy decisions of the Department of Health, including procurement of any required training programmes via the Irish Institute of Pharmacy.
1.8 Collaborate with pharmacists, pharmacies and other stakeholders on patient safety and quality initiatives, including ensuring positive work environments for pharmacists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clarity to the pharmacy sector on the legislative interpretation of 'wholetime charge' with respect to requirements for supervising pharmacists. Development of guidelines on acceptable delineation in Retail Pharmacy Businesses (RPBs) to isolate medicines from other non-clinical services in pharmacies e.g. shuttering systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on pharmacy governance roles and responsibilities issued in Q1 Guidelines on delineation in pharmacies issued in Q2

In relation to the action in the Corporate Strategy to 'Stand ready to engage with any feasible and sustainable initiative to develop a professional and independent leadership framework or body for

Ireland's pharmacy profession.', PSI is available to engage as and when required with parties wishing to present a proposal or feasibility study on the development of any such independent professional leadership framework or body for Ireland's pharmacy profession. Under the recommendations of the Workforce Intelligence Report, PSI has committed to commissioning a feasibility study tasked with proposing a suitable and viable approach to addressing the need for professional leadership for pharmacy (medium term objective 3-5 years).

Strategic Objective 2: Evolving a More Effective Regulatory Model for Community Pharmacies

Corporate Strategy Actions	2024 Activities	Outputs
2.1 Develop a standards-based regulatory model for community pharmacies that, subject to Department of Health agreement, will be supported by revised and updated Retail Pharmacy Regulations and/or amendments to the Pharmacy Act, 2007 (multi-annual project).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards based regulatory model to be considered under the next corporate strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities under 2.1 will inform the developments required under actions 2.2 and 2.3, and these will be considered in the development of the next corporate strategy.
2.2 Further develop regulatory standards to support those in key governance roles across the community pharmacy sector (owners, superintendent pharmacists and supervising pharmacists) to deliver safe and reliable services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards based regulatory model to be considered under the next corporate strategy 	
2.3 Develop new ways to report to stakeholders on the learnings and data gathered through our regulatory work in pharmacies and inform the public as to how pharmacies are performing against the PSI standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This strategic action is connected to the establishment of an agreed standards-based regulatory framework and will be dependent on the outputs of the framework and engagement with wider stakeholders. 	
2.4 Propose a prioritised programme of reform of the current Pharmacy Act to the Department of Health and work on its progression over the life of this Strategy (multi-annual project).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an evidence review to support policy proposal for reform of the regulation of pharmacy professionals. Submit paper to the Department of Health requesting amendments to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outputs from the evidence review stage will inform the development of evidence-based policy proposals for reforming the current Pharmacy Act, and these will be submitted to the Department of Health in Q4.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the regulation of pharmacy professionals. Commission research to support policy proposal for reform of the regulation of Retail Pharmacy Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence review will be commissioned by Q4 2024 to support reform of regulation of RPBs, with outputs of this submitted to Department of Health in 2025.
2.5 Promote positive understanding among pharmacists of the Code of Conduct and work to ensure that pharmacists adopt the essential principles set out in the Code in their routine practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted throughout the year through the newsletter and communications to pharmacists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from pharmacists will inform the future evolution of the Code of Conduct.
2.6 Operationalise our regulatory risk statement policy as a key tool in managing incoming information, intelligence, and strategic learning to help identify, and respond to risks to patient safety and/or serious concerns as to the quality of community pharmacy services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regulatory risk statement has been operationalised, and work will continue in 2024 to manage information and intelligence to help identify and respond to risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathering data insights to inform our work.
2.7. Recognising the importance of supporting a strong culture of safety and learning across the community pharmacy sector, work with stakeholders to ensure a clear focus on the role of incident management, quality audit and inter-professional communication in providing safe and reliable services to patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted throughout the year through our newsletters and communication to pharmacists, pharmaceutical assistants and pharmacy owners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from pharmacists, pharmacy owners and pharmaceutical assistants will inform our regulatory work and drive improvements to ensure patient safety and public protection.

In relation to the action in the Corporate Strategy to ‘Engage with other regulators on developing a community of practice for regulators in Ireland.’, of note is that PSI is already an active participant in the Forum of Health and Social Care Regulators that was established by the Department of Health

and is currently chaired by Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council. The community of practice learning initiative would be led by a number of regulators, and a formal structure would be established. PSI would be involved in discussions on any such structure.

Strategic Objective 3: Building our Capability and Performance as a Regulatory Organisation

Corporate Strategy Actions	2024 Activities	Outputs
3.1 Complete our current programme of business transformation (multi-annual).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will continue towards the rollout of Phase 2 of the business transformation programme (complaints, concerns and queries). Ongoing development of greater data analysis and insight derived from the new platform's analytics capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better integration of digital systems leading to greater efficiency both from a process and people perspective. Roll out of Phase 2 will facilitate greater data analysis and insight.
3.2 Utilise our new digital systems to support our regulatory purpose and mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree new ICT strategy and commence implementation. Build on efficiencies from earlier phases of the Business Transformation Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Strategy alignment with PSI Strategy and Business area objectives for 2024 – 2027, driving further efficiencies.
3.3 Implement revised organisation and management structures to support the achievement of our strategic goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of the operating model and organisation structure by end of Q2 to ascertain effectiveness. Undertake a strategic workforce review in Q3 to produce a plan that can ensure the right skill mix and number of staff are available for the organisation to deliver effectively and efficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance PSI's capabilities and performance through continual strategic adaptations to our Organisation Development Project (ODP) to ensure that we have a full staff complement to fulfil our regulatory functions and strategic endeavours.
3.4 Complete our strategic financing review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update detailed cashflow to inform the strategic financing review to predict expenditure more effectively in this area for future years. Commence the review of core funding the organisation needs to assure a sustainable financial future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed cash flow developed for Q3. Core funding review commenced by year-end.
3.5 Invest in our website and social media communication channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and launch a new website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New PSI website developed and launched in Q3, which will support and facilitate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development of all our social media channels to supplement PSI communications. 	our digital offering for all our stakeholders and contribute to raising awareness of the PSI for all our customers.
3.6 Take actions to be a workplace of choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete implementation of the HR Strategy 2021-2024 e.g., leadership and management development framework, learning and development pathways, knowledge management and Wellbeing Strategy implemented Culture Audit to be commissioned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing Strategy approved in Q1 to promote and support the physical, mental and social wellbeing of staff by providing a range of initiatives and resources to help staff cope with stress, enhance resilience, and achieve work-life balance. Management and Leadership Programme will be developed and implemented in Q1 with the aim of equipping our managers and leaders with skills and competencies to lead and motivate their teams, manage change and uncertainty, and foster a culture of innovation and excellence. Skills and Competency Matrix will be assessed and developed in Q2 and will map the current and future skills and competences required for each role. Learning and Development Framework will be developed in Q3 and rolled-out in Q4 to provide a structured career development pathway for all PSI employees. Culture Audit will be commissioned in Q4 with a view to conducting the audit in early 2025.
3.7 Maintain our current 4-star recognition with the	Work with staff to further embed the EFQM model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and ongoing engagement with staff via

European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)	within the PSI and into our ways of working with the aim of making a submission under the next Corporate Strategy.	various fora regarding EFQM model implementation.
3.8 Ensure we continue to be a safe and caring employer.	Combined with 3.3 and 3.6 above and full delivery of the HR Strategy and development and implementation of a Wellbeing Strategy will address this objective.	

Our Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

Underpinning our strategy is our commitment to communicate widely and to work extensively with others. This is a necessary and fundamental part of our role, which requires extensive work and partnership with others in health, regulation, and those who provide and receive pharmacy services. This engagement is central to the PSI's remit in providing opportunities to learn from others and to inform our work. In 2023 we carried out a number of roadshows to inform the profession about the work carried out by the PSI and to seek their feedback to inform our work on an ongoing basis.

3. Expected financial position and summary budget 2024

Funding direction

During 2024, the PSI will continue to operate in a prudent manner to ensure its resources are fully, and properly, utilised to meet its statutory functions. We will implement the objectives of the Corporate Strategy 2021-2024 within the context of Government policies for healthcare regulation and the management of public bodies in the health sector.

The PSI will continue to manage its resources carefully and ensure it has the funding and reserves available to meet its expenditure commitments. Reserve funds will also be managed and invested appropriately and, in line with Council policy, to ensure that future liabilities can be funded as they arise.

The 2024 budget has been drafted with a view to meeting, to the optimum level, the statutory obligations of the PSI within the constraints of the resources available and within the bounds of the provisions provided for in the Strategic Financing Review (SFR) report approved by Council on 7 October 2021 and the PSI Reserves Policy approved by Council on 23 June 2022. These documents also set out the potential operating deficit that Council agreed could be allocated by the PSI for meeting its service delivery commitments. In summary, the income budget for 2024 is **€8.654m** and the total proposed expenditure budget for 2023 is **€10.769m** of which it is proposed that **€948k** is eligible to be funded from the reserves, thereby projecting a deficit arising from operating activities of **€1.167k**.

Overview of principal components of the 2024 budget

The following sections set out a brief description of the activities covered in the 2024 budget.

- **Income**

The total income from registration fees and other related fees is expected to be €7.976m, an increase of €325k above the 2023 budget.

It is expected that the Department of Health will continue to fund the operation and further development of the Irish Institute of Pharmacy's services in 2024, up to an annual amount of €600k.

- **Expenditure**

The projected expenditure in the 2024 budget provides for the continuation of the core functions and services as in previous budgets, any continued cost of projects

commenced in prior periods, as well as newly planned activities for the year 2024.

- **Pay budget (€5.095m)**

The total pay budget for 2024 is €5.095m, an increase of €0.558m or 12% on the 2023 budget. This increase of 12% in payroll, year-on-year, is a result of the new public sector pay agreement which was applied with effect from 2022 (Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2022). These increases included a 4% increase in February 2022, a 1% increase in October 2022, a 2% increase in March 2023 and a 1.5% increase in October 2023. These are now absorbed fully into the 2024 budget. The staffing and pay levels are in line with public sector pay policy and include the workforce matters approved by Council in 2021. The total pay budget also reflects the phased hiring of staff as approved in the revised organisational structure underpinning the new Target Operating Model (TOM) implemented in July 2021 and the costs associated with temporary staff, pending the approval of the new posts and recruitment to those posts. The PSI will undertake a strategic workforce review in mid-late 2024 to determine its required people resourcing levels to deliver as an effective regulator.

- **Non-pay budget (€5.674m)**

The non-pay budget covers the costs of all goods and services expected to be incurred by the PSI during the year. It includes the regular contracted services required to run the organisation's operations and agreed development projects to be funded from the reserves.

Management of the 2024 budget

- **Procurement planning**

The PSI will continue to search for efficiencies, value for money and use ICT solutions and Office of Government Procurement (OGP) frameworks, wherever possible. The PSI will ensure that its procurement policies and procedures are implemented, and that competitive tendering is undertaken for goods and services procured. The PSI will carry out its annual procurement activity in line with its Corporate Procurement Plan.

- **Financial management**

Each budget holder in PSI is responsible for managing their own budget. The Finance and Support Services Team will issue regular reports to the Heads of Business Areas and Team Managers. Quarterly meetings will take place with each budget-holder to discuss progress and any resulting variances. All variances will be considered by the Executive Leadership Team and remedial actions taken as required. The Council will review quarterly financial reports, which will also be reviewed by the Performance and Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee.

- **Treasury management**

The PSI invests its funding as per its approved Treasury Management Policy. The PSI will continue to manage its funding and cash flows to ensure availability and access to funding in order to service the requirements placed on it in legislation and any future developments that may arise. PSI funds are currently invested with AIB Bank, Bank of Ireland, and the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) and our current account banking partner is now AIB following the withdrawal of Ulster Bank from the Irish market. In the Irish deposit market while interest rates are positive, they remain low and we will endeavour to maintain the value of the PSI reserves as far as possible, and as per the PSI Treasury Management Policy.

- **Property/facilities management**

In 2024, the PSI will enter its twelfth year of residency in PSI House. The premises continues to provide efficiency of resources with the ability to hold all meetings, fitness to practise inquiries, and events in-house, as well as the potential to make modern meeting facilities available to other regulators and stakeholders. In early 2024 we will undertake an upgrade to the emergency light and general lighting system that will reduce our energy usage and enable cost savings. We will manage the implementation of the PSI's Climate Action Roadmap.

The PSI will continue to maintain the property to a high standard and deal promptly with maintenance issues as they arise. Nonetheless, it must be recognised that future provision is required for additional and proactive maintenance as the premises and building infrastructure begin to age. Options regarding this aspect of PSI House are being examined as part of the Strategic Financing Review. In 2024 we will undertake a life-cycle review of PSI House and its key infrastructure, that will assist in managing and maintaining the property, plan for future upgrades and improvements, comply with health and safety regulations, reduce our energy consumption and make recommendations regarding future use of the building and related costs.

Summary budget 2024

	€M	€M
Income 2024		
Registration of Pharmacists	3.161	
Registration of Retail Pharmacy Business (RPB)	4.507	
Administration charges and other registration costs	0.308	
Bank interest receivable	0.077	
Department of Health funding to the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IIOP)	0.600	
Total Income		8.653
Expenditure 2021		
Pay costs	5.095	
Operational costs	4.027	
IIOP	1.321	
Organisation-wide projects	<u>0.325</u>	
Total expenditure		<u>10.768</u>
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)		(2.115)
Add back projects funded from Reserves		0.948
Adjusted Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		<u>(1.167)</u>