A BIG THANK YOU from the LPC to all the pharmacy teams that helped drive the success of the Pharmacy First scheme in Devon! You have now done over 11,000 Pharmacy First consultations across Devon up until July.

The Pharmacy First evaluation covers the first five months (November 14 to March 15) of the three successful Pharmacy First services; “winter ailments” service providing access to Over-The-Counter (OTC) medications to vulnerable groups; a minor ailments Patient Group Direction (PGD) service covering bacterial conjunctivitis, impetigo, nappy rash, oral candidiasis and uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs); and an emergency supply service for patients who do not have access to their repeat medication.

The evaluation showed that the Pharmacy First services help relieve the pressure on primary care and urgent care services saving General Practice doctor time of 465 hours (approximately 2,790 appointments saved), 303 hours of OOH GP time (approximately 1,818 appointments saved), and 35 hours for Accident and Emergency department (approximately 210 appointments saved). The total opportunity for monetary savings was forecasted to be over £40,000. There were over 8,000 patient consultations in the five months from November 2014 to end of March 2015, with significant provision on Saturdays and Sundays. Patient satisfaction was high with 100% of patients who completed the service user questionnaire reporting that they were happy with the service and would recommend it to friends and family.

If you would like to take a look at the evaluation that was publicised in the Chemist and Druggist please go to: http://devonlpc.org/our-news/pharmacy-first-evaluation/.

What is next for Pharmacy First?
We have received a further allocation of Prime Ministers challenge sustainability funding. This will fund the Pharmacy First services until a commissioning decision can be made by NEW Devon CCG and the South Devon CCG on the future of the three services.

The evaluation which was co-written by the NEW Devon CCG sought your views on the minor illness medicine supply service or ‘winter ailments service’. From those views and ideas we were able to create a proposed all year round formulary for the Pharmacy First Scheme, however this will need to be agreed as part of the commissioning decision. In the meantime we are seeing an uplift in referrals to community pharmacies offering this service from NHS111.

Important Reminder:-
With the above in mind in mind we would ask pharmacies to consider how they manage these requests especially in terms of the skill mix within the pharmacies during opening hours. For example, are all your staff aware of the services and what they can offer? Are all your pharmacists accredited to deliver the Patient Group Direction (PGD) services? Is your pharmacy registered for all three services?

With summer upon us and autumn approaching we feel this is a good opportunity to address these questions and ensure that patients who are referred from NHS111 receive the appropriate professional service which we know community pharmacy can deliver.

Ordering EPS tokens
Pharmacies in Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly – order from Shared Business Services (SBS) T. 01392 351351, fax 01392 351383 or e-mail sbs-i.swpss@nhs.net
Seasonal Flu 2015-2016

A new Advanced Service for 2015/16 — a national flu vaccination service — was announced on Monday 20 July 2015 by the NHS and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC).

From September 2015, community pharmacists in England will be able to provide flu vaccinations under the NHS to eligible adult patients. The national flu vaccination service will be underpinned by a national Patient Group Direction (PGD), which will be issued by NHS England. This will be the first Advanced Service to include a PGD and pharmacies providing the service will have to comply with the terms of the PGD. As an Advanced Service, providing the national flu vaccination service will be optional for pharmacy contractors.

Pharmacies will be reimbursed the cost of the vaccine, and receive £9.14 per administered dose (comprising remuneration of £7.64 and an additional fee of £1.50 per vaccination to recognise costs that will be incurred in order to provide the service (e.g. training and clinical waste disposal). There will be no separate funding for initial set-up costs. Fees for flu vaccinations will come from national flu budgets, i.e. in addition to and outside of the £2.8bn. The service is being funded from NHS England’s annual flu vaccination programme budget.

Service specification and SOPs
The service specification, guidance and PGD for the national flu vaccination service are still being developed. Keep a look out for updates on the PSNC website as and when further information is available.

Patient eligibility
Pharmacies will be able to offer flu vaccinations to patients aged 18 years and over, at the time of vaccination, who meet the risk criteria set out in the annual flu letter. These include people aged 65 years and older, pregnant women, people in long-stay residential care homes, carers and people aged between 18 and 65 years with specified medical conditions. Please be aware that children are not covered by the national NHS Pharmacy flu vaccination service, so some of the information set out in the annual flu letter is only relevant for general practice.

Criteria for providing the service
The national flu vaccination service can be offered by any community pharmacy in England which:

- Has a consultation room
- Has suitably trained staff (see below)
- Is able to procure the flu vaccines
- Meets data recording requirements
- There will be a requirement to report to the patient’s GP practice

It is not yet known whether data collection and payment claims will involve an electronic or paper-based system

Vaccination training
Pharmacies wishing to provide the service will have to demonstrate that pharmacists administering the flu vaccinations have been appropriately trained. The LPC has arranged two local flu vaccination training events for pharmacists who have not been trained before, and other training provider details are also on the LPC website.

The LPC is also running a series of local Flu Engagement Events to help you get going with the service which are open to all members of the pharmacy team — see LPC website and flyer included with this newsletter.

PSNC is developing a very useful set of FAQs and briefings about the flu vaccination service, which can be found on their website using this link; http://tinyurl.com/no8bgq5
Be Clear on Cancer – Pharmacy Health Promotion Campaign “Breast Cancer awareness in women over 70” – August 2015

Public Health England is running a national reminder campaign to raise awareness of breast cancer in women over 70. Activity is currently taking place across England from 13 July to 6 September 2015.

The key message promoted on TV will be: ‘One in three women who get breast cancer are over 70, so don’t assume you’re past it.’ The advert also reinforces the message that finding breast cancer early makes it more treatable.

A second message, promoted more prominently in other campaign materials, will be: ‘A lump isn’t the only sign of breast cancer. If you’re worried about any changes to your breasts, tell your doctor straight away.’ The aim of the campaign is to encourage more women aged 70 and over with unusual breast symptoms to go and see their GP.

Community pharmacy teams are ideally positioned to assist with this campaign as most people have quick and easy access to pharmacies and may be more willing to discuss their symptoms in a less formal setting.

Community pharmacies across Devon are required to participate in the NHS England regional Be Clear on Cancer campaign “Breast Cancer awareness for the over 70’s” throughout August. You will have received details about the campaign from the local NHS England Pharmacy Team including a poster, leaflets and symptom cards. Please make sure these are displayed in your pharmacy and your staff briefed on the key messages of the campaign. The materials have been posted on the LPC website http://devonlpc.org/our-news/be-clear-on-cancer

Tomorrow’s Pharmacy Team

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has launched a debate on how the education and training of the pharmacy team needs to change to address future challenges.

All pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must be registered with the GPhC and uphold the standards that they set. The GPhC would welcome your views on what you would expect to be able to do in the future, to meet the changing needs and expectations of patients and the public.

How you can get involved?
- Read the discussion paper and provide feedback http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/educationstandards
- Join in the discussion on Twitter using #pharmed
- Email your comments to consultations@pharmacyregulation.prg – responses by the 14th August 2015

Pharmacy in Public Health

The Royal Society of Public Health’s recent report “Rethinking the public health workforce” has identified community pharmacy, along with more diverse occupations such as the fire service and postal workers, as key players in promoting public health.

“Community Pharmacy offers an ideal location to reach out to the public and provide greater accessibility to health support and advice.”

Community Pharmacy is given as an example of good practice in the wider public health workforce by acknowledging the work already being done by pharmacies. Particular mention was given to services aimed at improving cardiovascular disease diagnosis, raising awareness of of dementia, identifying unpaid carers and tackling mental wellbeing though effective advocacy and signposting.

FREE training for pharmacy staff

The Devon LPC, together with Cornwall and IOS LPC, has been fortunate in securing funding via an educational grant from Health Education South West. These means we can offer the opportunity for up to two members of community pharmacy teams to attain the Level 2 Award in Understanding Health Improvement from the Royal Society of Public Health. This funding provides a great opportunity to up-skill staff who have contact with the public. Your pharmacy does not need to be currently working towards Healthy Living Pharmacy status. This training will equip pharmacy teams to provide their customers and patients with advice on health and wellbeing within the communities they serve, providing information and signposting the public to pharmacy services or other NHS services that will help them to adopt healthier lifestyles. Details of the training can be found on the LPC website.  http://tinyurl.com/q6kzq98

Pharmacists in GP practices

Do you want to understand more about the role of a practice pharmacist based in a GP surgery and the benefits a pharmacist could bring to patients and the team?

Would you like to find out more about the NHS England pilot to employ 250 pharmacists in practice teams, understand how to apply to take part in the pilot and what support is available?

The RPS and NHS England will be running two free webinars in August to answer these and other questions.

The first free webinar will take place on 12th August from 2-4pm and features

- Introduction from RPS England Chair Sandra Gidley and RCGP Chair Dr Maureen Baker on the benefits of bringing pharmacists into general practice as a patient-facing clinical role
- A day in the life of a GP Practice pharmacist – Pharmacist Ravi Sharma
- Why I employed a patient facing pharmacist – how it has benefitted me, the practice and improved patient care – GP Dr Suliman
- Resources available from relevant organisations to support this development including training and practice development – PCPA, RPS, RCGP, NHS England, CPPE
- An introduction to the pilot scheme, what’s required to apply for funding and the deadlines to meet – NHS England
- Question and answer session

Claim your place by registering for the webinar. (or use this link http://tinyurl.com/npm3ayt)

Changes to Christmas / New Year opening times

Pharmacies are entitled to be closed (subject to any specific direction to open issued by NHS England) on the three public/bank holidays on Friday 25 December, Monday 28 December and Friday 1 January. Pharmacies have previously been asked to provide confirmation of whether you will be open or closed on those days.

For the other days over the Christmas / New Year period pharmacies are expected to open for their usual contractually agreed opening hours on those days. The expectation of NHS England will be that they expect all pharmacies to be open for their core hours during this time but pharmacies can ask to make changes to supplementary hours provided 90 days’ notice has been given to NHS England (Saltash office) in writing that they wish to do so. Pharmacies must ensure that all requests reach NHS England (Saltash office) before the 25th September, any requests received after this date will not be authorised. Pharmacies will appreciate that ensuring there is enough pharmacy cover is a time consuming activity and NHS England would appreciate your support by returning any request for changes of hours over this period as soon as possible. NHS England reserve the right to direct pharmacies to open should the need occur.

If you are interested in attending an LPC meeting as an observer, please contact the Secretariat on 01392 834022.

Details of all forthcoming events can be found on the events page of Devon LPC website www.devonlpc.co.uk