

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release



PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

59 Buckingham Street
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 2PJ
Telephone (01296) 432823
Fax 01296 438427
www.psn.org.uk

13 December 2007

PSNC statement

Availability of oral contraceptives in community pharmacies

Lord Darzi yesterday highlighted Department of Health plans to pilot pharmacy supply of oral contraceptives to women via a Patient Group Direction. He was responding to a question from Baroness Finlay who is currently the President of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Commenting on the discussion in the Lords, Alastair Buxton, Head of NHS Services, PSNC, said:

"Access to oral contraception is an important measure to prevent unwanted pregnancies and PSNC is supportive of the move by the Department to use the community pharmacy network to provide women with a further source of support. We have been discussing this issue and the wider use of community pharmacies to provide sexual health services such as Chlamydia screening over the last year. Additionally, emergency hormonal contraception has been successfully supplied in community pharmacies for many years and pharmacists have shown that they are capable of adapting well to new service demands.

Both patients and the NHS will want assurances that pharmacists have the required knowledge and skills appropriate for the delivery of this service and this will be a key part of forthcoming discussions with the Department.

It is important that the NHS examines as many alternative methods as possible of providing both convenient and cost effective services to the community beyond the traditional methods of delivery. PSNC is keen to work with the Department to explore other areas where community pharmacy can contribute to the healthcare needs of the population as a whole."

-- ENDS --

Notes for editors:

1. The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) is the body that represents community pharmacy on NHS matters and seeks to secure the best possible NHS services provided by pharmacy contractors in England and Wales.

For further information contact:

Dipen Shah, Head of Public Relations, at PSNC, 59 Buckingham Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 2PJ, e-mail: dipen.shah@psnc.org.uk - office: 01296 432823, mobile: 0785 228 1399.

www.psnc.org.uk