

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee Agenda
Tuesday 24th November 2020 at 3pm
Meeting to be held remotely via Zoom

Members: David Broome, Tricia Kennerley (Chair), Clare Kerr, Sunil Kochhar, Fin McCaul, Jay Patel, Prakash Patel, Stephen Thomas.

1. Welcome from Chair
2. Apologies for absence
3. Conflicts or declarations of interest
4. Minutes of the last meeting

Action

5. Influencing and 2021 Planning **Appendix 02/11/2020**
6. PSNC and LPC Websites Upgrade **Appendix 03/11/2020**
7. PSNC Annual Report 2019/20 **Appendix 04/11/2020**

Report

8. Pharmacy Communications **Appendix 05/11/2020**
9. Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs **Appendix 06/11/2020**
10. Any other business

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Subject | Influencing and 2021 Planning |
| Date of meeting | November 2020 |
| Committee/Subcommittee | Communications and Public Affairs |
| Status | Not confidential |
| Overview | Positioning and 2021 planning |
| Proposed action(s) | The subcommittee is asked to sense-check the plans and to consider the questions set out. |
| Author(s) of the paper | Zoe Long |

Influencing and 2021 Planning

Introduction

At the last subcommittee meeting we considered tactics that PSNC could use to try to influence policy, and in particular HM Treasury, more effectively. This paper considers the immediate priorities in this work for 2021. It draws on information included in the reports in [Appendix 04 and 05/11/20](#).

Key issues for early 2021

PSNC will have a number of key communications and public affairs challenges early in 2021. Some of these are ongoing issues that we expect to continue, but others, such as Brexit, will be new. In December and in the new year we will need to:

- Continue to manage the huge volume of COVID-19-related communications to contractors
- Influence more effectively to make progress with our funding bids...
- and explain the delays and/or outcomes to contractors
- Manage communications risks around Brexit (and possible medicine supplies)
- Manage patient expectations of community pharmacies
- Continue to build Parliamentary support for our policy asks

Alongside this, day-to-day communications with contractors must continue to update and inform them, and to highlight PSNC's work to them.

PSNC Plans

Managing Contractor Communications and Explaining Negotiations

In order to keep in close contact with contractors we will continue with the PSNC daily newsletters in 2021. An update on these newsletters is given in [Appendix 04/11/20](#), but in summary the feedback on them is excellent: they appear to be a highly valued resource, and thanks must go to Melinda Mabbutt for her tireless work on making them happen. As part of the website upgrade we will look to improve our newsletters to make them easier for the office to process, more visually appealing, and also to try to let our 18,600 subscribers opt into and out of different types of information.

In recent weeks we have ramped up communications to the sector on our funding and other asks of HM Government – using news stories, CEO Blogs, and speeches by the Chief Executive. There are further tactics that we can use to keep getting these messages to the sector in 2021 and we could look to use video blogs and press interviews to do so. A particular objective for 2021 is to do more to promote the CEO blogs and ensure that Simon's latest messaging is always reaching everyone in the sector – Committee Members may be able to help with this.

Influencing and Funding

With two outstanding funding bids, current influencing work has been focused on trying to build support for our asks – the recently launched APPG inquiry will help with this. If we continue to get radio silence or pushback on our asks, then in 2021 as well as our plans to reach more influential stakeholders such as Select Committee members, we will need to consider what more we could do and whether further national media work could support.

Brexit Risks and Managing Patient Expectations

The Brexit Forum continues to discuss communications risks related to Brexit and medicines supply, and falling out of that Forum PSNC is convening a meeting of wider sector communications teams to see if there is collaborative work that we can do on this topic. As a minimum, PSNC will need to equip contractors and LPCs with communications resources to handle any patient and media queries about

medicines supply. But collaborative work to proactively promote community pharmacy and ensure that patients, MPs, doctors and the media understand that supply issues are out of our control and that pharmacies do a tremendous job in ensuring continuity if supply to patients is our aim. To support that, work has continued on our patient-facing animation which will be ready for the New Year.

Building Parliamentary Support

The recent significant increase in membership of the APPG (see [Appendix 05/11/20](#)) is good news and gives us a potential new cohort of MP advocates. In 2021 we must work to leverage this as much as possible: we will begin that process by offering all APPG Members individual briefings on the sector and what we need from Government. This work will run alongside the MP briefing events that we are holding with LPCs.

Following the subcommittee's last meeting and the suggestion to do more to engage with Select Committees we have submitted a response to a Health Select Committee inquiry and begun preparing a second. Early in 2021 we plan to try to use the APPG report into COVID-19's impact on the sector to brief individual members of the Select Committee and Clerks.

The APPG will also want to continue its work to support the sector and we will need to use that, as well as its new MP members, to best effect.

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider:

- What more can PSNC do in 2021 to ensure its key messages are reaching as many contractors as possible?
- Should PSNC be saying more in public about our funding asks and the value of the sector: what messages would help us?
- How can PSNC start to press for independent regulation of financial decisions made by DHSC and the NHS?
- What resources will contractors and LPCs need to help ensure that any medicine supply problems after Brexit are not blamed on the sector?
- What more can MPs do to support the sector – should we be calling debates on community pharmacies, or using other tactics?
- Would now be a good time for MPs to help support local integration work eg with PCNs?
- Does the subcommittee have ideas for the 2021 APPG workplan?

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Subject | PSNC and LPC Websites Upgrade |
| Date of meeting | November 2020 |
| Committee/Subcommittee | Communications and Public Affairs |
| Status | Not confidential |
| Overview | Summary of progress on the upgrade to the main PSNC website and the template LPC sites. |
| Proposed action(s) | Discuss options and consider next steps. |
| Author(s) of the paper | Zoe Long and Melinda Mabbutt |

PSNC and LPC Websites Upgrade

Introduction

This paper sets out progress made on a website upgrade to improve accessibility and resilience, as well as to provide a fit-for-purpose website for PSNC (or a rebranded negotiating organisation) in line with the recommendations of the independent review into contractor support and representation. This upgrade looks to improve both the main PSNC website and the template sites offered to LPCs.

General Project Update and Timelines

Following conversations with a range of different providers over the summer, the Communications Team has continued discussions with Deeson, who would provide a one-stop solution for PSNC in this project. They are able to help with the design of the website, handle the technical side of the upgrade, and will also work with us on the information architecture of our site, linking all of this closely to our communications strategy. They come with a recommendation from an LPC Communications team who we trust and we have so far been impressed with them. We will look to talk to another similar agency over the next few weeks in order to sense-check information, get a further quote and give us another option for the project.

We have talked to Deeson in more detail about our website and digital communications (email newsletters etc) and also about the LPC templates. A key decision remains whether we keep the LPC website templates as part of the PSNC website, or build them completely separate sites, which would give them more freedom. Our view is that we stick with a template linked to PSNC – this will ensure more consistency across the LPC sites (in line with the Wright review recommendations) and also be a significant cost saving. It will help to keep some consistency in branding between PSNC and the LPCs, and working with Deeson we should be able to give the LPCs enough flexibility while also addressing some of their concerns about the current site template.

We have made some progress re LPCs as set out below and we will shortly launch a user survey to gather thoughts and ideas about the PSNC website. We are also considering whether a user forum would be helpful to help us take this part of the project forwards.

Deeson estimate that the websites will take four months to upgrade, once we have signed contracts. We plan to agree terms with them or another agency this year: this will mean we can begin work in January and should be on track for a launch of the new websites in the first half of the year.

LPC websites survey

The Communications Team ran an LPC survey in November to gather initial views and ideas from LPCs on the current features offered by the LPC website templates and what changes they might benefit from. We asked the primary website administrator for each LPC to respond and, whilst some of the questions were mainly intended for those LPCs already using our template sites, those not using our template were still encouraged to share their thoughts.

The survey confirmed many things we already knew, such as that news and information are the most important aspects of LPC websites and that the websites need better search functionality. Overall, it appears that convenience and cost-saving drew many to our templates but there has been increasing frustration with the current rigidity and outdated features. Most aspects of the site templates are ranked as 'ok'.

It has been interesting to see that the Wright report has made some LPCs begin to reconsider how they should be using their websites. In particular, the survey revealed that an increasing number of LPCs want to provide a place on their sites for local commissioners and members of the public, as well

as for pharmacy teams. However, an important take-away is the general lack of resource and IT knowledge in many LPC teams. Many responses call for simplicity, ease of navigation and support in making the transition to any new site.

A download of all the data has been sent as a separate appendix (see **LPC Sites Survey – all data**).

We have also discussed the findings with Deeson who believe they can offer a useful solution for LPCs: the key challenges here will be governance and relationship management, rather than technical.

LPC sites working group

The LPC survey provides us with a useful starting point, but the development of the LPC template websites will very much need to be a joint project between PSNC and the LPCs. The formation of a working group will be a first step in this and we will look to get this group together early in 2021. This group will oversee the development of the new LPC templates to ensure they are fit for purpose, but will also work with us to ensure that all LPCs have as much support as they need when we do all migrate to the updated sites.

The survey identified a good level of interest in supporting an LPC working group, with 22 respondents indicating they would consider joining such a group.

Next Steps

The next step in this project will be to agree terms with Deeson or another agency. We would like to do this by the end of 2020 so that we can start the project formally in the New Year and still aim for a late-spring launch date for the new websites.

To achieve this, the Communications Team will:

- Launch the user survey of the PSNC website
- Write a detailed brief for the project based on our discussions with Deeson
- Seek final quotes and proposals from Deeson, and a second agency

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider:

- Any reflections on the findings of the LPC survey.
- Does the subcommittee have any suggestions for LPC officers or members who might be particularly useful to have on the working group? Who else should this group include?
- Is the subcommittee content to move forward with LPC websites that will still be 'owned' by PSNC?
- Any additional feedback at this stage of the project.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Subject | PSNC Annual Report 2019/20 |
| Date of meeting | November 2020 |
| Committee/Subcommittee | Communications and Public Affairs |
| Status | Not confidential |
| Overview | Progress made on PSNC's annual report for 2019/20. |
| Proposed action(s) | Reflect on the plans and consider next steps. |
| Author(s) of the paper | Zoe Long and Melinda Mabbutt |

PSNC Annual Report 2019/20

Introduction

A key task that has been delayed by COVID-19 communications work is the production of PSNC's annual report. The Communications Team has resumed work on this project in recent weeks and below we have detailed the progress made.

Design specification

Following discussions with CPA members during the September meeting, we have settled on the following plan for the report.

Works in digital and hard copy formats: Our main focus is for the report to be visually appealing and be accessible in a digital format, but we will also aim to have some copies printed as this was useful to send to LPCs. To achieve both objectives we are focusing on infographics and short boxes of text (eg case studies) to get our key messages across. We are also working to see if we can incorporate some video content.

Two versions of the report: We are working on a report for our own sector (i.e. community pharmacy contractors and Local Pharmaceutical Committees) and one much shorter report for external audiences/stakeholders (e.g. politicians, NHS leaders, patient charities). This will allow us to properly tailor our messages – for the pharmacy audience we need to focus on the value PSNC is delivering for them, but for external audiences, while we do want them to know about PSNC, the primary goal is to showcase the sector.

We are drafting the text for the external report to tie in with our animation on the value of community pharmacy which is currently being developed by our animators. A draft script for this animation will be shared with the subcommittee by email when it is available. We expect the animation to be ready in the New Year, in time to use for some of our January MP briefing events.

A4 and A5 booklets: The annual report aimed at the community pharmacy audience will be more comprehensive and, dependent on our designer's conclusions, we expect this to be printed as an A4 booklet. Online it will have its own website designed up. The version for external audiences will be much snappier, so if we have a printed version this is likely to be A5.

Design: We are working with a new designer design on the project to give it all a fresh look and feel, while still following PSNC's brand guidelines. As above, the reports will be based on infographics as much as possible. We may also try to include some QR codes to link to related videos.

Timelines: We are working as fast as we can on the report and hope to be ready to publish the report to the community pharmacy sector either before Christmas or very early in the New Year. This is our first priority for the annual reports. The external stakeholders report will follow, and we wonder whether this would be better written as a report about the calendar year 2020 – as this will not include financial reports, there is no need to link it to the financial year, and a 2020 report would then be more timely in the New Year.

Content map

We are working the below page plan for the community pharmacy annual report.

| Content – community pharmacy | Page |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Front cover | 1 |
| Comments from the CEO and Chair | 2-3 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| The Year at PSNC | 4-5 |
| The Five-Year CPCF | 6-7 |
| Engaging with contractors and learning | 8 |
| Representing through National Crises | 9 |
| PSNC Annual Accounts 2019/20 | 10-11 |
| The Year Ahead | 12-13 |
| Back cover | 14 |

Sample pages

Draft designs are not yet available, but a final proof of the report will be shared with the subcommittee by email ahead of publication.

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider:

- The suitability of the revised plan for the annual reports.
- The plan for the report for external audiences – would a 2020 calendar year report be suitable?
- Any key objectives or audiences for the report for external audiences.
- What should PSNC do to promote the two annual reports?

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Subject | Pharmacy Communications |
| Date of meeting | November 2020 |
| Committee/Subcommittee | Communications and Public Affairs |
| Status | Not confidential |
| Overview | An update on PSNC's communications with contractors, pharmacy teams and LPCs, including our digital statistics reports. |
| Proposed action(s) | None |
| Author(s) of the paper | Melinda Mabbutt |

Pharmacy Communications

Introduction

This paper provides an update on work to communicate with community pharmacy contractors, pharmacy teams and LPCs. It also contains monthly statistics on PSNC's digital communications.

Autumn/winter messaging for external stakeholders

Following discussion with the subcommittee in September, the key messaging grid for autumn/winter was shared with LPCs who have been using it to support their local communications.

To support the messaging, we are creating a library of digital and media resources for LPCs and contractors to use, particularly on their social media feeds. These are being added over time to the relevant sections of our new [Messaging for Autumn/Winter 2020 page](#) (which sits in the LPC Members' Area of the PSNC website). So far, we have social media resources on flu and pharmacy services during the pandemic, with infographics and further digital resources including an animation to follow in the coming weeks.

September 2020 LPC Conference Communications

The 2020 LPC Conference was held on 16th September 2020. It was the first time PSNC had held this annual event digitally and it was a big undertaking for the team. We worked with a small visual/audio company and utilised a virtual conference solution.

We ran a feedback survey after the event. An anonymised summary of the responses, plus further comments given in response to the final survey question, can be viewed in the documents below. Overall the feedback was positive – 86% of delegates found the technology easy to use, and 84% rated the event as excellent or good.

[LPC Conference Feedback Survey: Summary of responses](#)

[LPC Conference Feedback Survey: Further comments](#)

In the weeks following the conference we made as many resources and as much information as possible from the day available to all LPC Members. This included slide decks, on-demand recordings, poll results, and best practice videos. We created a new page in the LPC Members' Area of the PSNC website to host all of these: [LPC Conference 2020: Resources](#).

PSNC Digital Guides

We have been adding to our series of 'digital guides' throughout the autumn. These give short video presentations on topical issues, offering busy pharmacists an alternative way to digest information.

[Flu Vaccination Service 2020/21 Digital Guide](#)

A 30-minute guide from David Onuoha, PSNC's Service Development Manager, providing an overview of the service requirements, highlighting the changes to the service for the 2020/21 season and signposting contractors to the variety of reference sources available.

This guide has been viewed 755 times since its release.

[Part 2 PQS 2020/21 Digital Guide](#)

A 20-minute guide from Alastair Buxton, PSNC Director of NHS Services, giving an introduction to the scheme's requirements and explaining what contractors need to do to complete the necessary actions and claim payments.

This guide has been viewed 1,115 times since its release.

NHS Test and Trace concerns

In October, PSNC, AIM, CCA and NPA [co-signed a letter to Ministers and NHS officials](#) outlining the sector's concerns about the impact of the NHS Test and Trace service on pharmacy teams. This led to interest from an ITV News reporter – particularly regarding whether the application of contact tracing is forcing some pharmacies to close.

To inform PSNC's work in this area and any media reports, we ran an [anonymous survey](#) to try and get a sense of how many pharmacies are or have been affected, and how easy it has been to resolve the situation. We recently used this data in our discussions with DHSC and NHSE&I and will continue to monitor the situation during the second wave of the pandemic.

Regulation Explainer Articles

On 20th October 2020 new NHS regulations were laid to introduce changes to the Terms of Service for pharmacy contractors. Some of these changes relate to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, but most are changes which were previously agreed as part of the 5-year Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) and were originally planned to be introduced in July 2020.

The main changes were listed in a [PSNC news article](#) as a summary for contractors, but that was followed by a series of 14 more in-depth Explainer articles to explain exactly what those changes mean. These articles are available from a new 'Changes to the Terms of Service in 2020' page on the PSNC website, with the shortlink: psnc.org.uk/ToS2020

PSNC in the press

Here is a round-up some of the recent press coverage PSNC has been involved in.

Flu vaccination supply on BBC Radio 4

Alastair Buxton, PSNC's Director of NHS Services, appeared on BBC Radio 4's You and Yours programme on 16th October to discuss the flu vaccination season. Alastair spoke about the demand that community pharmacies have seen for flu vaccinations this season. He also gave some insight into phased orders of vaccinations and explained why some pharmacies are out of stock at this time of year.

[Listen to the programme on-demand](#) (the flu segment begins at 01:10 and Alastair can be heard from 05:54)

PSNC CEO funding negotiation interview

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes gave an indication of how funding negotiations are going in an interview with Pharmacy Magazine Editor Richard Thomas. As well as talking about PSNC's bid for a funding uplift, Simon discussed the impact COVID-19 has had on the sector, the perilous financial situation many contractors have found themselves in, and the findings of the independent review into contractor representation and support.

[Read or listen to the interview on the Pharmacy Magazine website](#)

Highlighting quota issues in pharmacy press

The PSNC Communications Team supported Regional Representative and independent contractor, David Broome, to write an article about the difficulties that quotas are causing for Independent Community Pharmacist magazine. David discusses findings from the Funding and Contract Subcommittee and urges contractors to continue to report quota issues to support PSNC's representation work on issues affecting the supply chain.

[Read the article in Independent Community Pharmacist](#)

Chief Executive Blogs

PSNC CEO Simon Dukes continues his monthly blogs and, recently, has been using them to address the delays in reaching a deal on the funding desperately needed to cover the sector's COVID-19 costs.

[PSNC Chief Executive's Blog \(2nd October\)](#)

September's blog sees Simon consider the frustrating delay in support for COVID-19 costs, whilst being encouraged by announcements on CPCS and a new pathway to independent prescribing.

[PSNC Chief Executive's Blog \(2nd November\)](#)

October's blog reflects on the impressive work community pharmacy teams have put in this year and the need for this to be recognised by Government.

Communications to contractors

We have been continuing to work to promote the work that PSNC is doing on behalf of contractors, and to reassure them that the Committee is very aware of the issues that they face and battling to get them more help and support. This has included trying to give updates on ongoing negotiations and discussions with the NHS, and also addressing these topics in CEO Blogs, speeches and other communications.

Recent communications along these lines have included a story on PSNC's rejection of the Government's initial COVID-19 costs offer (published in response to inaccurate reporting on this topic); our response to the publication of the DHSC impact assessment on the five-year deal; and our update on COVID-19 vaccinations.

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-cost-negotiations-update-psnc-rejects-initial-offer-and-makes-counter-proposal/>

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/government-cpcf-impact-assessment-psnc-highlighting-issues-to-minister/>

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/psnc-discussing-pharmacy-involvement-in-covid-vaccinations/>

Communications on the Independent Review

In October, PSNC shared its proposal for a Review Steering Group (RSG) to take forward work on contractor representation and support with LPCs. The communications team then collated the feedback received from LPCs: this was broadly supportive of the proposal, and a summary as well as the anonymised feedback can be found on the website.

[RSG Feedback Summary](#)

[RSG Anonymised Feedback](#)

With the RSG agreed, PSNC has issued two communications to contractors to update them on the process, and then to announce the membership of the RSG. Links to the articles are copied below.

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/independent-review-update-new-review-steering-group-to-take-forward-work-on-contractor-support-and-representation/>

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/independent-review-update-aim-cca-and-independents-nominate-members-to-review-steering-group-rsg/>

Daily Email Newsletter

Whilst there was a brief period when the volume of news – and subsequently interest in our daily newsletter – died down, the emergence of a second wave in the COVID-19 pandemic has meant the Communications Team decided it would be best to continue with our daily email newsletters.

Interest in the newsletter continues to grow – we now have 18,600 subscribers to the newsletters, up from around 16,000 at the start of 2020. We also continue to receive very positive feedback about the daily communications, with one recent tweet from a pharmacist reading:

Can I once again thank @PSNCNews for maintaining the daily newsletter/email bulletin. This is a huge task to collate, prepare and distribute on a daily basis – without it getting tired or irrelevant. I recommend all community pharmacy team members sign up to receive it

The Kings Fund have also recently commented to PSNC policy leads on the high standard of PSNC's communications throughout the pandemic.

The subcommittee is reminded that they can direct contractors to sign up for PSNC's emails via psnc.org.uk/enews and that they can view an [archive of PSNC newsletters](#) on our website.

PSNC digital communications reports (September and October reports overleaf)

September 2020 overview: This month news and guidance on the Flu Vaccination Service and Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) were popular, alongside information relating to the ongoing pandemic. Our largest peaks in website numbers were on Wednesday 2nd, the day after requirements around consent and remote consultations for Advanced services changed, and on Tuesday 29th, the day after we published an introductory guide to Part 2 PQS.

October 2020 overview: Information relating to the ongoing pandemic continued to be popular, whilst supply issues and payment related concerns made a resurgence. Our largest peaks in website numbers were on Thursday 1st, the day after the Part 2 PQS bandings were published, and on Wednesday 21st, the day after new NHS pharmacy regulations were laid and new SSPs came into force.

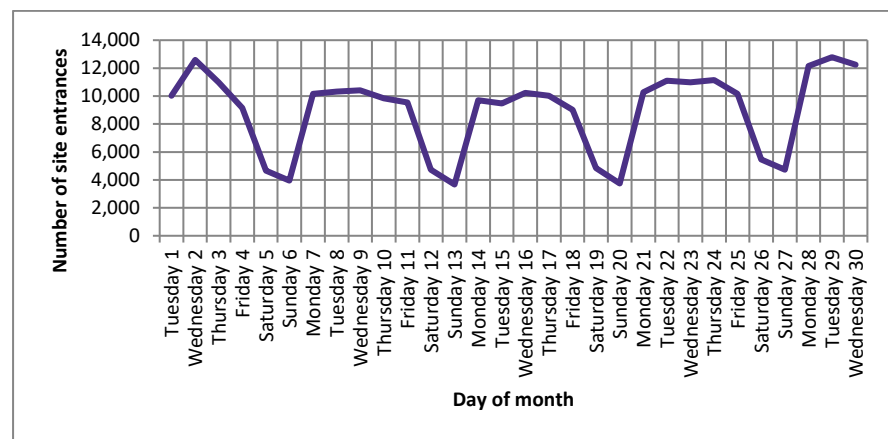
Conclusion

This paper has been created just for review; no action is required. However, subcommittee members are welcome to share their feedback or ask questions on any of the above.

PSNC digital communications report – September 2020

PSNC Website

| Audience | September | August |
|--|----------------|---------|
| Number of unique visitors (site entrances) | 268,144 | 178,628 |
| Number of unique pageviews | 453,840 | 295,822 |



| Pages | Views |
|--|--------|
| Flu Vaccination Service | 19,345 |
| Price concessions | 17,597 |
| Flu Vaccination – record keeping and data requirements | 11,404 |
| Flu vaccination training | 9,994 |
| PQS 2020/21 Part 2 | 7,022 |

| News stories | Date | Views |
|--|---------|-------|
| Advanced services: changes to consent and other rules | 1 Sept | 6,739 |
| COVID-19 app: QR code posters optional for pharmacy | 23 Sept | 5,050 |
| PPE guidance updated (including changes for flu vac) | 24 Aug | 3,402 |
| Supply Notification: H2-antagonists – Update | 21 Aug | 3,194 |
| Flu vac: service spec published & new flexibilities agreed | 28 Aug | 2,515 |

| PSNC Briefings | Views |
|--|-------|
| 026/20: Guidance on the 2020/21 Flu Vaccination Advanced Service | 4,068 |
| 024/20: PQS Essential Criteria Checklist for COVID-19 - Evidence checklist | 1,199 |
| 028/20: Pharmacy opening hours in 2021 | 729 |
| 023/20: Early guidance on the 2020/21 Flu Vaccination Advanced Service | 410 |
| 029/20: Guidance on the Hepatitis C Antibody Testing Service | 343 |

| Webinars/videos | Plays |
|--|-------|
| Digital Guide to the 2020/21 Flu Vaccination Service | 575 |
| Introductory guide to PQS Part 2 2020/21 | 360 |
| Part 1 PQS 2020/21 digital guide | 243 |
| Future of Pharmacy animation | 130 |
| 2019/20 Flu Vaccination Service video | 15 |

PSNC Emails

| PSNC Newsletter | September | August | Other health newsletters |
|-----------------|------------|--------|--------------------------|
| Open rate | 33% | 31% | 23% |
| Click rate | 4% | 3% | 6% |
| Clicks to opens | 11% | 8% | 20% |

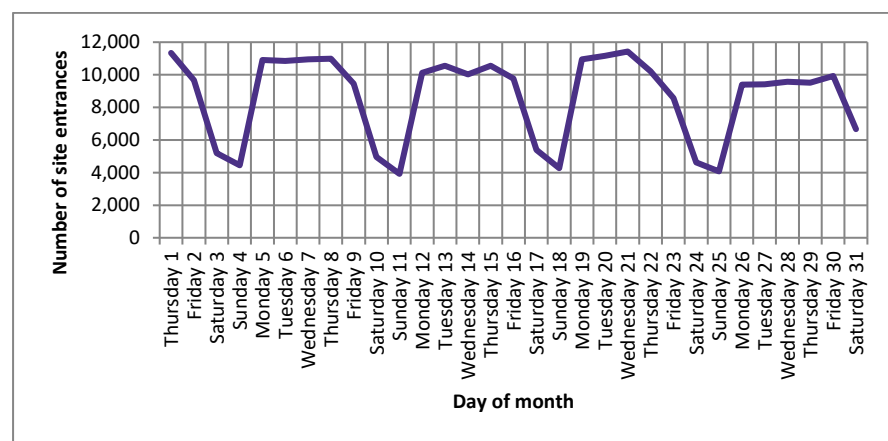
Social media

| | September | August |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------|
| Twitter reach | 148,200 | 113,600 |
| Twitter interactions | 4,052 | 2,100 |
| Facebook reach | 11,386 | 2,520 |
| Facebook interactions | 1,161 | 262 |
| LinkedIn reach | 9,001 | 3,614 |
| LinkedIn interactions | 929 | 112 |

PSNC digital communications report – October 2020

PSNC Website

| Audience | October | September |
|--|----------------|-----------|
| Number of unique visitors (site entrances) | 268,858 | 268,144 |
| Number of unique pageviews | 442,327 | 453,840 |



| Pages | Views |
|--|--------|
| Price concessions | 18,616 |
| PQS 2020/21 Part 2 | 16,573 |
| Flu Vaccination Service | 8,710 |
| Flu Vaccination – record keeping and data requirements | 8,399 |
| Pharmacy Quality Scheme | 8,168 |

| News stories | Date | Views |
|--|--------|-------|
| Supply Notification: H2-antagonists – Update | 28 Oct | 4,096 |
| Requirement to sign prescriptions suspended | 30 Oct | 3,391 |
| Disallowed EPS items submitted for payment | 16 Oct | 2,985 |
| New NHS Pharmacy Regulations laid | 20 Oct | 2,858 |
| Healthcare workers should pause COVID-19 app at work | 5 Oct | 2,689 |

| PSNC Briefings | Views |
|--|-------|
| 022/20: NHS Test and Trace - FAQs (UPDATED 12 October 2020) | 1,459 |
| 024/20: PQS Essential Criteria Checklist for COVID-19 - Evidence checklist | 1,005 |
| 033/20: dm+d and EPS factsheet | 722 |
| 026/20: Guidance on the 2020/21 Flu Vaccination Advanced Service | 699 |
| 032/20: PQS Guidance for Pharmacy PCN Leads on PCN domains | 558 |

| Webinars/videos | Plays |
|--|-------|
| Introductory guide to PQS Part 2 2020/21 | 755 |
| Part 1 PQS 2020/21 digital guide | 233 |
| Future of Pharmacy animation | 197 |
| Digital Guide to the 2020/21 Flu Vaccination Service | 121 |
| A digital guide to the Pandemic Delivery Service | 12 |

PSNC Emails and Social Media

| PSNC Newsletter | October | September | Other health newsletters |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Open rate | 32% | 33% | 23% |
| Click rate | 4% | 4% | 6% |
| Clicks to opens | 12% | 11% | 20% |

| | October | September |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Twitter reach | 124,100 | 148,200 |
| Twitter interactions | 2,823 | 4,052 |
| Facebook reach | 18,624 | 11,386 |
| Facebook interactions | 3,394 | 1,161 |
| LinkedIn reach | 6,251 | 9,001 |
| LinkedIn interactions | 327 | 929 |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Subject | Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs |
| Date of meeting | November 2020 |
| Committee/Subcommittee | Communications and Public Affairs |
| Status | Not confidential |
| Overview | A summary of PSNC's public affairs work and engagement with external stakeholders in recent months. |
| Proposed action(s) | None |
| Author(s) of the paper | Jessica Ferguson |

Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs

Introduction

This paper presents an overview of the public affairs work PSNC has carried out since the last committee meeting.

All Party Pharmacy Group (APPG)

During the last meeting of the subcommittee, we gave an update on the new agency appointed to provide the secretariat for the APPG, Tendo Consulting. The pharmacy bodies had been acting as the interim secretariat but have since formally handed over and the following work is currently being undertaken.

Recruitment drive and cross-party letter

As a starting activity, the group's chair, Jackie Doyle-Price, issued a letter to all MPs, encouraging them to join the group. This has so far resulted in an additional 12 MPs joining the APPG as members, bringing the total to 22. So far, new members include:

- **Bob Blackman, Conservative MP for Harrow East**, who is also the Chair of the APPG on Smoking and Health.
- **Dame Diana Johnson, Labour MP for Kingston upon Hull North**, who served on the Health and Social Care Select Committee from 2017-19. She is also the Co-Chair of the Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood APPG (and led calls for the independent inquiry into the NHS's contaminated blood scandal).
- **John McDonnell, Labour MP for Hayes and Harlington**, who was also Shadow Chancellor in Jeremy Corbyn's Shadow Cabinet from 2015-20.
- **Dame Cheryl Gillan, Conservative MP for Chesham and Amersham**. A prolific backbench MP, Cheryl is also the Vice Chair of the 1922 Committee.
- **Elliot Colburn, Conservative MP for Carshalton and Wallington**; new MP from 2019 intake, but previously worked in public affairs for an NHS trust.
- **Simon Fell, Conservative MP for Barrow and Furness**; new MP from 2019 intake.
- **Judith Cummins, Labour MP for Bradford East**, who is also the Vice Chair for the APPG on Dentistry and Oral Health.

We will be issuing introductory emails to all of the new members from PSNC and we will offer briefings via Zoom to bring them up to speed on sector developments.

This letter to MPs also called for signatories to a cross-party letter to Matt Hancock, calling for additional support for the pharmacy sector, including the following asks:

- Repayments of the £370m advance payments made to the sector to be written off to relieve the immediate financial pressures on community pharmacies;
- A boost to overall community pharmacy funding in recognition of the very great financial pressures facing the sector and the critical and valuable pharmacies have undertaken during the pandemic; and
- Continued access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and rapid access to COVID-19 testing to keep pharmacy teams safe.

The cross-party letter so far has 20 signatories, but we expect this to increase following more chasing by the agency. PSNC has also issued a template for LPCs to use to contact their MPs and encourage them to put their names to the letter.

Rapid inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on pharmacy

For its first project, the APPG is carrying out a rapid inquiry with the aim of examining the immediate and urgent pressures facing pharmacy as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking at both financial and operational pressures on the sector, the inquiry will result in a set of recommendations to HM Government for the resource the sector needs.

Over a period of two weeks, data will be gathered to inform the inquiry through a survey of the pharmacy workforce and interviews with key sector stakeholders. There will also be an opportunity for other stakeholders to submit written evidence. Once the report has been put together it will be formally launched, and to help disseminate it appropriately, the communications plan currently includes:

- A strategy to engage national media - through Tendo contacts, Press Association release, approaching The Mirror as part of their ongoing campaign etc.
- Regional press releases for local media – these will be produced with LPCs in mind
- A briefing for MPs – including a plan for subsequent questions, debate material, etc.
- A briefing to present to Government officials

An APPG meeting will also be held following the launch of the report, where we will have the opportunity to invite DHSC, NHSE&I officials and others to address the content of the report and its recommendations.

We are keen to use the report to help to address some of our wider influencing tactics as discussed in the last subcommittee meeting. For example, it may be a useful report to use to approach and brief Select Committee Members or Clerks and Special Advisors, and the Chair of the Group may be able to reach HM Treasury officials when she presents the findings to Government officials.

Other parliamentary engagement

MP engagement

Since the last meeting of the subcommittee, we have issued some of our latest messaging to the APPG officers and our key supportive MPs, including an update on the funding negotiations, but also some headline figures from this year's flu season. Key recipients included:

- **Justin Madders, Labour MP for Ellesmere and Neston Port**, Shadow Minister for Public Health and Prevention
- **Paul Bristow, Conservative MP for Peterborough**, APPG Officer, Member of the Health and Social Care Select Committee
- **Taiwo Owatemi, Labour MP for Coventry North West**, APPG Officer, Member of the Health and Social Care Select Committee
- **Munira Wilson, Liberal Democrat MP for Twickenham**, Liberal Democrat Health Lead
- **Peter Dowd, Labour MP for Bootle**, All-Party Parliamentary Health Group

Health and Social Care Select Committee

In October we submitted written evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into workforce burnout and resilience, highlighting our concerns about the resilience of community pharmacy teams amid a second COVID-19 peak. To inform our response we gathered case studies from Committee Members (also independent contractors) and we had discussions with the team at Day Lewis, who highlighted the impact upon larger pharmacy groups.

The response set out the significant increases in workload that community pharmacy teams have had to manage throughout the pandemic and the negative impact this has had on workforce stress and resilience. We also outlined the support that we believe the community pharmacy sector requires to cope through the second wave of the pandemic. We are currently developing the Select Committee response into a briefing for MPs, which we aim to use to further engage Parliamentarians on these workforce issues.

A joint inquiry between the Health and Social Care and Science and Technology Select Committee is also underway, looking into lessons learnt as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The scope is broad and allows for a range of topics to be discussed, so we are using this inquiry as another opportunity to highlight some of our key asks to MPs. At the time of writing, we are currently putting together a submission which outlines how existing financial pressures on the sector have been exacerbated during the pandemic due to increased demand, and that some pharmacy businesses are at risk of collapse unless they are adequately supported.

Briefing events for MPs

We have been working to support the LPCs with their local MP engagement, recognising that many have been under pressure over the past few months and may not have had the dedicated time or resource for this.

We are currently working with seven LPCs to host five MP briefing events. We have grouped the MPs from the seven LPC patches based on their parties and how long they have been elected. This is to allow us to tailor our messaging depending on whether they are opposition MPs, who may be more receptive to Government critique, or Conservatives, who will need a different conversation. We will also be hosting a briefing event specifically for Conservative MPs who were elected in the 2019 General Election, many of whom still require a proper introduction to pharmacy.

We plan to go ahead with events with Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs this year, and then two events with Conservative MPs will follow in January.

Parliamentary Questions

Following the summer and half term recesses, MPs have resumed submitting questions, including on community pharmacy matters. The following are examples of some of the pharmacy-specific parliamentary questions which have recently been put to the government:

- **Christian Wakeford, Conservative MP for Bury South**, asking what additional funding has been made available to community pharmacies to help them deal with increased demand for their services during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Justin Madders, Labour MP for Ellesmere Port and Neston**, asking what assessment has been made of the COVID-19 outbreak on the long-term funding requirements of community pharmacies.

- **Jackie Doyle-Price, Conservative MP for Thurrock**, asking what role the Secretary of State intends local pharmacies to play in delivering the Government's ambition for widespread national testing for COVID-19; and whether he plans to allocate additional funding to the pharmacy sector to ensure the sector's long-term sustainability.
- **Steve McCabe, Labour MP for Birmingham Selly Oak**, asking whether there are plans to make an assessment of the adequacy of funding for community pharmacies.

Work with other organisations

PAGB

We have continued to work with PAGB on various projects. Along with some of the other pharmacy bodies, PSNC signed up to a joint statement on self-care, recommending ways that the NHS could build on the self-care messaging adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also promoted Self Care Week (16 November – 22 November) on the PSNC website and via social media.

Conclusion

This paper has been created just for review; no action is required. However, subcommittee members are welcome to share their feedback or questions on any of the above.