



## **Practice Based Commissioning:** **A resource for community pharmacists in England**

### **1. Introduction**

Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) is the hot topic within the NHS but what does it actually mean for pharmacists and what resources are there to help understand this new way of working? For many pharmacists, involvement in PBC will have been limited to date and many of the documents related to PBC do not recognise the valuable input that pharmacists can make in both the commissioning and the provision of services.

At a national level many representative bodies are lobbying for the involvement of pharmacists in PBC so now is a good time for pharmacists to get involved locally.

### **2. What is Practice Based Commissioning?**

Practice Based Commissioning is a tool to improve the quality of services and access for patients. PBC supports the move of funding to frontline staff to enable the delivery of innovative system reforms, patient choice, plurality and investment. It supports the intent that commissioning should take place as close to the patient as possible to ensure cost-effective use of resources.

Under PBC, all practices will be given a minimum indicative budget which will be uplifted over time to enable the purchase of a range of services agreed with the PCT. A number of PCTs have already started the move to fair share budgets (the allocation of the practice spend is on a capitation rather than historic allocation of practice budget basis) for 2007/08. Many practices have chosen to pool their budgets and operate as consortia, with shared responsibility and decision making.

PBC should involve a number of other healthcare professionals, voluntary organisations, private sector etc. The challenge of PBC will only be met if there is effective collaboration between all professional groups.

### **3. What are the benefits to you of getting involved with PBC?**

- Integration into primary care
- Gain new and / or retain income streams

- Increased patient loyalty and footfall
- Opportunity to develop new clinical roles including Pharmacists with a Special Interest (PhWSi), prescribing etc
- Improved services and access for your patients and the local community

#### 4. **What are the risks of not getting involved in PBC?**

- Potential loss of profitability to re-invest in skill-mix, premises and opportunities as new services that pharmacies could provide are awarded to other organisations and / or professions
- Potential loss of patient loyalty and footfall
- Failure to be involved in the design and delivery of new patient care pathways
- Isolation from other primary care providers
- Lack of credible recognition from other healthcare professionals and commissioners

#### 5. **What needs to happen at a local level?**

##### ***Local Pharmaceutical Committees should:***

- find out how many PBC locality groups there are in your area and who their clinical and commissioning leads are;
- talk to the PCT commissioners and PBC consortia leads and offer pharmacy advice / involvement to PCT based commissioning groups;
- work with the local PCT Head of Medicines Management team to develop a team approach to tackling medicines and pharmacy related issues with PBC consortia and PCT commissioners;
- make links with the Improvement Foundation regional leads (see [www.improvementfoundation.org](http://www.improvementfoundation.org) for more information and contact details);
- encourage pharmacy representation on the PEC as these groups will have responsibility for approving expenditure plans and have significant input into commissioning decisions;
- encourage LPC representation on the PBC delivery group or PBC steering group at PCT level to ensure an opportunity to contribute to service redesign and an overview of progress across all localities;
- actively promote the benefits of optimising the community pharmacy contractual framework and accessible resource;
- get involved in the design of care pathways locally and ensure pharmacy has a foothold;
- gain access to locality based data relating to current referral and admissions costs to identify opportunities;
- encourage collaborative working wherever possible;
- work with Pharmacy Development Groups, where these are in place, to take PBC forwards
- learn how to write bids / tenders / business cases in the format that is required locally – is there a template available?(PSNC guidance to LPCs contains resources for bids and the NPA has published a suite of PBC business case templates which can be tailored for local use); and
- increase the knowledge of PBC amongst the LPC and your constituent contractors and pharmacists.

### ***Community Pharmacists should:***

- talk to your GP colleagues to find out what their plans are around PBC;
- ensure clinical governance is an integral part of all the services you offer to demonstrate and improve the quality and the safety of all current services; and
- evaluate existing services to secure continued funding and ensure evaluation is included in any new services;
- gather information from your customers and patients to see what services they would like to see provided within the PCT;
- talk to PCT and practice based medicines management pharmacists to understand how you can work together; and
- talk to your local LPC and check their website for information on PBC

You need to discover what the local needs are and then approach the PBC consortia or PCT with solutions to their problems.

## **6. Selling the benefits of Community Pharmacy:**

Community pharmacy is already involved in service re-design in a number of areas such as sexual health, smoking cessation, weight management and prescribing. Under PBC, community pharmacists could offer:

- Improved access to services and improved capacity e.g. minor ailment schemes
- Support for the management of Long Term Conditions (Repeat Dispensing Schemes, Medicine Use Reviews)
- Reduction of avoidable admissions and bed days (Repeat Dispensing Schemes, Medicine Use Reviews)
- Reduction of waste (Repeat Dispensing Schemes, Medicine Use Reviews)
- Cost-effective prescribing – supporting PCT initiatives to help make prescribing savings
- Reduction in Accident and Emergency costs
- Involvement of public and patients in service planning
- Reduction of health inequalities and improvement of public health

You do not need to compete with other health professionals for these services but you can look at opportunities where you can work in collaboration for the overall benefit to patients.

## **7. Useful links:**

### ***Department of Health:***

The Department of Health have set up a separate section on their website which contains all the resources they have produced for PBC including frequently asked questions and the latest news.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Organisationpolicy/Commissioning/Practice-basedcommissioning/index.htm>

### ***Improvement Foundation:***

The Improvement Foundation are running the national PBC development programme that currently involves 70% of PCTs. The main programme consists of a collaborative, which is running in three waves. LPCs and pharmacists need to be aware of any teams within their area and either get involved or take away learning from these sites. Details of the centres

and the programme are at

<http://www.improvementfoundation.org/View.aspx?page=/topics/health/practice/default.html>

The local centres are in the process of setting up PBC days for all PCTs and again pharmacists are encouraged to get involved in these.

Other resources include a '*Practice Based Commissioning Assessment Framework*' (2005) which is available at <http://www.improve.nhs.uk> This framework is designed to help practices and PCTs to undertake a diagnosis of their capacity and capability to meet the challenges of implementing PBC and to identify development needs.

The IF website also contains a great deal of information on PBC and also 'at a glance' guides as well as examples of service redesign.

The Improvement Foundation development programmes are also available to community pharmacists including the leadership programme; and quality improvement skills training can be delivered locally to community pharmacy teams. Further details are also available from the regional IF centres.

### ***National Pharmacy Association:***

The NPA have produced a '*Practice Based Commissioning Resource*' (March 2006) which explains PBC and demonstrates what this means for community pharmacy. It includes a number of key messages for pharmacists about how they can get involved at a local level and how they can put the case for pharmacy involvement forwards. The NPA has also published a suite of PBC business case templates, which can be tailored for local use. [www.npa.co.uk](http://www.npa.co.uk)

### ***NHS Alliance:***

The NHS Alliance have published a number of really useful documents available at <http://www.nhsalliance.org/documents.asp?subsection=pbcc>. However, these are only available to download if you are a member of the organisation.

### ***National Association of Primary Care***

It has a number of useful documents for member commissioners and providers, many of which are related to PBC. [www.napc.co.uk](http://www.napc.co.uk)

### ***Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee***

PSNC have produced '*PBC: A practical guide for LPCs* (2007)' and regularly update LPCs in PBC developments. Their website has a page dedicated to PBC which includes action points for LPCs and can be found at <http://www.psncc.org.uk/index.php?type=page&pid=115&k=5>

### ***Primary Care Contracting:***

This organisation has provided a wealth of information around PBC and have developed a bulletin on Pharmacy and PBC. They also have regional advisers which may be a useful resource locally.

<http://www.primarycarecontracting.nhs.uk/99.php>

### ***Health Policy Forum***

This forum is made up of representatives from CCA, NPA, PSNC and RPSGB. In December 2006 the forum published '*Making commissioning effective in the reformed NHS in England*' which sought to answer the question 'what makes for good or effective commissioning?'

<http://www.rpsgb.org.uk/worldofpharmacy/workingwithotherbodies/healthpolicyforum/>

**Pharmacy Management** published an article entitled “Commissioners’ Corner: Practice Based Commissioning” in July 2006. This paper defines PBC, sets PBC in the context of the overarching system reforms programme within the NHS and identifies opportunities for pharmacists. It is available online at <http://www.pharman.co.uk/cms/view.php/3720.html>

***Commissioning toolkit for long term conditions***

This website brings together information and resources to help commission effective patient centred services.

<http://www.commissioningforthelongterm.org.uk/index.php?page=home>