

February 2016

## **Campaigning guidance for community pharmacy contractors**

### **Introduction: the Government's plans**

On 17th December 2015 the Government announced a number of plans for community pharmacy. The proposals included a £170m reduction in funding for community pharmacy in 2016/17.

Since publication of the letter it has also become clear that as many as 3,000 pharmacies may close, that key payments for pharmacies (the Establishment Payment) will be phased out, and that there may be a drive towards a commoditised medicines supply service with an increased focus on warehouse dispensing and online services.

The Government has not revealed all the details of its plans but we expect there to be further reductions in funding in future years. Taken together we believe the proposals pose significant threats to both the community pharmacy network and, as a consequence, to patient care.

PSNC is working together with all the national pharmacy organisations to influence policy makers. Although the consultation on the initial proposals is due to finish in March 2016, this will be a long term campaign to deal with the expected long term efficiency drives from the Government.

### **The national campaign and activities**

The national pharmacy organisations (PSNC, RPS, PV, NPA, AIMp and CCA) are all working together to coordinate activities. We are planning for a long term campaign – two years, rather than months. The national work will include Parliamentary briefings and meetings, paper petition, patient case studies, work with patient groups, etc. Key messages will adjust as the negotiations begin and unfold.

PSNC has responded to the letter sent by the NHS and is demanding further information on the Government's long term plans. We have also published a set of service proposals designed to enable community to deliver value and cost savings for the NHS while meeting the Government's stated aim of developing a clinically focused community pharmacy service. You can read more about these at [psnc.org.uk/campaign](http://psnc.org.uk/campaign). PSNC has also appointed public affairs agency Luther Pendragon to carry out work on the coordinated campaign. We are meeting with MPs and policy makers as well as providing resources, guidance and training to LPCs to help them to campaign locally.

Pharmacy Voice has a number of meetings scheduled over the coming weeks with MPs, advisers and stakeholder bodies including patient groups. Pharmacy Voice is also raising awareness with MPs and advisers in areas beyond health. This includes BIS, DCLG and Cabinet Office. This also covers stakeholders such as CBI, BRC, FSB, Enterprise Forum and London First. Pharmacy Voice is initially focusing on angles around threat to business and enterprise as well as tapping into the localism agenda. Pharmacy Voice is planning to leverage its Dispensing Health campaign during the Spring to help demonstrate the positive role community pharmacy plays for patients and the public.

CCA representatives have been participating in a variety of ways in the consultation process to help shape the sector's response, and working collaboratively with other organisations to help plan and coordinate the sector-wide campaign.

The NPA is working on behalf of the independent sector, gathering evidence to show politicians and officials that local pharmacies are much more than just a distribution point for medicines. Visit the website to complete a short survey, order campaign cards and for details on how to send a personalised letter to your local MP.

The RPS has a hub page for members with the latest information and resources on the proposals. The Society is holding events in conjunction with Local Practice Forums throughout England which will provide opportunities to contribute to the RPS response to the Government's consultation.

## Key messages

In the initial phases of the campaign we are trying to ensure that stakeholders understand:

- The value of community pharmacy, both to patients and the NHS
- The potential threat that the Government's proposals pose to the community pharmacy network
- The implications of this for patient care and the NHS

A key messages document has been produced to help contractors and LPCs to do this.

## Local work and how you can get involved

Contractors and their teams can support national work at a local level in a number of ways:

- Social media – tell us how you have helped patients using **#lovemypharmacy** and encourage patients to tweet as well
- Host an MP visit or write a letter to your MP – talk to your LPC first
- Sign or ask your patients to sign the e-petition at: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/116943>
- Collect case studies and share these with you LPC (guidance below)
- Talk to your patients and use the available resources to get their support (an NPA MP card is now available; and paper petitions will be coming soon)
- Visit and direct patients to [supportyourlocalpharmacy.org](http://supportyourlocalpharmacy.org)

## Patient case studies: what makes a good case study?

PSNC and the other national pharmacy organisations are all seeking examples of pharmacies offering care that has made a real difference to patients. This helps us to demonstrate the value of the community pharmacy network. Contractors are encouraged to note down case studies and send them to their local LPC as well as emailing them to PSNC at: [campaign@psnc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@psnc.org.uk).

Here are a few notes on preparing good case studies:

- Make sure any story is about a *person* – ideally a patient, otherwise a member of the pharmacy team.
- All case studies should be about pharmacy's extraordinary contribution to patient care.
- Remember that something that seems normal to you could be extraordinary to someone else.
- Stories are more powerful than pleas for help.
- People should speak for themselves wherever possible – use quotes (make sure you have consent!)
- Be positive.
- Be brief – if you are writing a letter or an email, save some detail for a meeting.
- Pharmacies can record case studies electronically, or, if patients are keen to help, they may like to record short video clips of patients telling their own stories.
- Remember to cover the key points – what happened; what did the pharmacy do; how did this help the patient; how might this have helped the NHS or others?

## Example case study

Joe Bloggs thought of pharmacies as places to pick up medicines, until he had his heart attack. The local pharmacy became Joe's first port of call for advice on his medicines, his other conditions and his general health. Joe went into

the pharmacy every month, so the team noticed that three weeks after he started his treatment he was feeling short of breath and nauseous. The pharmacist spent 20 minutes talking to him and was able to refer him on for help. Joe wouldn't have thought to go to the GP otherwise, and couldn't get through to his specialist. Joe says that the pharmacy saved him from a trip to A&E.

### Feedback and staying up to date

- PSNC and the other pharmacy bodies are here to help.
- Contractors and LPC members are encouraged to sign up to PSNC's email newsletters to ensure they receive all the latest news from us. Go to [psnc.org.uk/email](https://psnc.org.uk/email).
- Please update us on what you are doing – email any updates to [campaign@psnc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@psnc.org.uk).
- Contractors should also report any contact with MPs or local media back to the LPC.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Zoe Smeaton, Head of Communications and Public Affairs](#).