

Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into the implementation of the National Service Framework for diabetes in Wales
and its future direction

DB 25 Community Pharmacy Wales



**Community Pharmacy Wales' response to the
National Assembly for Wales's Health and Social
Care Committee Inquiry into:**

**The implementation of the NSF for diabetes in
Wales and its future direction**

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Part 1: Introduction

Community Pharmacy Wales is recognised in the National Health Services (Wales) Act 2006 and by the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Health & Social Services as the only organisation responsible for representing all of the 714 community pharmacies in Wales on all matters relating to NHS pharmacy services.

Community Pharmacy Wales works with Government and its agencies, such as local Health Boards, to help protect and develop high quality community pharmacy services and to shape the NHS community pharmacy contract and its associated regulations in order to achieve the highest standards of public health and the best possible patient outcomes.

Part 2: Community pharmacy and chronic conditions management

CPW has, over a considerable period of time, regularly argued for a stronger, more proactive role for community pharmacies as providers of front line health and social care services in Wales. Community Pharmacy Wales believes that the skills, experience and the facilities available at the 714 community pharmacies in Wales are underutilised and should be more extensively used for the benefit of the Welsh people. This is particularly the case in terms of providing quality healthcare and much needed support for people living with chronic conditions

If utilised effectively community pharmacies could be a vital component in the delivery of modern, cost effective, fit-for-purpose, outcome driven health and social care services in Wales.

The Welsh Government is right to emphasise the need to achieve a step-change in NHS thinking and a move away from treating illness to preventing it arising in the first place. To achieve that ambition will require effective and timely delivery and a determined commitment to patient-led community based services designed to improve the health and well-being of the people who live and work in Wales. The network of community pharmacies – a community based Good Health Pharmacy network – should be fundamental to achieving that outcome.

CPW welcomed the publication of the NSF for Diabetes in 2002 and its standards. The standards appeared to have picked up on many of these themes and in particular CPW was pleased to read the following statements:

- The need to provide support in managing lifestyles and in particular to help people lose weight and increase activity levels.
- The need to provide structured education that facilitates self management.
- The desire to move to an integrated multi-disciplinary approach to diabetes care.
- The need to raise public awareness of the symptoms and signs of diabetes.
- The role that opportunistic screening could have in identifying those at risk of developing diabetes.
- The requirement for all adults to be supported in optimising their control of blood pressure and blood glucose.
- That stopping smoking was one of the most effective ways of reducing risk of developing cardiovascular disease and micro-vascular complications.

As CPW had made clear in 2002 that community pharmacy could make a significant contribution to the achievement of these objectives, it is particularly disappointing that we find ourselves some ten years later making the same points and where there has been little or no engagement with CPW in terms of the delivery of the NSF objectives in the meantime.

CPW would ask the Health & Social Care Committee to ensure that engagement with community pharmacy is a more specific requirement in any revision of the NSF.

CPW would again wish to put on record where it believes that community pharmacies can make a significant and valuable contribution to the provision of high quality, patient centred diabetes care and delaying or preventing of the onset of diabetes.

Future Direction for Diabetes Services

In the ten year period following the launch of the original diabetes NSF, resources in NHS Wales have tightened significantly and the work associated with managing the ever growing requirements of people with diabetes and other chronic conditions has increased considerably. If NHS Wales is to continue to meet the needs of its population then it needs to ensure that all elements of the NHS are contributing to their full potential and this includes community pharmacy. CPW welcomed the Committee's recognition of the contribution of community pharmacy to chronic conditions management in the Report of its Inquiry into Community Pharmacy. Diabetes would be a key part of any new community pharmacy service for chronic conditions. As part of the current inquiry we would now ask the Committee to consider and support community pharmacy as an integral part of any revised NSF so that community pharmacy services cease, as now, to sit outside of patient pathways and move to being fully integrated in the care pathway.

The following highlights the role that community pharmacy can play in supporting patients with diabetes and also, importantly, in reducing the risk of diabetes.

Awareness raising

Community pharmacies are the most effective channel available to NHS Wales to deliver public health messages. They are the most visited and most accessible part of NHS Wales and as recent public health campaigns have clearly demonstrated, have the potential to get information into the hands of large numbers of people. The next Diabetes NSF could achieve a significant shift in peoples' behaviours by switching the focus of the delivery of elements of its public health services into community pharmacies as part of an integrated NHS/Public Health Wales agenda,

Healthy lifestyle support

Government should act to ensure effective advice and support smoking cessation, help to reduce alcohol consumption and assistance in weight management. And to ensure these advice services are available in every community pharmacy making access to these services as easy as going shopping.

Government's own public health strategy, *Our Healthier Future*, recognises the need for a shift of focus away from treating the growing number of people with lifestyle influenced conditions and towards improving lifestyle choice and reducing the risk of developing diabetes and vascular conditions.

As research shows that only 5% of people with diabetes are taking up the structured educational programmes currently in place; the onus is on NHS Wales to put in place a

more accessible educational programme. CPW considers this would most effectively be achieved through the community pharmacy network.

A broad network of **Good Health : Iechyd Da Pharmacies** could be developed. Building on the success of the Healthy Living Pharmacies initiative in England, Good Health : Iechyd Da Pharmacies would ensure that patients newly diagnosed with diabetes receive the well structured, evidence based education and lifestyle support they will need.

Screening

There is a commitment in the Welsh Labour Party Manifesto to 'Instigate a programme of annual health checks, led by GPs, practice nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals, for everyone over the age of 50 over the next Assembly term'. This is a clear endorsement of the valuable role that community pharmacy can play in assessing risk through opportunistic intervention with the many people who visit community pharmacies each week and targeted interventions in those harder to reach communities.

CPW looks forward to being involved in the plans for these national health checks. Both population screening and pre-screening could be elements of community pharmacy diabetes services in these health checks.

Medicines management

Medicines remain the backbone of modern healthcare and as a result the vast majority of people living with diabetes are being prescribed one or more medicines. As these medicines are only supplied through community pharmacies it results in regular contact between the person and their community pharmacy.

NHS Wales largely limits the role of community pharmacy to one of supply. There is, however, considerable potential for a package of medicines management support for diabetic patients through community pharmacy. This could enable a coordinated medicines management package of care that includes a Medicines Use Review (MUR), a new medicines support service, a hospital admission and discharge service, a review of evidence based prescribing, compliance support and advice on blood glucose testing and insulin management.

On-going monitoring and support

As part of an integrated community pharmacy diabetes service, community pharmacies could have a role in monitoring their diabetes patients, performing routine testing, looking for signs of deteriorating conditions and referring patients for appropriate support.

Part 3: Recommendations

The above elements outline a clear role for community pharmacy in the provision of support to people living with diabetes. It is a means by which the potential of community pharmacy can be utilised to the benefit of people with diabetes.

A service of this nature would not only provide valuable support for people living with diabetes, it could also be replicated to provide support patients living with other chronic conditions.

An initial helpful step to achieving this would be that the current investment in IT development being put in place to support the introduction of a national community

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pharmacy common ailment service, should be future proofed so that the IT platform being developed is able to be used to support the development of a *National Chronic Conditions Service*. CPW would recommend that the first two elements of any such service should be focussed on diabetes and respiratory health.

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

CPW welcomes communication in either English or Welsh.

For acknowledgement and further Contact:

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