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A GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT DECEMBER 2022

This briefing sets out the politicians and who have decision-making responsibility relevant to community pharmacy policy matters, or who wield influence over such matters. This document is correct as of 7th December 2022.

Issues in the NHS, and the wider health and care sector, are high on the Government's agenda. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November 2022 included an extra £3.3 billion per year for the NHS, however, there has been no commitment to providing increased funding for community pharmacy. Without addressing the funding problems facing the sector, pharmacy services will be difficult to maintain in their current state, let alone expand.

Politicians

This section sets out the figures in Government and Parliament who:

- have an active role in deciding health policy and driving the direction of the Government in relevant areas of health and care;
- have Opposition front bench responsibility for relevant aspects of health and care policy;
- sit in Parliament, take an interest in health and care matters – including community pharmacy and have, or could have, influence over these decision-makers.

DHSC Ministers

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP – Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



- First elected to Parliament in 2010, Steve Barclay has focused much of his time on public spending and particularly identifying efficiencies.
- Barclay was appointed as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care by Rishi Sunak in October 2022, having previously been in this role during Boris Johnson’s interim government from July – September 2022.
- He is known to hold the view that there is considerable waste in the NHS - most recently it was even reported that he was seeking to make the case that the NHS did not need a spending uplift in the most recent Autumn Statement.
- Barclay [defended](#) the CPCF in October 2020 while Chief Secretary to the Treasury in answer to a written question, calling it a “landmark 5-year settlement” which will allow pharmacies to “support the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan.” Barclay [reiterated](#) this view in answer to a later written question in March 2021, calling the CPCF a “comprehensive package of support” which provides “additional funding to meet extra costs incurred by pharmacies during the pandemic.”
- During departmental questions in October 2018, while Minister of State for Health, he [signalled](#) support for a Pharmacy First scheme by saying “we want to ensure that rather than people’s first port of call being a GP, they access the NHS and pharmacies at the appropriate time.”

Angela Richardson MP – PPS to Steve Barclay



- Richardson was first elected to Parliament in 2019 following a career in investment banking operations.
- She was previously a PPS to Michael Gove at the Department for Levelling up, Housing, and Communities. She was suspended from her role for abstaining on the vote to overturn the suspension of Owen Patterson in November 2021. Re-instated the next day, she quit her role in January 2022 in the wake of the Sue Gray report into parties held at Downing Street during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- She is currently running a campaign in her constituency of Guildford entitled “better access to healthcare” which aims to ensure constituents can access services “within a reasonable travel area from their home.”
- She was appointed a PPS to Barclay in November 2022.

Neil O'Brien OBE MP – Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Primary Care and Public Health (Pharmacy Minister)



- O'Brien was first elected to Parliament in 2017, previously being Director of Open Europe between 2005 and 2008 and Director of Policy Exchange between 2008 and 2012.
- He played a major role in the development of the Policy Exchange think tank in the 2010s, turning it into one of Westminster's most influential policy organisations, before joining government to work for George Osborne as an adviser in No 11, leading on the Northern Powerhouse initiative.
- As a MP he founded the Onward think tank in 2018 alongside Will Tanner (now Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy in No.10), Lord Daniel Finkelstein, and Martyn Rose.
- He believes passionately in the levelling up agenda describing himself as a "total obsessive" about ending inter-regional inequalities.
- He was appointed as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at DHSC in September 2022, having previously served as a Minister at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities between September 2021 and July 2022. He resigned in the mass exodus of Ministers from Boris Johnson's Cabinet.
- He was appointed as Minister for Primary Care and Public Health in November 2022 following Rishi Sunak's reshuffle of Ministers, taking over from Will Quince.

Will Quince MP – Minister of State at DHSC (Minister for Health and Secondary Care)



- First elected to Parliament at the 2015 general election, Quince was appointed Minister of State for Health by Liz Truss in September 2022 and was previously Minister for Primary Care, moving to responsibilities for Health and Secondary Care in November 2022.
- A former lawyer, his previous ministerial roles included Minister of State for School Standards, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Welfare Delivery.
- Quince has a particular interest in social policy. He has led a number of campaigns around bereavement and child loss and is known for working on a cross party consensus basis.
- Quince's son was stillborn shortly before he entered Parliament. He has spoken in the Commons on this and previously co-chaired the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Baby Loss, campaigning for better treatment of bereaved parents in hospitals.

Rt Hon The Lord Markham CBE – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for the Lords)



- Lord Markham was made a Peer in October 2022 to take up the role of Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at DHSC (Minister for the Lords) under Liz Truss. He was kept in the role by Rishi Sunak.
- As DHSC Minister for the Lords, he has responsibility for NHS finance which includes procurement and cost recovery.
- He was previously Non-Executive Director at the Department for Work and Pensions from July 2020 – September 2022 and at the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government from January 2013 – December 2018.
- He was elected a Councillor on Westminster City Council whilst still a student in 1990, becoming Deputy Leader of the Council in 1995. He stood down from the Council in 1998.
- In a Health and Social Care update in the Lords in October 2022, he [said](#) that his first job was in a community pharmacy, saying that the sector “can be very valuable” in meeting appointment targets.

Labour Shadow Ministers

Wes Streeting MP – Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



- Streeting has served as Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care since 2021 and has been MP for Ilford North since 2015.
- He became a Labour councillor for the Chadwell ward on Redbridge London Borough Council, becoming Deputy Leader of the Labour Group in 2011. He served as a councillor until 2018, not seeking re-election on becoming an MP.
- He previously served as Shadow Secretary of State for Child Poverty from May to November 2021, as Shadow Minister for Schools from 2020 to 2021, and as Shadow Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury from April to October 2020.
- In a [debate](#) in Parliament in June 2022 on Access to GP Services and NHS Dentistry, Streeting commented that he “wholeheartedly agrees about the importance of looking at primary care as a whole and the really powerful and valuable contribution that community pharmacies can make, alleviating pressures on other parts of the primary care system, particularly general practice.”
- Speaking at the Labour Party Conference in September 2022 he [suggested](#) that “sensible improvements on things like medicine dispensing” could be made where “draft bureaucracy” was not present. He commented that a shift in “public awareness” is also needed so that pharmacies can “step in to support the NHS.”
- Streeting [said](#) in October 2022 that it “isn’t true” that the NHS is the “envy of the world,” saying that he will not “pretend that the NHS is great.” He stated that this is a motivator for the expansion of the NHS workforce plan.

Feryal Clark MP– Shadow Minister for Primary Care and Patient Safety



- An MP since 2019, Feryal Clark was appointed Shadow Minister for Primary Care and Patient Safety in the November 2021 opposition front bench reshuffle.
- Prior to her parliamentary career, Clark studied Bioinformatics at the University of Exeter. She worked in the NHS in Pathology for six years.
- She served on the London Borough of Hackney Council. This included serving as Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.
- She has a particular interest in women’s health issues and rights and has taken part in a number of roundtables to discuss how women have been left behind in health and care provision.
- She has been part of [a group of female Labour MPs](#) campaigning in favour of sex-based rights, supporting the Labour MP Rosie Duffield who has been embroiled in a row surrounding trans rights for the past two years.
- She [asked](#) three questions in September 2022, concerning the provision of female contraceptives, urging the minister to “expand the NHS Community Pharmacy Contraceptive Management Service Pilot.”
- Clark [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Department is taking to reduce dispensing errors in community pharmacies. She also [asked](#) what assessment has been made of levels of pharmacy closures in areas of deprivation.

Andrew Gwynne MP – Shadow Minister for Public Health



- First elected in 2005, Gwynne served as PPS to various Ministers in Gordon Brown’s Government, including Home Secretary Jacqui Smith and Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, Ed Balls.
- Gwynne was Labour’s national campaign co-ordinator under Jeremy Corbyn, becoming one of the Leader’s most reliable MPs, regularly going on political programmes to set out the then Labour line and challenge the Government.
- He served as Shadow Health Minister between October 2011 and September 2015, then as Shadow Minister for Public Health between September 2015 – September 2016.
- After serving as Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government between June 2017 and April 2020, he was returned to the Shadow Minister for Public Health Role in December 2021.
- In a Westminster Hall debate in June 2022 he [said](#) that “community pharmacies are the cornerstone of our local areas” and calling the current funding arrangement “unsustainable.”
- In October 2022, Gwynne said that pharmacies are a “massively underused resource” with “absolutely more they can do.”

Conservative Backbenchers

Steve Brine MP (Winchester)



- An MP since 2010, Brine was Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Public Health and Primary Care at the Department of Health and Social Care from June 2017 to March 2019. In this role, he had ministerial responsibility for pharmacy.
- Brine previously worked in radio prior to becoming a researcher in Conservative Central Office under William Hague's leadership, then the Campaign Director for Hertfordshire from 2001 to 2005.
- Brine was elected Chairman of the Health and Social Care Committee in November 2022. His [statement](#) upon election said that the priority for the Committee is "how to deal with the backlog caused by the pandemic and the need to recruit a workforce now that's capable of meeting future demand."
- Outside Parliament, he was also a strategic adviser for the pharmaceuticals company Sigma and healthcare recruitment firm Remedium Partners until December 2021.
- Brine was one of 24 Parliamentarians who [signed](#) a letter to the Prime Minister in July 2022, highlighting the importance of local pharmacies and calling for action to prevent further closures.
- In a [debate](#) on Access to GP Services and NHS Dentistry in June 2022, he asked for a ruthless focus on the wider primary care landscape and said that "when it comes to prevention, surely those people [primary care professionals] must be the front door of the NHS to ensure that the system is sustainable in the long term".
- In a debate on the Health and Care Bill in July 2021 he [commented](#) on the need to realise the potential of integrated care systems stating that "if they are going to work, general practice needs to embrace the wider primary care family, which means finally to recognise the potential of community pharmacy".

Paul Bristow MP (Peterborough)



- Bristow was elected to represent Peterborough in 2019, winning the seat from the Labour Party.
- Before Parliament, Bristow founded a healthcare PR agency, PB Consulting, in 2010 which is now run by his wife under the name HealthComms Consulting.
- He is an Officer of the Pharmacy APPG.
- He has sat on the Health and Social Care Select Committee since November 2022, previously between March 2020 – May 2022.
- In July 2020 he wrote [an article](#) for the CAPX website, entitled “The public have got it right: it’s time to back our pharmacies.” He argues that “we need a solution on funding” and supports “proper integration” so that pharmacies can become “neighbourhood health and wellbeing centres.”
- Bristow spoke [in a debate](#) on Independent Pharmacies in July 2020 saying “Some 71% of people think pharmacies should be able to expand their offering to take pressure off the NHS.”

Dr Caroline Johnson MP (Sleaford and North Hykeham)



- Dr Caroline Johnson was first elected at a by-election in 2016, having qualified as a doctor in 2001 and becoming a Consultant Paediatrician in 2012. She continues to work as a part-time Consultant Paediatrician alongside being an MP at Peterborough City Hospital.
- She has sat on the Health and Social Care Select Committee since November 2022.
- A member of the European Research Group, she supported Boris Johnson for leader in 2019. She supported Kemi Badenoch initially for leader in 2022, then supporting Liz Truss when Badenoch was eliminated.
- She briefly served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Mental Health and Public Health in Liz Truss’s Government from September 2022 to October 2022.

James Morris MP (Halesowen and Rowley Regis)



- James Morris was elected to Parliament in 2010 following founding a computer software company and being Chief Executive of the centre right local government Localis Think Tank.
- He has sat on the Health and Social Care Committee since October 2022.
- He was briefly Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Primary Care and Patient Safety with responsibilities for community pharmacy between July – September 2022 in Boris Johnson’s interim government.
- In an [answer](#) to a written question while pharmacy minister in September 2022, Morris said that DHSC is “considering how the role of pharmacists in the supply of medication can be expanded to provide treatment for specific conditions without requiring a GP consultation.”

Lucy Allan MP (Telford)



- Lucy Allan was first elected in 2015, having worked in Investment Management. While a Councillor on Wandsworth London Borough Council, she was a non-executive director of Wandsworth NHS Primary Care Trust.
- Allan has sat on the Health and Social Care Select Committee since November 2021.
- Her questions on the Committee revolve around barriers to retention of staff – such as tax, pension penalties, and mental health support. She also has an interest in the culture of the NHS, previously asking witnesses on the prevalence of racism, sexism, or bullying in the health service.
- Allan has campaigned continuously since election for the Princess Royal NHS Trust in her constituency to receive more funding. In September 2022, she was [successful](#) in securing £10 million from the government for a new surgical hub at the hospital.
- In April 2020, she was [quoted](#) in the local press recognising the “enormous pressure” Covid-19 has placed on pharmacies, and praised the £300 million cash boost given.

Chris Green MP (Bolton West)



- Chris Green was elected to Parliament in 2015 following a 20 year career as an engineer in the mass spectrometry industry. He has sat on the Health and Social Care Committee since November 2022.
- He is the Chair of the Health Infrastructure APPG and the Medical Research APPG. He wrote a foreword a [report](#) by the Health Infrastructure APPG which calls for DHSC to “empower” ICSs with “resources, means, and expertise” to improve the equipment and facilities of the NHS.
- In a Westminster Hall debate on Covid-19: Community Pharmacies in March 2021, he [stated](#) that the “significant costs” that pharmacies have faced “must be addressed,” further saying that “pharmacies and high-street chemists are an important part of how we want the health system to evolve in the future.”
- In a Westminster Hall debate on Vaccination and Public Health in June 2019, he [said](#) that “community pharmacies have a really important role” in delivering vaccinations due to being “uniquely positioned to help the NHS to meet its immunisation targets.”
- In a written question in November 2022, he [asked](#) what steps DHSC is taking to promote digital technology in the pharmacy sector, including “interoperability between GP and pharmacy systems.” In response, Neil O'Brien said that pharmacies are “receiving access to the full patient record,” with actions taken by pharmacists recorded.
- He attended PSNC's Parliamentary blood pressure check event in November 2022.

Elliot Colburn MP (Carshalton and Wallington)



- Colburn was elected to represent Carshalton and Wallington constituency in 2019.
- Prior to his parliamentary career, Colburn worked as a public affairs officer for South West London Health and Care Partnership.
- He is an Officer of the Pharmacy APPG.
- Speaking on pharmacy to the media, Colburn has said that funding of community pharmacy, the dispensing model and proper utilisation of pharmacists need to be looked at to enable community pharmacies to play a larger role in the prevention agenda. He has also [stated](#) that we need to achieve a ‘pharmacy first’ culture in the UK.
- He co-signed a letter to NHS England welcoming the news that initial discussions about access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) via community pharmacy had begun.
- In June 2022 he [asked](#) the then Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Sajid Javid what steps he is taking to ensure regular testing and post-treatment follow-up of hepatitis C and what role could be played by pharmacies.

Dr Luke Evans MP (Bosworth)



- Evans was elected to Parliament in 2019, having been practicing as a full-time GP from qualification in 2013 to his election.
- He sat on the Health and Social Care Select Committee between March 2020 – November 2022.
- While on the Health and Social Care Committee, his questions centred around the role of GPs and the challenges they face in primary care. He focused heavily on workforce welfare issues, suggesting reformed ways of working. He also asked each clinician before the Committee how much time they spend on admin, IT, and paperwork compared to saving lives.
- He wrote a [post](#) on his website in April 2020 welcoming a £300 million cash boost to pharmacies during the Covid-19 pandemic, saying “it’s right that not only do we thank them, but actually put supportive measures in place.”
- In the Medicines and Medical Devices Bill debate in March 2020, Evans [drew attention](#) to the issue of “waste prescriptions” and commented that pharmacies “could be asked to legally collect the statistics on returns” so that the Government can gauge “how big the problem actually is.”

Labour Backbenchers

Taiwo Owatemi MP (Coventry North West)



- Owatemi worked as a pharmacist prior to becoming an MP in 2019, working in the cancer unit at Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust.
- She has sat on the Health and Social Care Committee since March 2020.
- Her questions on the Committee revolve around training and mental health support. She has also asked why part-time training is not available for medical students, and what impact this has on retention.
- Owatemi became chair of the Pharmacy APPG in November 2022.
- She [continues](#) to work as Locum Pharmacist for Tesco in Welwyn Garden City.
- Owatemi was interviewed for [an article](#) in the Pharmaceutical Journal in February 2020. In the interview, she decried medicine shortages and called for pharmacists to “do more in standing up for ourselves.” She also signalled her support for a state-owned generic drugs manufacturer which was included in the 2019 Labour Manifesto.
- She spoke [in a debate](#) on community pharmacies in June 2022, saying: “The pharmacy sector boasts a highly trained and clinically skilled workforce, who, according to the PSNC, could free up to 40 million GP appointments each year.”
- She was quoted extensively in a [campaign](#) The Daily Mail is running to encourage readers to write to their MPs to “save our local pharmacies.” She said that “we need to harness the skills of our community pharmacy workforce fully” and that the current pay agreement means pharmacies “aren’t making enough money to survive.”

Sarah Champion MP (Rotherham)



- First elected in 2012, Champion was formerly Chief Executive of a Children’s Hospice prior to her election.
- She asked [a written question](#) of Health Minister Maria Caulfield: “What recent discussions she has had with community pharmacists on how that profession can (a) support GPs and (b) help relieve the pressures on GP waiting lists.”
- She urged DHSC in March 2022 to assess “the potential merits of introducing a pharmacy first scheme in England” in a [written question](#).
- She is a member of the Pharmacy APPG.

Peter Dowd MP (Bootle)



- First elected in 2015, Peter Dowd served as Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury between 2017 - 2020 during Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership.
- He led a debate in June 2022 on Community Pharmacies, saying “It is no exaggeration to say that the community pharmacy network is under huge strain and that pharmacy staff and businesses are coming under increasing and, indeed, unsustainable pressure.”
- In December 2018, Dowd wrote an article on his website entitled “How local pharmacies are helping residents all-year-round”. He called for the Government to “make better use of this network of healthcare” by enabling them to offer a range of additional services.
- In a Westminster Hall Debate on NHS Staffing Levels in November 2022, Dowd [raised](#) PSNC’s action plan, calling it “straightforward” and saying it would enable “staff to feel wanted.”
- He is a Vice-Chair of the Pharmacy APPG.
- He attended PSNC’s Parliamentary blood pressure check event in November 2022.

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP (Knowsley)



- First elected to Parliament in 1997, Howarth was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs between May 1997 – July 1999 and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland between July 1999 – June 2001.
- In a Commons [debate](#) in April 2022 on the National Strategy for Self-Care, which Howarth opened, he asked his colleague Karin Smyth (Shadow Minister for Social Care) “Does she agree that in the past the potential of community pharmacies has been underused, just as the capacity of GP and A&E services has been overused?”
- In a [debate](#) on Community Pharmacies in February 2016, he drew attention to the fact that they “are unable to negotiate favourable deals on the drugs they dispense and, therefore, they are already at a disadvantage in market terms.”
- He is a Vice-Chair the Pharmacy APPG.
- He attended PSNC’s Parliamentary blood pressure check event in November 2022.

Members of the House of Lords

Rt Hon The Lord Clement-Jones CBE (Liberal Democrat)



- Lord Clement-Jones was elevated to the Lords in 1998. He was previously Chairman of the Liberal Party between 1986 –1988, playing a major role in the merger with the Social Democratic Party to become the Liberal Democrats.
- He was the Liberal Democrat Lord’s Health Spokesman from 1998 – 2004, then Spokesman for Culture, Media, and Sport from 2004 – 2010. He is currently the Liberal Democrat Lord’s Spokesman for Digital, which he has held since 2017.
- He was Chairman of the London School of Pharmacy between 2008 – 2011, prior to the School merging with UCL.
- In a debate in a Grand Committee on the Medicines and Medical Devices Bill in October 2020, he [called](#) for the Government to utilise pharmacists for “their expertise in and knowledge of the community” by delivering more clinical services. He further said that pharmacists “are capable of taking on all kinds of clinical work” which would enable the health service to “deliver much greater capacity.”
- He is a Vice-Chair of the Pharmacy APPG.
- He attended PSNC’s Parliament blood pressure drop-in event in November 2022.

Rt Hon The Baroness Cumberlege CBE DL (Conservative)



- Baroness Cumberlege was elevated to the Lords in 1990. She was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Minister for the Lords) from 1992 – 1997 under John Major, having previously been Chair of the Brighton Health Authority and the South West Thames Regional Health Authority.
- She was commissioned by the Government to Chair three national reports: Neighbourhood Nursing – A Focus for Care (1986), Changing Childbirth (1993), and Better Births – Improving Outcomes of Maternity Services in England (2016).
- In December 2016, she [asked](#) the Government in the Lord’s “how they plan to enhance the role of community pharmacies”, drawing attention to their potential to “prevent patients going to more expensive GPs.”
- In 2018 she was appointed by the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care to chair the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review. The Review examined avoidable harm caused by several medical interventions including sodium valproate. Its report, ‘First Do No Harm’, was published in 2020.
- She is an officer of the Pharmacy APPG.

Rt Hon The Baroness Meacher (Crossbencher)



- Baroness Meacher was elevated to the Lords in 2006, having been Chair of the East London NHS Foundation Trust between 2004 – 2012.
- She has a particular interest in drug reform and is the Co-Chair of the Drug Reform APPG, frequently raising the issue in Parliament.
- In a Lord’s debate on the Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Bill in September 2021, she [said](#) that drug laws are “dramatically increasing rather than reducing crime” with the UK having “the most draconian drug laws in western Europe.”
- She is a Vice-Chair of the Pharmacy APPG.

