

# PHARMACISTS MUST DISPENSE ABORTION PILL



## The General Pharmaceutical Council wants to force pharmacists to dispense The 'Morning-After Pill'.

By Stephen Green (but thanks to CitizenGo)

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is proposing a change to its guidelines which could force pharmacists to dispense abortion-inducing drugs. Essentially, this means the Morning-After Pill. A pharmacist's continued refusal to do so could result in the loss of their job.

This deeply intolerant, illiberal and unnecessary proposal will particularly discriminate against pharmacists who are Christian and Muslim.

### DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The changes are proposed by the GPhC in a public 'Consultation on religion, personal values and beliefs' in which they propose significant changes regarding the permissibility of a pharmacist to refuse these services.

The proposed changes mean a pharmacist could be faced with a choice. Either provide abortion inducing drugs or face disciplinary action. The latter would inevitably mean loss of employment or a whole business.

They could employ someone else to provide abortifacients, but this is a cost which many pharmacies simply could not afford. And if it is their own business, they would face the same ethical dilemma as if they were dispensing themselves.

The intolerant proposal disproportionately and adversely affects pharmacists who are religious, especially Christians and Muslims, and is an unjust intrusion into the right to freedom of conscience.

Up until now, if a pharmacist was unable to dispense certain services, because they believed it immoral to do so, they were permitted to refuse provided they directed the customer to somewhere else which would provide that service.

### SECULAR MEDICAL FORUM

This liberal compromise has worked for many years as it respects the consciences of pharmacists and the desires of patients as far as possible.

However, owing to the influence of the Secular Medical Forum (SMF) - a new branch of the hostile National Secular Society - the GPhC are considering changing the standard to be far more restrictive and intolerant of individual

pharmacists.

Other services specifically mentioned in addition to the Morning-After Pill are: contraception; fertility medicines; hormonal therapies; mental health and wellbeing services; substance misuse services; and sexual health services.

### TIME TO PRAY AND TAKE ACTION

The consultation ended on Tuesday 7th March so now is the time to pray and take action.

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the statutory regulator for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy premises in Great Britain.

The Health Act 1999, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2008, enabled the GPhC to be established via the Pharmacy Order 2010. It replaced the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. It does not extend to Northern Ireland at the moment.

'It is our job to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of members of the public by upholding standards and public trust in pharmacy,' says the GPhC. We say pregnancy is not a disease which needs a medicine.

**READ:** Exod 20:13; Deut 30:19; Prov 17:22; Matt 5:21; Romans 13:9.

**PRAY:** That the GPhC will pull back from this proposal.

**WRITE:** To Mr Nigel Clarke, Chairman, General Pharmaceutical Council, 25 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5LQ, using the arguments above. Phone: 020 3713 8000

Write also to your MP.

**VISIT:** It could be a good idea to visit your local pharmacies. If any say such a new regulation would put them in difficulties, this could be an important point in your letter.

**Child in the womb at 6 weeks gestation. See story opposite.**

