

PRESS RELEASE



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19 May 2008

PSNC meeting – May 2008

PSNC met on 13 – 14th May 2008.

Pharmacy White Paper

PSNC considered the Pharmacy White Paper in detail, regarding it as a positive move forward. The Pharmacy White Paper adopts many of PSNC's priorities for service development, including minor ailments, vascular risk assessment, sexual health and other public health services. The White Paper also reflects recommendations made by the APPG report *The Future of Pharmacy*. The Committee further welcomed proposals in the White Paper on pharmacy-delivered services to manage long-term conditions (LTC), particularly for patients with newly diagnosed LTCs.

Much of the initial developmental work for the new services is already underway and PSNC is developing its programme of work to implement policies set out in the White Paper. PSNC looks forward to working closely with the NHS to ensure that the benefits of these new pharmacy-delivered clinical services are brought to patients as quickly as possible.

PSNC Membership

After many years of outstanding service on PSNC, including six years as Chairman of the Funding & Contract subcommittee and as a member of the negotiating team, Steven Williams has stepped down from the committee. Steven will be replaced as Chairman of the Funding and Contract subcommittee by Peter Cattee.

Digby Emson, also a former member of the negotiating team, has stepped down as well. Both Steven and Digby will still attend PSNC meetings on occasions as deputies for CCA and AIMp colleagues. The committee warmly expressed its gratitude to both for their work.

Funding

PSNC is currently working on funding for 2008-9. This will be based on discussions with the Department of Health on the assessment of purchase profit income and the pricing of generics. The aim is to ensure that the necessary changes can be made for the July Drug Tariff.

PSNC expects to announce the outturn in funding arrangements for 2008-9 in the next few weeks. Further information will be available at the time.

The Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) is scheduled to change on 1st September and PSNC noted that any price cuts would have an impact beyond the UK, as UK prices are used as a reference point for 24 other countries.

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

LPC Conference/ PSNC Dinner and Community Pharmacy Conference (CPC)

Feedback from LPC delegates attending this year's Conference and PSNC Dinner was considered at the meeting; feedback was positive and delegates particularly appreciated the PSNC Chairman's speech at the dinner, which showcased local pharmacy services in City and Hackney Teaching PCT.

PSNC was pleased to note that Rt Hon Dawn Primarolo MP, the Minister responsible for pharmacy, has confirmed that she will speak at this year's Community Pharmacy Conference in Birmingham in November.

PSNC decided that the timings of the PSNC Dinner/ LPC Conference and the CPC would be revised with effect from 2010. In 2010, the CPC will be held in the spring and the LPC conference/ PSNC Dinner will be held in the autumn.

National Audit Office

The National Audit Office (NAO) is examining the mechanism for measuring purchase profit income under the pharmaceutical contract. This has been expected for some time.

Public Health Services

On behalf of community pharmacy, PSNC attended the Department of Health's pre-launch briefing on the national programme of vascular risk assessments. PSNC has developed an outline service specification which is being considered by the Department of Health.

PSNC has also been engaging in discussion with the Department of Health to include community pharmacists in the training currently being developed for GPs and the NHS regarding alcohol services and campaigns.

IT Update

PSNC is encouraged that good progress is being made with EPS Release 1 deployment and that 84% of community pharmacies are now technically enabled. Usage is also continuing to increase, with approximately 9% of prescriptions now being prescribed and dispensed via the service.

PSNC Website

The PSNC website www.psnco.org.uk has recently been re-launched, following a substantial development programme. It now contains regional member-only pages where LPC members from a particular region can access resources relevant to them.

It was agreed that Enhanced service specifications currently under development will be placed on the LPC section of the website to ensure that all LPCs have access to current drafts which could be used to inform local negotiations.

-- 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.
2. LPCs are Local Pharmaceutical Committees; these represent pharmacies at a local level and engage with Primary Care Trusts and GPs to negotiate local services.

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