**Community Pharmacy Call to Action: we need your help!**

Pharmacy teams may have read recently about a ‘Call to Action’ on community pharmacy launched this month by NHS England.

NHS England is the national commissioner of community pharmacy services and it is currently working on a strategy which will set out how it wants all primary care services to work in the future. Through the pharmacy Call to Action NHS England is seeking views and ideas on how community pharmacy services should be developed in the future as part of that strategy.

The Call to Action is extremely important because it is our chance to have a say in our future by telling our national commissioner how we believe our services should develop. Patients, GPs and other organisations will also be giving ideas to NHS England, so it’s crucial that we make our voice heard and that we show the benefits that pharmacies can and could deliver for the NHS.

The LPC will be working on its response to the Call to Action in a number of ways, including answering the questions set out by NHS England within it and talking to the local NHS England Area Team about how we think pharmacy services should be developed locally.

But we really need your help. To support our response we need to hear examples of how innovative or high quality community pharmacy services have made a real difference to your patients; or of where pharmacies have worked well with other local healthcare providers to support the care they offer. And if you have ideas on how pharmacy services in our area could be improved to better help patients, we want to hear about those too.

The LPC will also be sending some of your examples on to PSNC so that they too can use them to support their national response to the Call to Action.

You can send your thoughts, ideas and examples to the LPC at **xxxx,** or better still look out for information about events we and the local Area Team will be running in the New Year and come along to talk to us. It will be really important for us to ensure that pharmacy’s views are heard at these events, and your support will be a vital part of that.

**Suggested quote from LPC Official/Chair:**

“The NHS England Call to Action probably sounds like just another consultation that most pharmacies don’t really need to think about; but that couldn’t be further from the truth. This time, the future of community pharmacy really is at stake.

It’s no secret that the NHS has serious financial problems at the moment, and if we don’t tell our national commissioner and our local Area Teams how much we have to offer and what benefits our services can offer the NHS and patients in the future, we risk having services scaled back, rather than developed.

Of course the LPC and national organisations will be working very hard to do this on your behalf, but we need all the help we can get on this – the more examples of great practice we have and the more people we have talking about those, the better chance we have of making sure NHS England hears us loudly and clearly and comes up with a primary care strategy that has community pharmacies at its heart.”

**Quote from PSNC Chief Executive, Sue Sharpe:**

"The launch of NHS England’s Call to Action on community pharmacy represents an important milestone for the sector in the reformed NHS. It gives us our biggest opportunity yet to shape pharmacy’s future, both by making our own views heard and by finding out more about what users and commissioners of our services think, and it is vital that we take it.

PSNC will be responding to the Call to Action to continue to make the case for the greater role we know pharmacies can play in improving patients’ health and making the NHS sustainable, but it will also be important for pharmacy to be heard at a local level. We have provided guidance and support for LPCs to help them to do that and in the New Year we will be hosting a number of local engagement events to seek their views and help them with their local responses and actions.

LPCs and PSNC also need help from pharmacies on this important piece of work though. PSNC set out its vision for community pharmacy this year describing how services could be developed across medicines optimisation, public health, self care and supporting independent living, and we need your examples of successful services to support that vision. You can share your thoughts and examples through your LPC or Regional Representative, and of course by talking directly to your local Area Team.”