

PRESS RELEASE

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Review of Contractual Arrangements

Representatives of Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee met Anne Galbraith on 1 February to discuss PSNC's initial response to the current Review. PSNC was represented by its Chairman, Barry Andrews; together with Chief Executive, Sue Sharpe; the Chairman of Funding and Contract Sub-committee, Steven Williams; and Chairman of Service Development Sub-committee, Ash Soni.

Barry Andrews opened the PSNC response to the Review by emphasising the strengths of the current contractual arrangements in supporting high levels of access for patients, that high level of access being dependent on sufficient business confidence to invest in premises and training of staff.

It is PSNC's position that all communities, whether they are affluent or in socially deprived areas, have core needs – the prompt supply of prescribed medicines with advice, support for self care and over the counter medicines, and support for healthy lifestyles.

PSNC stated that there is great potential to develop the pharmacy contract by introducing minor ailments services and public health services in sexual health and obesity management, among others. The use of pharmacies in influenza inoculation and the adoption of pharmacist prescribing would provide substantial improved access to services for patients.

Whilst the national components of the pharmacy contract had delivered real improvements to patient services, PSNC expressed disappointment that development of local services had been severely hampered by both the financial pressures facing Primary Care Trusts and the re-organisation which took place in Autumn 2006.

A special meeting of PSNC will consider a number of questions posed by the Chairman of the Review, Anne Galbraith, and the Committee will put forward proposals that:

- Offers value for money for the NHS and PCTs;
- Reduces cost, complexity and administrative burdens on PCTs;
- Supports increased access where services, or choice of services, are inadequate;
- Develops the value of community pharmacy services for PCTs;
- Supports the government's health priorities;
- Supports competition and choice in service quality; and
- Restores business confidence.

- ENDS -

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