

## PRESS RELEASE



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### **PSNC CHIEF EXECUTIVE ADDRESSES DISPENSING DOCTORS CONFERENCE**

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008, Sue Sharpe, Chief Executive of PSNC, spoke at the DISPEX conference. She addressed the contentious issue of the provision of pharmaceutical services to patients in rural areas, and she spoke more broadly about collaboration between GPs and community pharmacists.

Sue Sharpe said:

“PSNC firmly believes that all healthcare professions should focus on collaboration to find the best ways of supporting patients and the public. We should seek to avoid confrontation and instead recognise each other’s existence, legitimacy and potential. PSNC’s focus has always been on patients - providing services to them and developing our contribution in key areas where we can offer real value.

“The NHS needs the resources which community pharmacy can offer. Pharmacists are not challenging GPs’ skills; they are seeking to complement them, to the benefit of the NHS and ultimately the patients. We need to develop virtual collaborative teams.

“Key White Paper proposals for pharmacy seek to extend public health services where pharmacists have the appropriate skills to complement existing NHS services. Recommendations include Healthy Living Centres, which are not in conflict with traditional GP services; proposals to extend minor ailments services to include all members of the public, not just those with the ability to pay for them; and support for newly diagnosed Long Term Condition patients so that they may administer their medication correctly to get the full benefit. In all cases, these new pharmacy services are designed to complement those offered by GPs.

“Regarding the pharmacy/ dispensing doctor agreement, the 2000 agreement sought to bring an end to hostilities and support collaboration between the professions. Compromises were made on both sides and when this agreement was finally reflected in regulations, PSNC and dispensing doctors signed a memorandum committing support. PSNC pays serious regard to that commitment and recognises the case for doctor dispensing rights in rural areas

when patients cannot get pharmacy services with reasonable ease; we would therefore ask that doctors likewise acknowledge the integral role of pharmacy.

“In short, the NHS needs to make the best use of its resources and Pharmacy can play a constructive role in this; however, our role should be complementary, not confrontational. Accordingly PSNC advocates greater collaboration between GPs and Pharmacy and will therefore continue to seek to build a constructive relationship for the benefit of all patients.”

**-Ends-**

### **Notes to Editors**

1. PSNC (The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee) is the body that represents community pharmacies in England and Wales on NHS matters.
2. For information on the new services available from community pharmacies please visit [www.psnc.org.uk/contract](http://www.psnc.org.uk/contract).