

PRESS RELEASE

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PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

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18 June 2007

PSNC RESPONDS TO HOME OFFICE CONTROLLED DRUG CONSULTATIONS

PSNC today responds to two consultations on controlled drugs by the Home Office.

Consultation MLX 336 relates to the provision of controlled drugs by pharmacists under patient group directions. PSNC firmly believes that the inconsistency between nurse's and pharmacist's ability to provide pain relief under a patient group direction can no longer be justified and supports proposals to widen the range of controlled drugs that can be supplied by pharmacists under the authority of a patient group direction.

Consultation MLX 338 relates to the prescribing of controlled drugs by Pharmacist Independent Prescribers. PSNC is supportive of enabling Pharmacist Independent Prescribers to prescribe all controlled drugs. This will remove existing inconsistencies in the current law where nurse prescribers are currently able to prescribe some controlled drugs but pharmacists cannot prescribe any - including controlled drugs in Schedule 5 that may be sold directly over the counter to patients in the pharmacy.

PSNC believes that making these changes to the current legislation will help patients obtain wider access to care and to ensure that pharmacists skills as Pharmacist Independent Prescribers are fully utilised by allowing them to prescribe any product, for any condition, so long as they are acting within their competence.

Commenting on the consultation, Stephen Lutener, Head of Regulation stated, "There is no logical reason why a pharmacist should not be able to supply controlled drugs under a PGD, even though a pharmacist is able to authorise a PGD permitting a nurse to do so. In addition, Pharmacist Independent Prescribers have so far been unable to prescribe any controlled drugs, including those that can be purchased over the counter - we are pleased to see these proposals to remove the legislative barriers and so allow Pharmacists to provide the wider range of services for which they have been trained".

- 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.

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