



Faculty of
Pharmaceutical
Medicine

*Advancing the science and practice of pharmaceutical medicine
for the benefit of the public*

FPM Public Engagement Policy

Introduction and purpose

FPM members and staff, individually or collectively, may represent the organisation externally in many ways and in many forums. This policy aims to guide external policy, advocacy and press and media engagement, and ensure that it is consistent across the organisation, understood by all those affected, and can be reviewed and adapted to match changes in strategy as well as best practice. The policy aims to reduce the risk of FPM being willfully or accidentally misrepresented or misunderstood and that messaging is consistent and reinforced.

FPM's mission is to advance the science and practice of pharmaceutical medicine for the benefit of the public. One aspect of this mission involves positioning people, groups and messages so that they may provide unbiased information on all aspects of pharmaceutical medicine, advocate FPM policies or advocate generally for the profession and/or the organisation. This activity aims to stimulate an increased understanding of medicines and medical devices and the process of medicines development amongst policy makers, healthcare professionals and the public, particularly in vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The aim of this advocacy is therefore fourfold:

- To give the public and patients the power to make more informed decisions about their own personal healthcare and that of the people they care for.
- To support healthcare professionals – in all sectors – with information, education, training and tools to do their jobs.
- To provide policymakers and healthcare leaders with information and guidance, to enable strategic decisions to be made that further FPM's mission.
- To ensure that the specialty of pharmaceutical medicine, the products themselves and broader
- public health policy is for the benefit of all patients, as well as the public, and supports a fairer, more equal, society.

FPM can only undertake these activities when it is within our remit and subject to adequate resource. This policy defines who is affected, the relative processes, and the scope and limitations.

Scope

What activities are in scope for this policy?

All activities that FPM undertake are subject to oversight by the Chief Executive and the Board of Trustees. This policy broadly applies to activities classed within public policy, advocacy, PR, publishing, social media and news media, where the individual or group is using an FPM affiliation:

- Representation of FPM members and staff on external groups
- Comments made individually, or that can be individually attributed, on a public consultation
- Comments to an external conference, event, evidence hearing, etc.

- Any article or comment where the author is using an FPM affiliation
- Authoring or editing an article or book
- Comments to the press and media
- Comments made on social media platforms, unless it is explicitly stated that views are personal

What activities are out of scope for this policy?

- Stakeholder engagement primarily for an educational purpose.
- External engagement concerned with the pharmaceutical medicine designated body for revalidation.
- Engagement where there is a client/provider relationship.

What formats are covered by this policy?

- FPM published policy statements
- Consultation responses
- Articles published externally
- Videos and /or podcasts produced internally or externally
- Pre-recorded or live media interviews
- Press releases and media statements
- Conference or event slides
- Social media platforms

Who does this policy apply to?

- Officers
- Trustees
- Committee, fora, working groups and expert group members
- FPM members – all grades
- Permanent and temporary staff
- Contractors

What topics would FPM engage in?

FPM can engage in activities and advocate on any issue that would usually be defined as within the work function of pharmaceutical physicians, using the Diploma in Pharmaceutical Medicine syllabus as a guide.

We would also consider making statements outside this core remit on a case-by-case basis. This could include prescribing, medicines policy and broader health and social care issues, and would be decided by the Policy and Communications Group and Head of Policy and Communications.

What topics would FPM not engage in?

Unless in exceptional circumstances, FPM does not make statements on the regulatory progress of specific medicines in development or the effectiveness or value/cost of specific medicines. FPM will not make statements of a party-political nature.

n.b. during the COVID-19 pandemic FPM has engaged externally in reaction to news regarding specific medicines and vaccines, as well as policy decisions. This was in response to a specific and immediate public health threat, and it was decided that we should act in this way, for the benefit of the public. However, it is not expected that this will be the routine way of working but, should a similar event occur again in future, we may again adapt our policies and ways of working to meet the public health need.

A note on post-nominals

For clarity, FPM Members and Fellows may use their post-nominals, respectively MFPM and FFPM (plus honorary forms), as they wish in their professional lives and during their membership of FPM. There is no requirement for approval of use from FPM, once these letters have been bestowed. When an FPM Member or a Fellow relinquishes their membership, they may no longer use their post-nominals.

Processes

In due course, specific processes for specific activities may be developed. However, the general principles and case studies outlined below should act as a guide.

Consult first

Before undertaking any public policy and advocacy activities, all persons to whom this policy applies must consult with FPM, usually initially with the Head of Policy and Communications, who can approve said activity, subject to the framework below, or direct to the appropriate group or individual for discussion and decision:

- Is the activity appropriate and in line with FPM mission and current strategy?
- If not, could we signpost to external groups to undertake?
- Is there a pre-existing policy, statement or activities that wholly or partially overlap?
- If within scope, is there an FPM person or group better suited to undertaking this activity?
- Who is the audience?
- What support will the activity require and are current FPM resources adequate?
- If current resources are not adequate, does the activity justify additional resource?
- What are the expected outputs and outcomes?

The level of input required by FPM staff or groups will be dependent on the type of activity. For example, an FPM member making a statement to the press on a topic of interest will require closer management than a member authoring a book chapter, whilst mentioning FPM as an affiliation. This level of management will be at the discretion of the Head of Policy and Communications and/or relevant person or groups.

Stay engaged

Once an activity has been agreed, the individual or group responsible should stay engaged with the relevant person(s) or group within FPM. This may involve:

- Ensuring content remains relevant, in scope and in line with FPM mission.

- Supporting adherence to FPM tone, style and corporate branding, if appropriate
- Checking for (potential) conflicts of interest.

Gain final approval

The individual or group should work with the Head of Policy and Communications and colleagues to ensure a draft is presented in good time, for processing through the required approval channels.

If, during the approval process, significant edits are required, or concerns raised, they should be raised with the original author or group as early as possible, to discuss how to proceed. The approval process will vary dependent on the subject matter, the importance, the timelines and the potential risk for organisational reputational damage. A general guide to approval processes is outlined overleaf.

Definitions	
<i>HPC: Head of Policy and Communications</i>	
<i>PCG: Policy and Communications Group</i>	
<i>P: FPM President</i>	
<i>VP: FPM Vice-President</i>	
<i>CEO: FPM Chief Executive Officer</i>	
<i>MDCM: Marketing and Digital Communications Manager</i>	
Content	Typical approval process
Written statements or consultation responses on policy of broad national or international scope, affecting the wider industry or healthcare systems.	HPC -> PCG Chair (and members, dependent on timings) -> CEO, VP, P
Written input into less high profile and/or more 'niche' consultation responses or statements.	HPC -> PCG Chair +/- relevant Expert Group chair -> CEO
Press statement or FPM press release	HPC -> PCG 'press group' +/- relevant Expert Group chair -> CEO
Agreed 'lines' to take in a live or unscripted interview on a significant external development or FPM policy announcement.	HPC -> PCG 'press group' +/- relevant group or committee chair
Book chapter / academic article etc., not directly related to FPM policies or activities	HPC -> PCG Chair +/- relevant group or committee chair
Article on FPM policy or activities in external journal or other format	HPC -> PCG Chair
Design and content of an FPM slide or slides at an event or conference	HPC -> MDCM

Affiliation(s)

Most formal written outputs of FPM will not be affiliated to a group or individual, for instance a consultation response or policy statement will be known as an *FPM Statement*. FPM members or staff may be acknowledged within the document, but it will not be directly attributed to them. Planned media statements will also be unaffiliated, though individuals may be quoted within. Using this generic style of statement helps to support and develop the profile, reputation and branding of FPM as an organisation.

The affiliation of a specific group or individual can and should be used, for instance, where an individual is acting as an FPM spokesperson, a group has co-authored an article for internal or external publication, an individual is speaking at an external meeting or event, or strategically, where the individual or group is a known authority on the topic in question.

Feeding back and spotlighting

In order that FPM can follow-up on, support, monitor, review and refine our activities, it is important that, where possible, individuals or groups responsible for external engagement feedback on their experiences, the reception, metrics or any other learnings.

As a way of highlighting the work undertaking and acknowledging those responsible, FPM will usually try to feature the activity on our communications channels – for example, by ‘Tweeting’ a quote from a policy statement, attributed to an expert group, or by writing a Blog article for the website on the FPM response to a national guideline, thanking the individuals involved. This ‘spotlighting’ is dependent on the significance of the activity, the overall communications schedule at the time and available resources.

Case studies

It is not feasible to cover every scenario in this guide. Below are listed a few examples of the process for consultation and approval of various materials and media.

Case study 1

FPM Fellow – Prof X – is invited to author a book chapter in the ‘Ethics of Pharmaceutical Medicine’. Dr X is an independent pharmaceutical physician and a member of the FPM Ethics and Practice Committee (EPC). Prof X would like to use their affiliation to EPC, as they are proud of their membership of the committee, and it will also demonstrate FPM’s interest in and commitment to upholding medical ethics.

- *Prof X should approach the Head of Policy and Communications before commencing work on the draft.*
- *Head of Policy and Communications will then consider whether the chapter and book are in line with FPM’s mission and consult with the chair of EPC for a professional view.*
- *Prof X may then proceed with drafting the chapter. It would be expected that they share a near final draft of the chapter, for review, if feasible.*
- *Once published, Prof X will share a copy of their chapter with HPC, for reference.*
- *If, at any point, the content of the chapter shifts from that originally discussed and moves outside FPM’s mission and remit, HPC will ask that the affiliation to EPC is not used.*

Case study 2

FPM Member – Dr Y – is invited, via FPM, to give a live interview on the BBC news that evening, commenting on an announcement about a shift in policy affecting oncology clinical trials. FPM does not currently have a position paper that covers this area. Dr Y is an employee of company A and a member of the FPM Oncology Expert Group.

- *HPC or a colleague will contact Dr Y to see if they are willing and able to undertake the interview.*
- *If Dr Y is not suitable or willing or available, HPC will consult chair of Oncology Expert Group, to see if they or another group member could undertake interview.*
- *HPC will attempt to convene a conference call with Dr Y, chair of the Oncology Expert Group and the chair of the PCG or PCG ‘press group’ to discuss, or provide written advice. If neither chair is available then we would not proceed with the interview.*
- *Dr Y, Oncology chair, PCG rep and HPC will agree lines to take.*
- *Dr Y must prepare a conflict of interest statement, outlining the scope of their current employment with company A and any previous relevant interests and stating that they are speaking as a representative of FPM.*
- *Dr Y undertakes interview. He or she may deal with questions that were outside the scope to that originally discussed, but answers must be in line with the general FPM mission and remit.*
- *HPC or colleague will debrief with Dr Y, if possible and will make a record of the interview and track and analyse any follow-up.*
- *FPM may spotlight the interview with, for example a quote in a Tweet.*

Case study 3

The FPM President is invited to give an opening presentation at an international conference on the ‘Future of Pharmaceutical Medicine’.

- *HPC to clarify with President and the event organisers under what premise this offer is made as that the President is representing FPM, not acting in their personal or private, professional capacity.*
- *President will consult with Board members, Chief Executive, HPC and chair of PCG regarding the content of the presentation.*
- *President must share a draft of the presentation, in good time, with HPC, who will check for FPM mission and strategy alignment and general tone and style, delegate design and branding check, and ask the chair of the PCG and/or Chief Executive for a check on content and to make any suggestions for omissions or improvements.*
- *Once the presentation is approved, President will deliver presentation and may answer questions that are outside the scope of the presentation, at their discretion.*
- *The President will feed back to PCG chair, HPC and/or Chief Executive on the experience and any learnings or outputs for FPM’s awareness.*
- *FPM may highlight the activity, for example via LinkedIn.*

Case study 4

The FPM Head of Education is asked to author an article on 'Advances in Pharmaceutical Medical Education' for a medical journal.

- *Head of Education will gain approval from Chief Executive and inform HPC.*
- *Head of Education may seek guidance and input from chair of ESC and/or relevant FPM committee members.*
- *Head of Education will share a draft with HPC to check for style, tone and alignment with current strategy.*
- *Upon publishing, signposting and supportive messaging may be released via email bulletins, the FPM website and social media channels.*

Social media

Currently, only FPM staff have access to and use of FPM's social media channels. Content is internally reviewed and approved. The principal channels that FPM currently uses are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Many FPM members and staff have their own private social media channels, which they sometimes use to respond to, spread and amplify FPM's messages. Social media provides a powerful way of sharing FPM's work and amplifying our messages and FPM is grateful if and when those associated with the organisation choose to engage and share or comment on posts with their networks.

All persons to whom this policy applies should make it clear in social media postings, or in the personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf.

All persons to whom this policy applies should be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

Code of conduct and conflicts of interest

A person's engagement with this policy must uphold FPM's [Values](#) and be in line with the mission of FPM. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that they conduct themselves in line with this policy and in a professional manner when representing FPM, see FPM's [Code of Conduct for Volunteers](#) for more information.

FPM members must not describe themselves as speaking for FPM or portray themselves as holding a position at FPM if they are not entitled to do so and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that others, including the media, do not do so, whether deliberately or otherwise. Such steps may include clarifying the nature of any relationship you have, or have had previously, with FPM and ensuring that any information that is already in the public domain is accurate and up-to-date.

It is of utmost importance that FPM is an independent voice and maintains its reputation as such. It is inevitable that individuals will have historic, current or future interests that may either explicitly or implicitly affect their view. It is therefore vitally important that individuals acting with their FPM affiliation declare and keep up to date any interests – financial, professional or personal – that may impact their view on a topic. Interests and potential conflicts must be considered at every stage of the processes above, see FPM’s [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#) for more information.

About this policy

Responsible	Head of Policy and Communications
Accountable	Chief Executive
Consulted	Policy and Communications Group Executive Committee Senior Management Team
Informed	Board of Trustees All FPM members, as required (see below)

A copy of the policy will be actively disseminated to all FPM members with a formal link to FPM, beyond their membership – i.e., they are a member of the Board, a committee or expert group. It will be made available for all members to view on the FPM website and will be signposted periodically and as required. The policy will be reviewed every three years from date of publication, or if the need arises earlier.

Document	Version date	Approved by	Summary of changes and rationale
Original Policy	12 May 2022	Board	Not applicable (N/A)