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## Community Pharmacy: Developing Services for the Future

### The need for change

Community pharmacies currently dispense medicines and offer advice and a range of clinical services to patients, making sure that people have access to the medicines that they need, when they need them. But there are many additional services that pharmacies could offer to better support patients and the NHS. As the NHS struggles to meet financial and sustainability challenges, there is more need than ever to make better use of community pharmacies to improve the health and wellbeing of local populations, and to ease pressure on other parts of the NHS.

### Benefits for patients

PSNC would like to see community pharmacies able to provide services that help patients develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage their own health and care. Patients should also be able to access comprehensive public health services conveniently from their local community pharmacies, and it should become the norm for people to have regular discussions with a community pharmacist to ensure that they are getting the most benefit possible from their medicines and looking after themselves properly.

Some patients with long-term conditions would benefit from further support to help them get the best outcomes from their medicines and to better manage their conditions, and PSNC's proposal for a Community Pharmacy Care Plan would give those who need it more regular access to conversations with a healthcare professional who can support them and help them to meet their health goals. This should help them to manage any symptoms, and to reduce both the impact that their condition has on their life and the risk of more serious complications. They will also have a key point of contact with the health service, who they can talk to whenever they need to.

### Benefits for the NHS

PSNC believes that developing the community pharmacy service could help the NHS to reach its ambitions and meet the ongoing sustainability challenge in the following ways:

- Enhanced support from pharmacies would mean that patients with long-term conditions are able to better control their disease leading to fewer hospital admissions and visits to GPs.
- Pharmacies could help NHS England to meet its Medicines Value Programme objectives, which are all about improving health outcomes from medicines and ensuring that the NHS gets the most value from its spend on medicines.
- Pharmacies could also help to meet NHS England's objectives to:
  - Support people with long-term conditions to self-care;
  - Support safe transfer of care between settings (e.g. after discharge from hospital);
  - Support efforts to tackle anti-microbial resistance; and
  - Tackle health and wellbeing inequalities.

PSNC has developed community pharmacy service proposals that are in line with NHS objectives to help people to take an active role in managing their own conditions – so called 'Patient Activation'. The proposals are also based on services

which are clinically effective, do not increase workload for GPs, are most appropriately provided by community pharmacies, have health economic benefits and improve patient safety and experience.

### **PSNC's service proposals**

PSNC has proposed two ways in which the services that pharmacies currently offer could be developed:

- The Community Pharmacy Care Plan (CPCP)
- The Universal Community Pharmacy Care Framework

The CPCP is a service designed to make regular pharmacy support available to people with long-term conditions, such as asthma or diabetes, which can sometimes have life-threatening complications. Pharmacy teams would help people to stay healthy and to manage these conditions and symptoms, meaning they should have less need to see their GP and can avoid being admitted into hospital.

The full service may not be appropriate for all people with long-term conditions, and a move to provision of such a service would need to be undertaken in a managed way. The service would involve changes for pharmacies such as registering patients that will receive the service at the pharmacy.

The Care Framework describes some more gradual changes that could be made to the services that community pharmacies currently offer (known as the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework). This would include asking pharmacies to do things such as helping patients who have recently come out of hospital to use their medicines correctly, checking that patients are getting the most benefit from their medicines and ensuring that all medicines prescribed are as cost-effective as possible.

PSNC would like to see elements of the Care Framework introduced in a phased manner over the next two years. Again, not all patients would need all of the services listed in the framework, but it would mean that pharmacies had to offer them to those patients who were eligible for and could benefit from them. This would lead up to the full commissioning of all elements as well as the Care Plan, for appropriate patients, by the end of 2019.

### **What would the services look like?**

On the attached infographics we have set out:

- What a typical patient journey through the Community Pharmacy Care Plan might look like; and
- Our plan for the introduction of the Universal Community Pharmacy Care Framework.

### **How will all of this be funded?**

PSNC recognises the severe financial constraints facing the NHS at the moment, and the need for community pharmacy to play its part in delivering efficiencies. We would like to start discussions with the NHS about how community pharmacy owners could be fairly funded to ensure that they can provide all of these services and have the most positive impact on their local communities.

### **Next steps and what this means for pharmacies**

PSNC has made its proposals to the Department of Health and Social Care and we hope to begin discussions on our suggestions in the near future. In the meantime, we will be working to seek wider views on our plans, and what they might mean for patients, pharmacies and others. We recognise the very great changes that our service proposals will mean for some community pharmacies and we would of course provide advice, guidance and resources to help them to do this.