



The Community Pharmacy Wales response

to

FULLFILLED LIVES, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES – A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES IN WALES OVER THE NEXT DECADE

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RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: FULLFILLED LIVES, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES – A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES IN WALES OVER THE NEXT DECADE

Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW) is the body whose function is to represent and negotiate NHS contractual matters on behalf of all of the pharmacy contractors in Wales

Part 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

Community Pharmacies in Wales constitute a network of 712 community pharmacies located where people work, shop and live and have the potential to be utilised as a network of ‘walk-in health and wellbeing centres’ that can deliver services in the very heart of the community.

Members cover a range of businesses from small independent pharmacies to the major high street multiple chains. This network represents a resource often underutilised in Wales and with a significant potential to improve the health and well-being of local people and to deliver services to those often hard to reach communities.

It is against this background that we feel that we have a key contribution to make to this consultation and in supporting the social care agenda in the future.

CPW was particularly pleased to see the recognition in the consultation document that local authorities need to respond to the recommendations in ‘Beyond Boundaries’ and the statement that they ‘*need to work with the statutory, voluntary and private sectors to tackle the barriers of good partnership and to promote new models to commission and deliver services*’.

Community pharmacies in Wales often bridge the boundary between the responsibilities of local authorities and local health boards in that they deliver NHS services under contract with the LHB while at the same time operate as key businesses, employing local people and contributing to the health and welfare of the local community.

As local authorities extend their responsibilities for the health and well being of local people **there has never been a better time to engage with the local pharmacy network and to seek to design and commission services to be delivered from community pharmacy.**

The following identifies some of the ways in which community pharmacy can help deliver the priorities identified in ‘Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities’, however it must be recognised that wherever there is a need to

deliver support services in the heart of the community there is a potential to engage with the community pharmacy network:

Part 2: The potential of Community Pharmacy

1. Managing long-term conditions in the community

The consultation document clearly identifies the challenge associated with managing the support required for people living with long-term conditions and identifies it as '*one of the most critical issues in demand for social care*'.

The number of adults in Wales reported as living with a limiting long-term condition is 23% compared to 18% of people in England and 20% in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and with the burden of managing these demands estimated to double by 2030, it is essential that all providers are fully engaged.

The role of pharmacy in the provision of advice, the management of medication, disease monitoring and the provision of accessible Near Patient Testing will become a more important element in the management of patients with long-term conditions.

CPW recommends that community pharmacy services need to be an integral part of patient care pathways for conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, asthma, COPD, epilepsy, colitis, coeliac disease and dermatology.

CPW were particularly pleased with the recommendation for whole system pilots that arose from the *Designed to Deliver* consultations, as this implied a willingness to adopt a 'clean sheet' approach to the management of chronic conditions in the community and recognition of the role that less traditional providers have to play.

Local authorities are encouraged to recognise the potential that community pharmacy has to educate patients, to provide easily accessible support, to undertake routine monitoring and to signpost to other local authority services.

2. Supporting self care and promoting better health

Community pharmacies have a significant contribution to make in supporting self care and helping people to lead health independent lives. They can achieve this through the provision of medicines and advice on minor ailments, compliance support for people having difficulties in managing their medicines and the provision of aids to independent living. In this way community pharmacists can help to reduce demands on social services.

The need for health promotion support and advice on appropriate lifestyle choices is well recognised as a key driver in reducing impact on social care and unscheduled care services. Community pharmacies exist in the heart of

our communities and the community pharmacist is widely acknowledged as a trusted provider of advice and support. The utilisation of the community pharmacy network in delivering public health advice helps to reduce two barriers to healthy living namely: access to services and access to advice.

Community pharmacists are in a position to provide advice on CHD risk, obesity, exercise, diabetes, smoking cessation, hypertension, alcohol usage, sexual health, nutrition and the uptake of immunisation in an environment that is convenient and where people will feel both at ease and empowered.

CPW wishes to see a clear strategy for the development of the community pharmacy network in Wales and recognition of their potential to become a network of 'health and wellbeing centres' providing health promotion, education and support to local people, and where the community pharmacist is recognised as the public health expert in the community.

Utilising the community pharmacy network in the provision of lifestyle and public health advice will help to achieve one of the key objectives identified in the consultation, namely: *'provide services which help people to prevent or delay the need for more intensive services'*.

3. Managing Medicines

As long as medicines remain the backbone of modern healthcare, it is more important than ever that patients achieve maximum benefits from their medicines. Effective use of modern medicines is a key facilitator in ensuring that patients healthcare is optimised and that patients are able to live independently for as long as possible. **Poor medicines management will result in greater demands for social care services.**

Pharmacists are the experts in medicines usage and the skills of the community pharmacist has a lot to offer in delivering medicines management services to all patients, to support hospital discharge and the Unified Assessment Process, and to support independent living.

It is estimated that more than 15% of the elderly patients that end up in hospitals do so as a direct, or indirect, result of their medication. Reducing hospital admissions will reduce the demands on social services that inevitable follow as patients are reintegrated into the community. **As patients over the age of 70 account for 80% of admissions to secondary care, ensuring regular and effective medicines management support those over 70 years of age will significantly reduce social services workload and expenditure.**

Within the Enhanced Services element of the new Community Pharmacy Contract, local pharmacies can be commissioned by social services to provide domiciliary support and outreach services, to patients who may have difficulty accessing regular services.

4. An integral part of substance misuse support services

Community pharmacies have been involved, in a number of local authority areas, in providing substance misuse support services. The *Substance Misuse Treatment Framework* recognises the contribution that community pharmacy '**supervised administration of medicines schemes**' make to the management of clients receiving methadone and buprenorphine medication.

A number of community pharmacists also provide **Syringe and Needle Exchange Services** that help to reduce incidents of blood borne infections and to reduce the number of contaminated syringes being discarded in public places.

Despite the well documented contribution that community pharmacies can make to the management of substance misuse in the community, commissioning of substance misuse services from community pharmacy remains sporadic. CPW would recommend that local authorities become more actively involved in the commissioning of community pharmacy substance misuse services through the local Community Safety Partnerships'.

5. Support for Carers and independent living

The valuable role that is played by carers is well recognised in the consultation document. One of the key roles carried out by carers, in both the care home and community environments, is to assist in the correct administration of medicines. Community pharmacists have the experience and expertise to train carers on the safe and effective administration of medicines and to meet the **National Minimum Standards** of the Care Standards Inspectorate Wales.

Community pharmacies can, through the enhanced service element of the New Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework, be commissioned to repackage medicines into compliance aids. This service will provide significant support to social services carers in administering medicines in a patient's home and in supporting patients to continue to live independently.

Commissioning community pharmacy to provide this type of support meets two of the key challenges identified in the consultation, namely: '*services need to concentrate more on supporting independence, be more reliable, responsive, consistent and of a high quality*' and '*Services need to be rebalanced toward prevention, stabilisation and maintenance*'.

6. Improving the sexual health of the local population

Community pharmacy has the potential to make a significant impact on the management of the sexual health needs of the local population.

Access to community pharmacy **Emergency Hormonal Contraception Schemes** provides rapid and easy access to the 'morning after pill', reducing the number of incidents of unwanted pregnancy and the resultant demands on social support services. The provision of free condoms supported by sexual health advice also limits the spread of sexually transmitted infections and encourages more responsible sexual behaviour.

In Greater London a large number of community pharmacies have been commissioned to provide **chlamydia screening services** and to provide treatment to patients with a chlamydia infection. **With chlamydia rates increasing across Wales the community pharmacy network stands ready to provide a similar service on an all-Wales basis.**

7. Population screening and risk reduction

Community pharmacies are the most accessible healthcare provider in Wales and this strength can be utilised in population screening for undiagnosed conditions such as diabetes, blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.

In addition through services such as **Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction Services** community pharmacists can be involved in assessing a patient's risk of developing conditions such as heart and circulatory disease.

In helping patients reduce their likelihood of developing debilitating conditions community pharmacies can help to reduce future demand on local authority and Local Health Board services.

8. Working with information technology

The network of community pharmacies across Wales, sitting as it does in the heart of local communities, is an ideal location to provide a signposting resource to local authorities and social services support services. With the introduction of technology signposting could be provided through the use of touch screen technology.

It is stated in the consultation document that '*Telecare - remote monitoring of citizen's wellbeing, with early identification of needs – can offer more effective services that help users to keep control of their lives*'. CPW would urge social services, when they look at the opportunities that information technology can bring in delivering new care models, to think about how the network of community pharmacies can link in to these new models of care.

If Information Technology is to deliver benefits envisaged in this consultation and the concomitant *Designed for Life* strategy then it is of paramount importance that Information, Management and Technology (IM&T) systems being developed in both the National Health Service and Social Services in Wales should facilitate the migration of information across boundaries. If **community pharmacy** is unable to electronically receive data or access information on the social services data source then the potentials outlined above will not be achieved.

Part 3: Conclusion

The preceding information clearly highlights the benefits that social services can achieve through active engagement with the community pharmacy network.

CPW would expect the WAG to recognise these benefits and to ensure, that community pharmacy is fully recognised as a potential service provider when they re-design the social services commissioning framework, in line with their declared objective of being '*flexible innovators in exploring new ways of delivering services and building services around the needs of the citizen*'.

In addition CPW would strongly encourage local authorities to recognise the support that community pharmacy can provide in improving the health and wellbeing of the local population and would encourage them to become actively engaged in the direct commissioning of community pharmacy services

Thank you for inviting CPW to respond to the consultation and for allowing us the opportunity to input into the decision making process.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can help with any additional information