



ALL-PARTY PHARMACY GROUP

WWW.APPG.ORG.UK

Chair: Dr Howard Stoate MP

Vice Chair: Baroness Cumberlege CBE DL

Treasurer: Sandra Gidley MP

Secretary: Mark Todd MP

All-Party Pharmacy Group meeting: Progress towards the Implementation of the Pharmacy White Paper

The All-Party Pharmacy Group meeting took place at 14.15 on Tuesday 28th April 2009 in Committee Room 6 in the Palace of Westminster. Dr Howard Stoate MP chaired the meeting, along with Sandra Gidley MP in her capacity as officer of the APPG. The meeting was well attended, with the room filled to maximum capacity.

The meeting focussed on progress towards implementing the Pharmacy White Paper one year after publication. Speakers included:

Felicity Cox (FC) - Chair of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework Negotiating Team, NHS Employers

Jonathan Mason (JM) - National Clinical Director for Primary Care and Community Pharmacy in England, Department of Health

Jeannette Howe (JH) - Head of Pharmacy, Department of Health

Martin Stephens (MS) - National Clinical Director for Hospital Pharmacy, Department of Health

Sue Sharpe (SS) - Chief Executive, PSNC

Howard Duff (HD) – RPSGB

Neal Patel (NP) – NPA

Stephen Fishwick (SF) - NPA

Detailed below are some of the highlights of the session:

- Howard Stoate MP announced that the next APPG meeting would focus on the decriminalisation of dispensing errors, following case of Elizabeth Lee. The meeting will take place on Tuesday 16th June at 4pm in Committee Room 10, in the Palace of Westminster. All speakers welcomed the announcement.
- JH listed a number of achievements and highlights since the publication of the WP:
 - Publication of a community pharmacy commissioning guide for use by PCTs and an accompanying letter from the Minister for Care Services, Phil Hope MP, to PCTs about developing a 'vision' for pharmacy services
 - The appointment of JM and MS
 - Provisions relating to Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment in the Health Bill
 - Tackling poor quality and rewarding excellence
 - Increasing access to primary care
 - A greater focus on communications by the DH
- JH made it clear that more time would be needed to implement the range of actions in the white paper but that good building blocks had been put in place over the past 12 months. She also stated that it is now widely accepted that pharmacy should have a significant and growing role in public health. FC stated that the next phase in the development of the community pharmacy contractual framework would focus on cancer detection and protection, managing long term conditions, and helping people to improve their quality of life.

- FC also said that the DH was determined to foster better relationships between pharmacy and other health professionals, referencing GPs in particular – specifically on how to make the most of MURs. This was a key theme that was reiterated by the audience, with an emphasis on the need for greater communication and stronger relationships between GPs and pharmacists.
- JM confirmed that since taking up his Clinical Director role in the DH, his primary objective has been attempting to act as a “critical friend”, working with PCTs, community pharmacy and the DH itself.
- MS similarly confirmed that his primary task is ensuring that patients get maximum benefit from the medicines they are using.
- JH and JM highlighted that the profession was at a “tipping point” and listed between them a number of developments that community pharmacists might see in the next 12 months:
 - A broadening of new services
 - Commissioning of VRA checks
 - More focus on helping people stay well, focusing particularly on flu vaccinations and smoking cessation
 - Chlamydia screening
 - Harmonisation of accreditation
- JH stated that the DH has nearly finished consulting on PNAs, and Ministers have considered the current framework. We can expect an announcement shortly.
- SS urged the DH to take steps to ensure better communications and working arrangements between pharmacists and GPs, particularly a need for electronic transfers.
- HD welcomed the appointment of JM and MS and noted that it was encouraging to see collaboration between those involved in the implementation process
- SS noted that the pressures faced by community pharmacists at present threatened to undermine confidence and slow progress towards achievement of the white paper objectives.
- Quality was a key theme that was highlighted by all speakers as a primary concern for the future development of community pharmacy services.
- SF pointed to initiatives that were being conducted by the NPA to facilitate communications between PCTS and community pharmacists in London
- In terms of world class commissioning of new services, FC reminded the Group that community pharmacists were just one of a number of primary care providers currently negotiating with PCTs, and that pharmacists must market themselves accordingly.
- Workforce developments and the importance of training both graduates and experienced pharmacists were given considerable discussion.