



## Communications & Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee Minutes

**Date:** Friday 14th July 2023

**Start time:** 10:00am

**Location:** Zoom meeting

**Note:** These minutes have been redacted to protect conversations around items of a confidential nature.

**Members present:** Clare Kerr, David Broome, Fin McCaul, Tricia Kennerley (Chair), Stephen Thomas.

**In attendance:** Adeola Wilson, Alastair Buxton, Daniel Fladvad, Faisal Tuddy, George Foote, Janet Morrison, James Wood, Mike Dent, Sue Killen, Zoe Long

**Apologies:** Jay Patel, Prakash Patel.

**Conflicts of interest:** None declared.

**Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25th May 2023 were approved by the subcommittee.

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

**ACTION 1:** Activity around the recovery plan to be added to the workplan. This has been completed.

**ACTION 2:** Messaging to be drafted to counter these concerns, working with the other national pharmacy bodies. This work is ongoing.

**ACTION 3:** Member polls to launch in good time ahead of the July committee meeting, incorporating this feedback. This was completed.

**ACTION 4:** Team to update our messaging and develop a workplan for the coming months to get across our key messages including on pressures and medicines supply. We held a Parliamentary event on medicines supply as well as developing a specific medicines supply issues briefing and a briefing with our more general messages.

**ACTION 5:** Plan for the annual report to be developed, taking into account the feedback from the subcommittee and the need to ensure it is widely read. This work is well underway.



### **Item 1: Subcommittee Workplan**

1.1 The subcommittee considered the progress on the workplan as agreed by the Resource, Development and Finance subcommittee (RDF). Progress has been made on all the points that were listed for the first quarter.

### **Item 2: Outputs from Committee Meeting: Messaging and Actions**

2.1 Subcommittee members had a discussion about what the comms outputs should be following on from the committee meeting. It was generally agreed that we could publish some extracts of the polling, whilst at the same time attempting to secure national media coverage. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to do some polling of LPCs in the autumn.

**ACTION 1: Publish some of the polling data, and Comms and LPC Support teams to consider LPC polling.**

2.2 It was noted that the recent announcement of a 6% pay increase for public sector workers has several implications for the sector. Firstly, it may make negotiations more difficult as the pay increase for doctors and nurses will be funded from existing health budgets. Any future requests for increased funding we make are likely to become more challenging due to this new context. It was also noted that there is a feeling of general disillusionment in the sector that many other sectors are getting a pay increase, yet community pharmacies have had a real terms funding reduction since 2016, meaning there is little opportunity to increase staff pay.

**ACTION 2: Community Pharmacy England to release a statement responding to the public sector pay increase announcement.**

2.3 It was agreed that in future it may be good to undergo some polling, either pre-committee meeting, or ad hoc, in partnership with an external organisation, such as National Voices. This would both strengthen our relationship with other organisations as well as increase our credibility and the likely reach of our polling.

2.4 We could also consider asking some questions regularly as a 'pressure check' of the sector – this could even be displayed on our website homepage as a way to immediately remind people of the pressures on community pharmacies.



2.5 It was noted that we should be proactive around the messaging of the £645m increase in funding. We should also emphasise that LPC colleagues attended and took part in our meeting. And it was suggested that they or another committee member could help with a video blog summing up the main discussion points of the meeting.

**ACTION 3: Comms Team to complete and publish post-Committee comms including a video blog from an LPC or Committee Member.**

2.6 Atorvastatin prices were noted – there will be a need for careful communications on this.

### **Item 3: Vision: Reflections and Community Pharmacy England Response**

3.1 The subcommittee reflected on the Committee discussion on the draft report of the Vision from Nuffield Trust and The King's Fund.

3.2 The Comms Team will work on how to land the vision both externally and within the sector. A summary document will be prepared. We could also now focus on the promotion of the report. Tactics could include infographics and animations to get across the content in a more exciting way.

3.3 It was noted that NF/KF are very well-respected think tanks and so the report would add credibility to our key messages as well as be useful to hold the sector to account where needed. We will need to consider engagement with ICBs as part of the launch plan.

3.4 It was suggested that we could work with patient groups and others on some of the content, including possible animations, promoting the vision. There will be many questions to answer on what the priorities are, how much this would all cost, timelines, benefits, and more. And there will also be much work to do to develop Community Pharmacy England's strategy following publication of the vision.

**ACTION 4: Comms and Public Affairs Teams to work up and deliver a full launch plan for the vision – both to the sector, and externally.**



#### **Item 4: Communications and Engagement Strategy Update**

4.1 The subcommittee considered the progress with the Communications and Engagement Strategy and were generally happy with the increased level of engagement and feedback since the introduction of the strategy.

4.2 It was noted that there was an engagement webinar in May and a further one is due to be held in September, in line with the strategy to hold regular engagement events. Community Pharmacy England will also have a stand at the Pharmacy Show.

4.3 Subcommittee members had a further discussion around whether referring to pharmacy owners as 'members' was the right approach for Community Pharmacy England to take. The use of the term 'members' was recommended by our rebrand agency as a way to demonstrate unity and belonging. It was also noted that Community Pharmacy Scotland refer to Scottish pharmacy owners as members.

4.4 But there was some hesitation around this as we need to clearly differentiate ourselves from a membership organisation. Given the risks, it was concluded that while we should broadly continue with our current approach in external communications (ie using the term members, where it helps us to better represent and talk about the sector) and internally as an executive team, we should look to drastically reduce – and pretty much phase out – the use of 'members' in our sector comms. This may change in time, but in the meantime we should try to find other ways to use 'warm and inclusive' language.

**ACTION 5: Comms Team to adopt new approach to communicating with pharmacy owners and to update style guide and messaging matrix accordingly.**

4.5 It was suggested that it would be useful to publish an update to the TAPR work, to highlight all the work we have been doing recently. It was noted that we should emphasise the reason why some LPCs haven't yet merged is because of practical issues outside of their control, rather than a lack of determination. This has prevented some LPCs moving as quickly as others.

#### **Item 5: Pharmacy Communications and Engagement**

5.1 The report paper was noted.



## **Item 6: Public Affairs and Influencing**

6.1 The report paper was noted.

## **Item 7: Any other business**

7.1 Subcommittee members had a discussion about when to next meet, considering at what point after the main committee it is best to hold CPA meetings. It was felt that immediately after the Committee Meeting is useful, but that in future we could try alternative timings or days of the week to see which best suits Subcommittee Members.