

# PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release



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**14<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

## **PSNC Meeting May 2007**

The PSNC met on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May 2007.

### **OFT market study into UK medicines distribution**

Last month the OFT launched a market study into the distribution of medicines in the UK following the recent and proposed distribution changes by leading medicine suppliers. The PSNC Funding and Contract Subcommittee at its meeting considered the elements of PSNC's response which will focus on the benefits of the current arrangements and the adverse implications of the recent changes. The PSNC response will be published on the PSNC website when completed. The OFT will be reporting by the end of the year.

### **Service Development**

The PSNC Service Development Subcommittee focused on the development of new national services including minor ailments, EHC and Chlamydia screening and the sub-committee considered draft service specifications for new services including an obesity (weight management) service and a seasonal influenza vaccination service.

With PSA targets applicable for childhood obesity, it was agreed that a paediatric service specification should be developed to sit alongside the adult version.

The seasonal influenza vaccination service specification was approved by the committee and will now be discussed further with DH; it is intended that this service specification will be added to the set of nationally agreed Enhanced service specifications.

### **Pandemic 'Flu**

The PSNC Service Development Subcommittee also considered progress on pharmacy involvement in planning for a pandemic flu outbreak. Pandemic 'flu is high on the Government's agenda and work is in progress on service continuity planning guidance for community pharmacy in a pandemic situation, and ensuring that community pharmacy is included in National DH guidance.

### **Information Prescriptions**

The PSNC received and discussed a report on Information Prescriptions which is a new initiative currently being piloted across a range of health and social care organisations, including primary care trusts, foundation trusts, mental health trusts, local authorities, GP surgeries, community pharmacies and the voluntary and community sector. Three of the twenty sites involve community pharmacy and further information will be sent to LPCs as a PCL(s)

## **Drug Tariff Simplification**

In 2005, the Department of Health published a wide-ranging consultation document on the simplification of the reimbursement rules. PSNC is still in active discussion with the Department of Health on the various proposals that have been made. An area of particular concern to PSNC has been to ensure that any changes made incentivise a move towards patient pack dispensing. Constructive discussions are being held on this. It is intended that changes to the rules will be cost neutral. During the meeting, the Committee discussed a number of proposed changes.

## **Roll Out of ETP**

The Committee received an update on the Roll out of ETP and discussed a number of policy issues relating to EPS Release 2. 43% of GPs are now technically enabled, it is predicted this will hit 50% by the end of May. More GPs are now enabled than pharmacies.

PSNC is continuing to encourage pharmacy contractors to take steps now to upgrade their systems to operate EPS Release 1. More information about the Electronic Prescription Service is available on the PSNC Website.

## **MURs**

A draft protocol has been developed by LPC Support and Implementation Subcommittee for dealing with disputed MURs. The protocol involves the LPC in investigating complaints to the PCT about adherence to the MUR service specification. A copy of the protocol is in the LPC members' area of the PSNC website.

The Subcommittee is also embarking on a major piece of work to promote MURs to pharmacists as well as a campaign aimed externally at patient groups, PCOs and GPs. There will also be a checklist for LPCs on action to support MURs locally.

## **LPC Provider Arms**

PSNC was alerted to some LPCs that are involved in setting up provider arms, i.e. companies that would contract for the provision of locally commissioned services. To guide LPCs legal advice on LPC involvement with such arrangements is being sought by PSNC.

## **Vice Chairman and PSNC Subcommittees**

The May meeting is the time that the Vice-Chairman and new Subcommittee Chairman are elected for the ensuing year. The PSNC Constitution and Rules were amended to formalise the role of the Vice-Chairman

The following were appointed:

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| PSNC Vice-Chairman                            | Dhiren Bhatt                  |
| Funding and Contract Subcommittee             | Steven Williams (reappointed) |
| LPC and Implementation Support Subcommittee   | Mark Collins                  |
| Service Development Subcommittee              | Ash Soni was reappointed      |
| Resource Development and Finance Subcommittee | Andy Murdock                  |

**- ENDS -**

If you have any queries regarding this report please contact Mike King PSNC [mike.king@psnc.org.uk](mailto:mike.king@psnc.org.uk) 01296 438405.