



# ALL-PARTY PHARMACY GROUP

[WWW.APPG.ORG.UK](http://WWW.APPG.ORG.UK)

*Chair: Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP*  
*Vice Chairs: Baroness Cumberlege CBE DL & Oliver Colvile MP*  
*Treasurer: Margot James MP*  
*Secretary: Stephen Lloyd MP*

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## **Parliamentarians announce major inquiry into NHS medicines shortages**

**21 November 2011**

The All-Party Pharmacy Group has today announced that it will hold a full-scale inquiry into the continuing problem of shortages of NHS medicines. The Group will call for written evidence, invite witnesses to attend evidence sessions and produce a report containing its conclusions and recommendations for action by government and other interested parties. Work will start immediately and the Group intends to complete the inquiry and publish its report in the first quarter of 2012.

Commenting on today's announcement, Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP, Chair of the All-Party Pharmacy Group, said:

“Shortages of NHS prescription medicines are a daily challenge for pharmacists up and down the country. This has been a problem for far too long, and as far as we can see the situation is not improving. The best interests of patients are being put at risk if medicines are not available when they are needed, and pharmacists are spending inordinate amounts of time trying to source medicines that are in short supply.

This isn't about over-the-counter medicines designed to treat minor ailments. This is about prescription medicines, including those for treating serious conditions such as hypertension, depression, diabetes and respiratory disease. In fact, medicines for almost every major condition have at some point in recent times gone into shortage. It is simply not acceptable that patients are being put at risk by their unavailability, and we cannot leave the situation unresolved.

The current government has looked in to the problem but we want to inject some urgency into this. So the All-Party Pharmacy Group will get to work quickly. We'll seek the views of everyone involved in the medicines supply chain and we will be asking the government about its plans for tackling this serious issue. My aim is that we play a part in getting the problem under control and reducing it as quickly as possible."

**-ENDS-**

For more information, please contact Simon Whale, Jack Colson or Lucy Hopkins on 0207 618 9100.

### **The inquiry**

The All-Party Pharmacy Group will be contacting relevant parties and seeking evidence immediately. Dates for evidence sessions and other information about the inquiry will be announced on the Group's website [www.appg.org.uk](http://www.appg.org.uk).

### **About the APPG**

The All-Party Pharmacy Group is a group of MPs and peers from across the political parties. Its focus is on issues affecting the profession of pharmacy.

The group receives financial support from the Company Chemists' Association, the National Pharmacy Association, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. The financial support funds the administrative assistance that the Group receives from Luther Pendragon.

Further information about the All-Party Pharmacy Group is available on the Group's website [www.appg.org.uk](http://www.appg.org.uk)