

PRESS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

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14 January 2008

PSNC Meeting – January 2008

PSNC met on 9th and 10th of January 2008

NHS IT Update

Although up to 24% of daily prescription volume is now being prescribed via the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS), less than 1% of daily prescriptions are being dispensed using the service. PSNC is continuing to encourage pharmacy staff to use the EPS service, where practical, to ensure that any problems with the system are identified and can be resolved before EPS becomes business critical. Problems should be reported to pharmacy system suppliers who can escalate the issue to NHS Connecting for Health where necessary.

As part of ongoing work to monitor the implementation of the Electronic Prescription Service, in late January and early February, PSNC will be undertaking a telephone survey of contractors to obtain more information on pharmacist experiences of using the service.

NHSBSA PPD Capacity Improvement Programme (CIP)

PSNC is continuing to monitor the work and accuracy of the PPD and has almost finished the first external audit of the programme. The results of the audit will be published shortly.

Contract Funding Issues

PSNC reviewed the current funding arrangements and recognised the recent effects and impact of the Category M price cuts on contractors. The Department of Health agreed to PSNC's request to increase practice payments, and they have been increased from 25.2p to 34.5p per item from January 2008 to compensate.

PSNC Plan and Remits

PSNC formally adopted a new three year plan and a one year plan for 2008/09. The overall vision within the three year plan is to drive pharmacy towards being the provider of choice for patients with minor ailments and those requiring certain

community based healthcare services such as screening and monitoring of patients with long term conditions. The plan has been designed to fit with existing government policy to enable the primary care sector to take on much more work from secondary care by using community pharmacy to both release existing capacity and build new capacity within the existing system.

In brief, the five main areas PSNC will be focussing on are:

1. Pharmacy Planning
2. The Future Service Framework
3. Service Development
4. Service Funding
5. Government Policy

A copy of the plan with further details will be published shortly.

Advanced Services

Updated statistics have been supplied by the NHS Prescription Pricing Division. Figures continue to show positive growth in uptake and total number of MURs in October 2007 was 84,000. Encouragingly, there has been an increase of 400 in the number of contractors claiming payments for MURs from Sept 2007 to Oct 2007.

Responsible Pharmacist Consultation

The Committee considered the Department of Health consultation on the Responsible Pharmacist. The Committee did not feel it was possible to reach any conclusion about the absence of the Responsible Pharmacist from the pharmacy without consideration of the framework for supervising supplies of medicines. Other provisions to be included in the proposed regulations were considered, and a response is being prepared.

A copy of the PSNC response will be available on the Resources section of the website shortly before the 20th January response deadline.

OFT Market Study into Distribution of Medicines

PSNC will be discussing the study and its recommendations for change with the Department of Health. In addition to the concerns about changes in distribution arrangements, the committee is anxious to resolve the growing numbers of medicines dispensed at a loss. This has become a very significant issue and discussions are currently underway with the Department of Health.

LPC Model Constitution

Responses from LPCs to the recent PSNC consultation on the future LPC model constitution were discussed in detail. A new model constitution for LPCs to consider will be drafted and shared with LPCs in the near future. The new model constitution is intended to be used as a guide for LPCs to adopt or change according to local circumstances.

LPC Conference and PSNC Dinner

PSNC will be holding the 2009 LPC conference and PSNC dinner at the Royal Lancaster Hotel.

-- 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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