

## **Inquiry into the contribution of community pharmacy to health services in Wales**

### **Key conclusions and recommendations**

The Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into the contribution of community pharmacy to health services in Wales was launched in August 2011. The Committee reported its findings in May 2012.

#### **Conclusions**

The Committee is convinced that there is more community pharmacy can do to contribute to health services in Wales.

The Committee endorses the proposition that community pharmacies have a reach into communities across Wales that other services can find difficult to penetrate. This, in our view, is a key strength of the network.

Significant barriers to realising the full potential of community pharmacy lie both within the profession and between professional groups in the health service. It is our view that work needs to be done within community pharmacy to bring the standard of the whole network up to the standard of the best. We also believe that there is a considerable inter-professional responsibility to resolve some of the issues between professions which were illustrated during our inquiry as barriers to the future development of community pharmacy.

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government provides a clear national lead for the future development of community pharmacy services to ensure that the necessary policies and structures are in place to secure its delivery. This should include nationally agreed priorities for the service and a centrally driven direction for its development.

The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government promotes further enhanced services with a national specification for community pharmacy, including a national Chronic Conditions Service, and follows the incremental model proposed for the introduction of the National Minor Ailments Scheme to ensure robust monitoring, evaluation and improvement of services. The Committee recommends that where there are clearly national health conditions, the service should be nationally specified, but that some continuing scope should be allowed for the volume and location of such services to be determined locally.

The Committee recommends access by community pharmacists to summary patient records where patients are registered with a community pharmacy.

The Committee recommends that the consistent participation of community pharmacies across Wales is secured for the next round of public health campaigns, whether national or local. Close monitoring of community pharmacy's participation is required by Local Health Boards to ensure that those failing to deliver on their contractual obligations are called to account for their non-compliance.



The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government improves the communication mechanisms it uses to inform the general public about the services available at any individual community pharmacy. To this end, we recommend that the Welsh Government makes it an obligation for all community pharmacies to place a prominent notice in their premises identifying the range of services available in that pharmacy.

The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government should take the opportunity afforded by the recently announced national minor ailments scheme to consider changes to the way in which community pharmacies are remunerated, including a transition to capitation-based payments, underpinned by a patient registration system.

The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government and Local Health Boards prioritise taking proactive action to address issues of cooperation and joint working between community pharmacists and GPs, both in rural and urban areas. We believe that better leadership from within the professions in this context is vital to securing the stronger relationships between key health professionals which are needed for the successful integration of community pharmacy services and the delivery of the Government's ambitions for primary care in Wales.

The Health and Social Care Committee will return to this topic during this Assembly, in order to monitor progress against the recommendations made.

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