



27 January 2009

To: Community pharmacists  
General practitioners  
Local medical committees  
Local pharmaceutical committees  
Primary care trust community pharmacy and primary medical care leads

Dear colleague

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC), Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) and NHS Employers have been meeting to discuss how relationships between community pharmacists and GPs can be improved for the benefit of patients.

These meetings were established following last year's publication of the Government white paper, *Pharmacy in England: building on strengths – delivering the future*, which recognised that good working relationships between healthcare professionals are essential to the delivery of personalised and effective patient services.

As healthcare delivery moves to primary care settings and primary care services play a more central role in helping people live healthy lives, discussions between community pharmacists and GPs can help to shape new services. It is important that there are opportunities for these discussions to take place.

We think that one of the best ways to stimulate and encourage working relationships is for community pharmacists and GPs to meet locally. Such meetings could be organised by local medical committees and local pharmaceutical committees, local educational facilitators or primary care trusts. There are a number of topics which could be discussed at these meetings, including:

- practice based commissioning
- new service awareness and referral pathways
- vascular risk assessment checks
- developing care pathways to deliver care closer to home
- managing minor illness and care pathways for minor illness

- locally organised multi-disciplinary audits
- discussions on specific medicines, e.g. warfarin, methotrexate or other high risk drugs where pharmacy and general practice can improve patient safety by working together
- repeat dispensing
- electronic prescription service
- medicines use reviews (MURs) and how to target patients in local priority groups
- minimising medication waste
- supporting patient adherence through the use of safe and appropriate compliance aids.

You may find it useful to use the workbook that was developed by the GPC and the National Pharmacy Association, *Improving communication between community pharmacy and general practice*. This is available at [www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk) and [www.npa.co.uk](http://www.npa.co.uk). You might also find it helpful to refer to new guidance on repeat dispensing and MURs that has been developed jointly by NHS Employers, the GPC and PSNC, for GPs. This is available at [www.nhsemployers.org](http://www.nhsemployers.org).

We would encourage you to arrange or attend a local meeting between community pharmacy and general practice. Improved local professional relationships will not only benefit members of the professions, they will also impact on the lives of patients.

Yours faithfully



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