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PSNC Meeting May 2018: Summary Report for LPCs and Contractors

PSNC and its subcommittees met in Bristol, on 8th and 9th May 2018. This briefing provides a summary of the key topics discussed for community pharmacy contractors and LPCs.

Community Pharmacy Funding

The Funding and Contract Subcommittee considered options for the mechanisms used to deliver funding through margin and fees as part of PSNC's new funding models project. As part of this work, the Subcommittee examined:

- the impact of branded generics and divestments on pharmacy funding;
- prescription item volume growth and prescription duration;
- the number of pharmacy closures;
- an audit of the payments for the 2017/18 Quality Payments Scheme; and
- the scale of distance selling pharmacies (DSPs).

An update on the current funding provision was given. The Subcommittee noted the hit in funding that had been expected because of the imposed fee reductions and Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) reduction in reimbursement prices from August 2017.

Whilst fee delivery is reasonably on schedule, the margins survey for Quarter 3 of 2017/18 is expected to show a significant decline in margin from the first half of the year, given the reduction in reimbursement prices and the effects of generic supply shortages. The total for the year won't be known for some time and at this point it is unclear what will happen to Category M reimbursement prices from August 2018.

Development of the Contractual Framework

PSNC's proposals for a Universal Community Pharmacy Care Framework and Community Pharmacy Care Plan have been published and a survey will soon be issued to garner feedback on the proposals from contractors and their teams. The survey will be accessible from psnc.org.uk and will be highlighted in PSNC's newsletters (sign up at psnc.org.uk/email). PSNC's new funding models working group is considering detailed descriptions of the individual elements of the care framework so that it can work up potential financial models for PSNC's proposals.

Flu Vaccination Service 2018/19

A working group has now been established between PSNC, the DHSC, NHS England, Public Health England (PHE) and the British Medical Association (BMA) to work through the practical implications that the phased supply of adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine (aTIV) (which is the only approved vaccine for patients aged 65 or over) will present this flu season.

The phased deliveries, and the likely need to initially target the vaccine to the highest risk patients, will present logistical challenges for pharmacy teams and general practices alike. The best solution to support this targeting may necessitate coordination of activity by LPCs, LMCs and CCGs. PSNC will continue to work, through the joint working group, to ensure

that contractors and LPCs receive as much information and guidance as possible to allow them to plan their flu vaccination services. PSNC has also stressed to NHS England and PHE the need for careful communications to patients about the changes this year.

Regulatory Support

The Health Policy and Regulations Subcommittee noted the significant amount of guidance material on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that has been produced by PSNC's Director of Operations and Support, Gordon Hockey. The office will continue to support contractors to ensure compliance with the GDPR after 25th May 2018.

The Falsified Medicines Directive (FMD) and communications were discussed and at the cross-sector FMD working group, which met shortly after the PSNC meeting, PSNC put forward proposals for future communications to ensure that community pharmacies receive clear and consistent messaging on this topic. A PSNC FMD working group will also consider implications of the FMD for community pharmacy funding.

The revised screening questionnaire questions as part of the Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) process have now been agreed with NHS England.

Community Pharmacy IT

PSNC has been considering with NHS England and NHS Digital what can be done to support greater use of the NHS Summary Care Record (SCR) in community pharmacies. LPCs and a sample of community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians will be invited to discuss this further with PSNC to try to identify any barriers to use of SCR which could be tackled.

Support for Working with LPCs

The LPC and Implementation Support Subcommittee (LIS) considered a number of issues relevant to LPCs, including the formation of local provider companies, HMRC guidance and handling conflicts of interest. PSNC is working on guidance on a number of areas and LPCs will be contacted about these in due course.

Public Affairs Work

Updated guidance and key messages for MPs are now available on the PSNC website, and PSNC is working to build support among MPs for its proposals for the development of community pharmacy services. PSNC is also working with the other pharmacy organisations to plan a Parliamentary briefing event later in the summer. This will provide LPCs with another opportunity to meet with their MPs in Westminster, and further details will be available soon.