Welcome to our Spring term newsletter.

Staff News
Prof. Elizabeth Williamson (Director of Pharmacy Practice) has been appointed as Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel for Veterinary Medicines to the British Pharmacopoeia Commission (BPC), a division of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which is part of the Department of Health. Prof. Williamson also Chairs the Expert Advisory Group on Herbal and Complementary Medicines (EAG HCM) to the BPC.

Dr. Katja Strohfeldt-Venable (Lecturer in Pharmaceutical Chemistry) has recently been appointed as a member of the EAG HCM and also oversees a research project looking at the quality of natural medicines, funded by the MHRA.

Dr. Vitaliy Khutoryanskiy (Reader in Pharmaceutical Materials) has been awarded the Royal Society of Chemistry’s 2012 McBain Medal for his imaginative use of colloid, polymer and interface science in the development of novel materials: for example, for his work on muco-adhesion and materials for drug delivery. Read more about his achievement at: http://www.readin.ac.uk/about/newsandevents/releases/PR426929.aspx.

Vaneeeta Anand (Pharmacist-Teacher Practitioner) was successful in publishing her article in January’s “Clinical Pharmacist” with kind assistance from Satinder Bhandal (Lecturer, CIPPET). This work describes the reduction of insulin-related errors by developing a “flash card” to be used as an aide-memoire. This contains information on how to prescribe and administer insulin safely thus increasing patient safety. Read more at: http://www.pjonline.com/c/clinical-pharmacist/2012_jan/reduce_insuling_errors_using_flash_card.

Student News
On the 9th December, 2012, our local student representatives of the British Pharmacy Students’ Association (BPSA) held their annual McNeil Responding to Symptoms competition, aimed to improve students’ communication skills and knowledge of over-the-counter medicines. The participants (from all four year groups) were given ten minutes to prepare for a ‘responding to symptoms’ scenario, where they were able to search the relevant literature before facing their ‘patient’ and the judges! The students were judged on their questioning style, professionalism and competence – all good practise for the fourth year OSCE examinations. We warmly congratulate this year’s winner, Anna Douglas (MPharm Part 2 student) and the runner-up, Farhana Rahman (MPharm Part 3 student). They each won a prize of £50 and £25, respectively; Anna will go on to represent Reading School of Pharmacy Student Association (BPSA) as part of the novel teaching methods used in the School of Pharmacy.

Chancellor’s Award ceremony
Congratulations to Katy Friend, Leanne Coyle and Lisa Hammond who were awarded Chancellor’s Awards for their fantastic first and second year results. High achieving University of Reading students were recognised by the Chancellor Sir John Madejski recently at the inaugural Chancellor’s Award ceremony: http://www.reading.ac.uk/about/newsandevents/releases/PR423285.aspx.

Facebook Page
We are starting to put news on our School of Pharmacy Facebook page, so that everyone can contribute any news, progress, or successes. We’ll be flagging this page to next year’s applicants so add anything you think might inspire potential RSOP pharmacists of the future! http://www.facebook.com/pages/Reading-School-of-Pharmacy/181519751864280.

Other News and Events
Our MPharm Part 2 students recently enjoyed a guest lecture from a Detective Superintendent from Thames Valley Police who formerly ran the Serious Crimes Unit and is now Head of Investigations and Covert Operations. The students were treated to a fascinating lecture about murder, manslaughter and ‘death by misadventure’ and how pharmacists (and other healthcare professionals) may find themselves implicated in such cases!

The 4th Annual Pharmacy Ball, organised by our Reading University MPharm students’ (RUMPS) committee, will take place on 2nd March, 2012, at Wokefield Park in Reading. This is usually a very enjoyable evening, attended by both staff and students. We look forward to reporting on the evenings events such as the winner of the ‘Best Dressed’ and ‘Favourite Lecturer’ awards in our next newsletter!