

PRESS RELEASE



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Collaborative approach ensures pharmacists preparedness for swine flu

11 May 2009 - The principal bodies representing pharmacy have pledged to work collaboratively and act collectively to ensure their members receive the best possible support in the event of a flu pandemic.

The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, National Pharmacy Association, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and Company Chemists Association have shared information to ensure consistent and timely updates are received by pharmacists as the situation develops.

The organisations are also participating in regular conference calls with senior officials from the Department of Health ensuring two way communication between Government and the profession.

The pharmacy bodies said:

“Pharmacists have a key role in providing public health information as well as providing a vital healthcare service. It is essential that people receive factual and high quality information about how they can protect themselves and others from swine flu. The pharmacy bodies are committed to making sure pharmacists are equipped to answer any questions the public may have about swine flu.”

And added:

“Many of the pharmacy bodies have set up dedicated swine flu areas on their websites or have a news service available to update members. As accurate and timely information is vital during this time we would strongly recommend that all pharmacists make sure they have access to this information. Pharmacists who would like additional information about swine flu should contact the relevant pharmacy body for advice.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

The Company Chemists' Association (CCA) provides a forum for its member companies to work together to create an environment where community pharmacy can flourish, and where contractors compete in a fair and equitable way. Our nine members - Boots, The Co-operative pharmacy, Lloydspharmacy, Tesco, J Sainsbury, Wm Morrison Supermarkets, Asda Wal-Mart, Rowlands Pharmacy and Superdrug operate over 6,000 pharmacies – more than 50% of all the pharmacies in the United Kingdom.

The National Pharmacy Association (NPA) was established in 1921 as the trade association of community pharmacy owners. Its core purpose is to represent, support and protect the interests of all community pharmacy across the UK to ensure its members prosper commercially and professionally. For up to date information on swine flu please go to www.npa.co.uk/members/swineflu.php.

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. For up to date information on swine flu please go to www.psnc.org.uk.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in England, Scotland and Wales. It also regulates pharmacy technicians on a voluntary basis, which is expected to become statutory under anticipated legislation.

The primary objectives of the RPSGB are to lead, regulate, develop and represent the profession of pharmacy. The RPSGB leads and supports the development of the profession within the context of the public benefit. This includes the advancement of science, practice, education and knowledge in pharmacy. In addition, it promotes the profession's policies and views to a range of external stakeholders in a number of different forums.

Following the publication in 2007 of the Government White Paper *Trust, Assurance and Safety - The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century*, the RPSGB is working towards the demerger of its regulatory and professional roles. This will see the establishment of a new General Pharmaceutical Council and a new professional body for pharmacy in 2010. For up to date information on swine flu please go to <http://www.rpsgb.org.uk/flu/>.

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