

**Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee Workshop
held on October 4th, at 11.00am**

Members of CPA present: Tricia Kennerley, Clare Kerr, Stephen Thomas

In Attendance: Sam Fisher, Jamie Gilliam, Melinda Mabbutt, Zoe Long

Apologies: Apologies were received from David Broome, George Foote, Sue Killen, Sunil Kocchar, Fin McCaul and Jay Patel

Item 1: Progress since last CPA meeting (verbal update)

- The APPG will be holding a pharmacy funding briefing for MPs. This will give MPs the opportunity to hear about the work of community pharmacy over the pandemic and for us to put across our concerns about funding and capacity in the sector.
- PSNC's Public Affairs Manager, George Foote, emailed MPs last week to update them about the sector's work, including the new services that will be coming online in Year 3.
- We are planning briefing sessions for external stakeholders, namely charities. The aim of the sessions will be to educate charities on the changes to the sector, and to build advocates with whom we can explore potential future joint work.
- PSNC is also going to host a joint Parliamentary engagement event (assuming other pharmacy bodies wish to take part) in late November/early December focused on the Hypertension Case Finding Service and the other new pharmacy services.
- Work on a contractor survey is underway and we are expecting a further PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audit to take place soon to update our data: both will provide key information and data to inform our public affairs work.

Item 2: Action plan and APPG inquiry

- Zoe Long outlined the updated Public Affairs action plan (see Appendix 1).
- The APPG has launched an inquiry into the future of the pharmacy sector post-pandemic and PSNC (along with the other pharmacy bodies) will feed into this.
- The Annual Review process is ongoing. CPA members agreed that PSNC should push for publication of this review or at least of the associated data.
- The subcommittee considered the need for a new pharmacy vision: this was felt to be a very important piece of work. Subcommittee members were clear that the vision should be developed with the NHS and DHSC and that it needed to paint a positive picture of the sector, setting out why it is an attractive sector to come and work in. External support may be needed for this.
- The subcommittee agreed that the upcoming Spending Review/Budget is a good chance for pharmacy to lobby and seek media coverage about some of its asks around funding. When asking for investment, we should set out what we can do in return for that and what the benefits would be e.g. in terms of patient outcomes, reduced GP appointments, and reduced hospital bed days.
- The subcommittee considered the difficulties we have with reaching and influencing Treasury Ministers and officials. Ideas for future work on this included seeking engagement with Special Advisors, seeing whether supportive politicians could help, and working with the Shadow Team to raise issues and questions through Parliament.

- On data, the subcommittee felt that we should continue to gather as much as we can e.g. through surveys and audits. This should cover workforce and locum rates, closures, and reductions in opening hours.

ACTIONS:

- **Office to draft a response to the APPG inquiry, using as much data as we can.**
- **Office to make initial contact with DHSC and NHSE&I about the possibility of working on a vision for the sector together.**
- **ZL and TK to feed back to NT the importance of being able to use as much data as possible from the Annual Review process externally, and to seek publication of a report on this.**
- **ZL and TK to raise the Spending Review with the NT, and ZL to work on messaging for media and Parliamentary work around the time of the publication of the Budget.**
- **Office to seek to make contact with Special Advisors to Treasury, and explore how key Parliamentary supporters could help us to influence Ministers and Treasury policy.**
- **Office to make contact with the Shadow finance/pharmacy teams to see how they can support our funding requests.**

Item 3: Policy objectives

- The updated policy objectives were broadly supported by the CPA, with a request that the office also consider some objectives around workforce which is becoming a huge challenge.
- The CPS messaging on this was noted, and the subcommittee felt PSNC should consider whether it too wants to make a request for PCNs to stop employing pharmacists.
- The subcommittee were keen to gather data on this if possible, as locum rates could be influencing the viability of the contract in some areas.

ACTIONS:

- **The office will explore some workforce objectives, if possible working with the Community Pharmacy Workforce Development Group (CPWDG).**
- **NT to consider workforce data as part of ongoing work to assess costs and capacity.**