

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee
Minutes from the Meeting held on 20th October 2022 at 3.15pm

Minutes of a meeting of the CPA Subcommittee held on Thursday 20th October 2022 at 3.15pm.

Members of CPA present: David Broome, Tricia Kennerley (Chair), Clare Kerr, Fin McCaul (part) Stephen Thomas, Jay Patel

In Attendance: Sam Fisher, Jamie Gilliam, Jas Heer, Indrajit Patel, Zoe Long, Sian Retallick, Rhys Martin, Has Modi, Janet Morrison (part), Mike Dent, Katrina Worthington, Alastair Buxton.

Apologies: Melinda Mabbutt, George Foote, Sunil Kochhar, Prakash Patel

Conflicts of interest: None received.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July 2022 were approved by the subcommittee.

Matters arising: There were no matters arising. Updates on actions were given as follows:

Action 1: PSNC has recently hosted webinars on Price Concessions, the arrangements for Years Four and Five of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) and the upcoming changes to the Discount Deduction system.

Action 2: PSNC has now appointed a Media and Corporate Communications Manager, with start date to be confirmed.

Action 3: PSNC has appointed the political influencing consultancy, Luther Pendragon, to lead on its future Public Affairs and Influencing work.

Action 5: PSNC has appointed IE Brand to support the rebranding work.

Item 1: Strategic Influencing

- 1.1 Members noted the paper in the agenda and Zoe Long explained that Luther Pendragon have been appointed to support with Public Affairs and Influencing work, following a competitive tender process.
- 1.2 Representatives from Luther Pendragon gave an overview of the campaign strategy, including the key elements tactical objectives.
- 1.3 The change in Government was noted but Luther explained that despite the changes in Government, the core components of the influencing strategy remain unchanged. They set out the key challenges facing PSNC, including the current costs and capacity pressures afflicting the sector.
- 1.4 Luther are developing an action plan for Government to help pharmacy, which we want to get wide MP support for. These actions will include resolving the funding squeeze, funding the sector to take pressure of the rest of primary care and a Pharmacy First approach for England, and they will form the core of the messaging. The campaign objectives include raising public awareness of

the value and pressure on pharmacies, securing high-impact media coverage, building key partnerships and improving local engagement, and finally changing Government mindsets.

- 1.5 The need for the sector to be placed on a more sustainable policy footing was noticed along with the aim of changing the perception of the negotiations from an administrative process, to a political priority that needs the attention, backing and support of key ministers. The influence of the Treasury was discussed, and Luther are assessing how the influencing campaign can target some of the new structures of the Treasury.
- 1.6 Early actions already taken include engaging with the current Pharmacy Minister (Will Quince), supporting the one-to-one meeting that Janet Morrison secured with him. The Minister seems well-informed and expressed excitement about what a Pharmacy First policy could deliver for the country.
- 1.7 Luther has also been working with PSNC to identify MPs and Peers from across the Houses and parties who can champion the key issues, to make sure these are discussed at the highest level. These will be our key targets for pharmacy visits in the coming weeks and months.
- 1.8 In addition, Luther have been working with local media outlets, including BBC Look North, to get some 'A day in the life of a Pharmacist' stories published, to highlight the important role pharmacies play in local healthcare and the pressures on the sector.
- 1.9 Finally, Luther have met with LPC representatives to discuss the production of an ICS benchmarking tool to be used by LPCs to show their MPs how well their local system is doing, helping better connect the local to the national.
- 1.10 The subcommittee discussed the plans, noting the importance of getting the patient voice heard through the campaign, and considering how this work will sit alongside other PSNC work (such as on the strategy and vision) to try to bring about policy change.

Action 1: The office and Luther will finalise the campaign toolkit, as well as briefing LPCs and hosting the Parliamentary event in November.

Action 2: The office, supported by Luther, will work on a longer-term public affairs plan.

Item 2: Community Pharmacy England rebrand

- 2.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.
- 2.2 Following a competitive tender process, PSNC has appointed IE Brand to lead on the rebrand of PSNC to CPE. As part of their pitch, IE Brand argued that the current PSNC brand lacks personality and that in future PSNC's communications to different audiences should be more clearly differentiated.
- 2.3 CPA and Committee Members are invited to support the initial research stage of work via a workshop, and we will have a further Committee discussion on values in November.
- 2.4 A key aim of the rebrand project is to recreate PSNC (CPE) as a recognisable and authoritative brand. This will involve the main PSNC website being redesigned (but keeping its current structure) and the creation of a new homepage with different audiences in mind.
- 2.5 CPA members broadly agreed with the objectives for the rebrand project as outlined by the agency. There was a suggestion that wider groups, including patient groups, could be considered.

Item 3: Contractor Communications

- 3.1 PSNC has issued a range of communications about key topics since the last meeting of the group, including on price concessions and discount deduction.

- 3.2 CPA members were asked what topics PSNC's comms should focus on in the near future.
- 3.3 One CPA member said that their contractors had reported that they liked the honesty in PSNC's recent communications.
- 3.4 It was suggested that PSNC should consider producing some contractor-facing comms regarding the LPC levy.
- 3.5 The difficulties surrounding the amount of information that PSNC is allowed to publish, particularly concerning the negotiations, was noted. The need for clear communication to contractors about the difficulty of the current situation was noted.
- 3.6 David Broome stated that any future TAPR communications should be sent as a separate newsletter and not be included in the standard PSNC update for contractors, which is sent thrice weekly, as it risks getting lost in that.
- 3.7 PSNC will be launching its vision project in association with The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust in due course. The subcommittee noted the challenges of engaging contractors with this work given the other pressures on their time.
- 3.8 Zoe Long asked the subcommittee for feedback about how PSNC should engage contractors on the vision work. It was suggested that the trade bodies should be engaged along with NHS England and DHSC. The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England, David Webb, has already been informed about the planned vision. Janet Morrison noted that no single organisation or individual will be in a position to dictate what constitutes the vision, as this will be an independent report.

Action 3: The office is working on a further TAPR update for November.

Action 4: The office will launch the vision project to contractors on 31st October.

Item 4: Pharmacy Communications and Media Work

- 4.1 The paper in the agenda was noted. PSNC continues to work to obtain national media coverage and this work should increase once the new Corporate Communications Manager is in post and PSNC has conducted its next Pressures Survey.

Item 5: Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs

- 5.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda.

Item 6: TAPR Communications Plan

- 6.1 The subcommittee noted the paper in the agenda. PSNC is working on the next stage of TAPR comms currently, including a timeline of what's next and a table that maps the Review Steering Group (RSG) proposals to the TAPR workstreams.
- 6.2 Janet Morrison is considering the justification for the additional levy monies to PSNC and the aim is to produce a package of information by early November 2022.

Item 7: Any other business

- 7.1 Stephen Thomas flagged that Cheshire and Wirral LPC has recently paid for some local media coverage on pharmacy pressures which seems to have gone down well locally.

Item 8: Future meetings

- 8.1 CPA members agreed that the meetings of the group taking place after full meetings of the PSNC committee makes sense. Members also supported the idea of blocking time out in people's diary

for next year's CPA subcommittee meetings in advance, and they asked for an optional monthly CPA meeting to be scheduled in.

Action 5: The office will look to schedule in CPA meetings 10 days to 2 weeks after Committee Meetings, with additional optional meetings booked in for the other months of the year.