A refocused outlook for grass-roots evidence gathering through the PTECO?

Lin-Nam Wang reports on a charity keen to establish an identity as an enabler of grass-roots audit and research for pharmacy

PTECO — a history

Originally known as the Thomas Marn Trust, the PTECO was created in 1938. According to Catherine Hope, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society’s charities and pensions officer, its purpose was to use monies allocated by the Society to pay the expenses of maintaining efficiently the Society’s charities (which included the library and the museum). However, the original trust provisions provided no flexibility to accommodate the changing role of the Society over time and in charity law, or how tax regimes might impact on arrangements, Ms Hope told The Journal.

In consequence, the Council of the Society some years ago set in motion an exercise to reorganise and rationalise the charities (for which it acted as trustee or was otherwise involved with) to ensure their independence, which the Charity Commission required, and make them fit for purpose for the 21st century. As part of this exercise, the PTECO’s charitable objectives were widened, she explained.

Legislative changes later prohibited the PTECO from continuing to fund the museum and library and once its charitable objectives were widened, it began to grant money to the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust, another charitable trust set up by the Society about 10 years ago. However, as a result of the present trustees’ review (see main text), a decision has been made to end this arrangement. “This has been, understandably disappointing for the PPRT,” said Ms Hope.

Mr Davies added: “It is probably fair to say that both charities face uncertain futures with no guaranteed income from previous major donors (eg, the Society) in an economic climate where research funding across all disciplines is unlikely to be sustained at past levels. Therefore, the PPRT will continue to fund innovative, cost-effective and robust research — the intended outcomes of which are public benefit — while it can attract and sustain funding to do so. In addition, where there are synergies between the two charities we would hope that both charities will collaborate to achieve greater value and impact for the profession and the public.”

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