

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol](#) ar [dyfodol ymarfer cyffredinol yng Nghymru](#)

This response was submitted to the [Health and Social Care Committee](#) consultation on [the future of general practice in Wales](#)

GP07 : Ymateb gan: Fferylliaeth Gymunedol Cymru |Response from: Community Pharmacy Wales





Community Pharmacy Wales response to the Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into the future of general practice in Wales

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Part 1: Introduction

Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW) represent community pharmacy on NHS matters and seeks to ensure that the best possible services, provided by pharmacy contractors in Wales, are available through NHS Wales. It is the body recognised by the Welsh Government in accordance with *Sections 83 and 85 National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006* as 'representative of persons providing pharmaceutical services'.

Community Pharmacy Wales are the only organisation that represents every community pharmacy in Wales. It works with Government and its agencies, such as local Health Boards, to protect and develop high quality community pharmacy-based NHS services and to shape the community pharmacy contract and its associated regulations, to achieve the highest standards of public health and the best possible patient outcomes. There are around 700 community pharmacies in Wales and these are located in high streets, town centres and villages across Wales as well as in the major metropolitan centres and edge of town retail parks.

In addition to the dispensing of prescriptions, Welsh community pharmacies provide a broad range of patient services on behalf of NHS Wales. These face-to-face NHS Wales services, available from qualified pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians include, Pharmacist Independent Prescribing Services, contraception services, Discharge Medicines Reviews, Smoking Cessation, Influenza Vaccination, Palliative Care Medicines Supply, Emergency Supply, Substance Misuse and the Common Ailments services.

CPW are pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this important consultation. Together with our GP colleagues, community pharmacies represent one of the key pillars of primary care. The evolution of the community pharmacy contract in Wales has resulted in the community pharmacy network delivering a significant increase in clinical consultations, managing the treatment of common ailments and prescribing for many conditions.

The expansion of our clinical role, endorsed by Welsh Government, has resulted in us working in closer partnership with local GP practices and taking a significant amount of workload away from GPs, to provide headroom for them to deal with more complex consultations.

The introduction of independent prescribing has resulted in one third of all community pharmacies providing a prescribing service. This will increase significantly, as pharmacists who qualify from next year, will do so with a prescribing qualification. Within a few years it is likely that all community pharmacies will offer a prescribing service.



This change, where primary care in Wales will have around 700 new prescribers is a simply massive opportunity if grasped by the committee or could be a huge lost opportunity if it does not do so.

CPW proposed the following addition to the Terms of Reference for the inquiry and was disappointed that it was not taken up:-

To explore the relationship and degree of integration of general practice with local community pharmacy practices, with the objective of improving the delivery of services to local patients and reducing administrative burden.

The Health and Social Care Committee is holding an inquiry into the future of general practice in Wales, including consideration of:

- Challenges threatening the sustainability of general practice, including:
 - the funding model for general practice and current financial pressures,
 - the efficacy of different models for managing general practice,
 - the suitability and maintenance of general practice estates and access to digital technology;
- The general practice workforce, including workforce planning, the recruitment of new staff into general practice, the retention of experienced staff, staff workload and wellbeing, training and continuing professional development, and the growth of the multidisciplinary team;
- **The patient experience of general practice, including equitable access to care, effective management of patient demand, the quality of care, and public trust in the services provided;**
- **Opportunities to improve general practice to make it fit for the future and take a more preventative approach to care.**

The observations below relate to the considerations highlighted in bold type in particular equitable access to care and the effective management of patients.

Part 2: areas for the committee to consider

Removing the majority of workload associated with repeat medication: NHS Wales is making a significant investment into the digital transfer of prescriptions from the GP practice to the community pharmacy. This presents an opportunity for the committee to leverage this investment by moving the supply of regular medication for stable patients completely to the community



pharmacy, releasing a significant amount of time in GP practices and immeasurably improving convenience for patients. For example; a stable patient currently obtains a prescription, signed by a GP, to take to a pharmacy at a regular interval to obtain their medication. This is somewhat archaic and inconvenient for all involved. CPW believe this labour-intensive process could be changed significantly for example: A GP sees a patient and after a review decides that the patient will be reviewed again in 12-months' time. The GP sends an electronic prescription to the pharmacy authorising the supply of medicines for the next 12 months. The pharmacy then supplies medicines to the patient at an interval that is convenient to the patient without the further involvement of the GP practice. This opportunity will be there to grasp in the next 12 months.

Long-term conditions: in a similar vein a community pharmacist with a prescribing qualification has the potential to take over the routine management of patients with long-term conditions such as asthma and diabetes. This is a clear this is an opportunity to more effectively manage patients.

Other opportunities for the committee to consider: There are many other aspects which the CPW board believe the committee should consider:-

- A more joined up service that incentivises GPs to refer to community pharmacy where appropriate and a formal digital referral system the other way.
- Wider primary care integration to improve the patient experience.
- The alignment of incentives and contractual arrangements.
- Seek to reduce duplication – where pharmacies are providing similar services to those in GP practices.
- Digital interoperability to streamline activity.
- Defining and communicating to the public where care should be provided, e.g. common ailments should not be treated in a GP practice.

Part 3: Conclusion

CPW feel that there is a golden opportunity presented by both this inquiry and the significant changes in community pharmacy to more effectively manage patients in primary care and to integrate GP and community pharmacy practices.

CPW agree that the content of this response can be made public.

CPW welcome communication in either English or Welsh.

For acknowledgement and further Contact:



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