

PRESS RELEASE



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PSNC CALLS FOR MORE ADVANCED SERVICES AND DESs IN EVIDENCE TO HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

21 September 2009 – Feedback from LPCs has shown commissioning of enhanced pharmacy services to be regrettably patchy, PSNC has told the Health Select Committee.

To address this, PSNC has called for pharmacy services with clear value across all areas, such as Minor Ailments Services (MASs), to be reclassified as Advanced Services or Direct Enhanced Services (DESSs). It has also recommended that the Department of Health ensure that PCTs fully implement recently published guidance on pharmacy commissioning and build service evaluation into the commissioning of all new services.

PSNC presented its findings and recommendations in written evidence to the Health Select Committee's Inquiry into Commissioning, which began in July and will hear oral evidence this autumn. PSNC's submission was informed by contributions from LPCs and pharmacy contractors, who were asked to provide information on their experience of PCT commissioning of pharmacy services across England.

Despite the *Pharmacy in England* White Paper's call for providers to be commissioned "based on the range and quality of the services they deliver", LPCs reported that poor commissioning was limiting their ability to deliver the range of services that document set out. The main problems that PSNC's consultation identified were a lack of PCT engagement with providers around planning or commissioning processes; inadequate communication between PCTs and LPCs; inconsistent and unclear responsibility for commissioning pharmacy services; a failure to adequately remunerate contractors for providing services; and imperfectly designed pilot schemes.

Sue Sharpe, Chief Executive of PSNC, said:

"Pharmacists are trusted, highly qualified health professionals, who are ideally placed to offer a wider range of clinical services. Enhanced pharmacy services, such as MASs and support for patients with long term conditions, have undeniable value for all communities. LPC feedback shows that in far too many cases the commissioning of these services is held back by PCTs' flawed internal processes.

"More needs to be done to ensure that all patients benefit from an expanded role for community pharmacy. Reclassifying irrefutably valuable enhanced services as Advanced Services or Direct Enhanced Services (DESSs), will give central Government greater

scope to ensure their provision is not held back by inadequate commissioning. Ensuring that recent guidance on pharmacy service commissioning is fully implemented will improve commissioners' understanding of pharmacy's potential. And building service evaluation into the commissioning of all new services will enhance the evidence base from which commissioners can work.

"We are confident that the Committee will agree that PCT commissioning requires substantial central support. PSNC is happy to present evidence to the Committee if required, and is keen to work with them in ensuring pharmacy service commissioning is as effective as possible in meeting patients' needs."

~Ends~

*For further information please contact the PSNC press office
on 0207 618 9187 or at psnc@luther.co.uk.*

Notes to Editor

1. PSNC (The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee) is the body that represents community pharmacies in England and Wales on NHS matters.
2. The Health Select Committee Inquiry into Commissioning was launched on July 9, and will be hearing oral evidence this autumn. More information can be found on the [Health Select Committee website](#).