

**Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee
Minutes for the meeting held on
Friday 14th May 2021**

Minutes of a meeting of the PSNC CPA Subcommittee held on Friday 14th May 2021 at 2.00pm.

Members of CPA present: David Broome, Tricia Kennerley (Chair), Clare Kerr, Sunil Kochhar, Fin McCaul, Jay Patel, Stephen Thomas.

In Attendance: Mark Burdon, Mike Dent, Simon Dukes, Jessica Ferguson, Sam Fisher, Jamie Gilliam, Jas Heer, Sue Killen, Zoe Long, Margaret MacRury and Has Modi.

Apologies: Prakash Patel.

Conflicts of interest: None received.

Minutes of the last meeting: With the addition of Sue Killen to the attendees, the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2021 were approved by the subcommittee.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising.

Item 1 - Communications and Public Affairs Strategy Update (Confidential)

Zoe Long gave an update on the Communications and Public Affairs strategy, outlining progress since the previous meeting and asking the subcommittee for feedback.

The subcommittee noted the volume of letters and parliamentary questions being submitted about pharmacy funding. Sue Killen noted that letters and parliamentary questions from MPs are monitored by officials, so it is important to keep the pressure up.

The subcommittee discussed some possible topics for the APPG to consider as part of the next stage of its workplan. Suggestions included independent prescribing in England, in line with progress in Scotland and Wales, as well as integration/IT.

The subcommittee discussed how PSNC should approach the new NHSE&I CEO once appointed. It was acknowledged that this would be an important and significant change for the NHS and that we need to get this right, making sure the approach is positive.

Action 1: The Office will continue briefing Parliamentarians, encouraging them to publicly back community pharmacy, to keep the pressure on.

Action 2: The Office will develop a plan for re-engaging with charities and patient groups, identifying areas where pharmacy could help their work and how they might be able to support pharmacy.

Action 3: The Office will continue to monitor reports on the next NHSE&I CEO (including researching the likely candidates) and consider an approach from PSNC carefully.

Item 2 - 2020/21 Annual Report

Initial work is ongoing in preparation for PSNC's 2020/21 annual report. Subcommittee members reported praise from LPCs and contractors for PSNC's communications. It was agreed that the daily newsletter is still very helpful. Sue Killen said that a lot is being done that is right, across PSNC's communications and public affairs, even if it isn't yet having the impact we want on the negotiations: the focus should be on continuing this good work and repeating the messages to MPs and others on a regular basis.

Item 3 - Website Upgrade Project

Zoe Long gave an update on the website upgrade and the subcommittee were asked to provide feedback. Stephen Thomas asked whether a testing phase would be built in and ZL confirmed this would be carried out alongside the development work.

The team has had several productive meetings with Make since the subcommittee last met and the early planning phases have already identified a lot of things which can be improved on the website - duplication is a big problem. Next steps are to publish a user survey and the wider PSNC team will also be involved in reviewing the content on the existing site. LPCs will need to wait a little longer for information on their new sites, as PSNC's main site is a big project and we need to decide on the new architecture of our own website first, before turning to the LPC templates. The overall plan will take more shape over the next six weeks and the plan is for LPCs to hear directly from Make at the next LPC Conference in June.

Action 4: The Office will arrange a subcommittee workshop over the summer to allow Committee Members to review the new designs for the website (assuming this cannot be done within the usual schedule of subcommittee meetings).

Item 4 – Pharmacy Communications

The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

In addition, Zoe Long flagged Community Pharmacy News, PSNC's monthly digital magazine, as viewing figures via the website seem low (fewer than 500 people per month). As we now send all news out via daily newsletters and there is little 'new' content in CPN, subcommittee members felt that there is probably no need for a monthly summary. The office will therefore stop publishing CPN after May, but we will seek contractor views via the upcoming website user survey and look for other ways to present the CEO's blog and the Dispensing and Supply Team articles.

Action 5: The Office will stop publishing CPN after May, but seek views via the website user survey and look for ways to promote the CEO's blog and Dispensing and Supply articles.

Item 5 - Parliamentary Engagement

The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda and JF gave a verbal update on APPG activity, highlighting the new email tool to help contractors and pharmacy teams lobby their local MPs.

Item 6 - Any Other Business

None.