

Health and Social Care Committee

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

CP 18 – ABPI Cymru Wales



Bringing medicines to *life*
Dod a meddyginiaeth i *fywyd*

Cymru | Wales

National Assembly for Wales -
Health and Social Care
Committee
Inquiry into the Contribution of
Community Pharmacy

September 2011

Inquiry into the Contribution of Community Pharmacy

Who We Are:

- The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) has 150 members including the large majority of the research-based pharmaceutical companies operating in the UK, both large and small.
- We represent innovative research-based biopharmaceutical companies, both large and small, leading an exciting new era of biosciences in the UK.
- Our industry, a major contributor to the economy of the UK, brings life-saving and life-enhancing medicines to patients. Our members supply 80 per cent of all medicines used by the NHS, and are researching and developing over two-thirds of the current medicines pipeline, ensuring that the UK remains at the forefront of helping patients prevent and overcome diseases.
- Working with our Research Affiliate Members, leaders in pharmaceutical R&D, is vital in promoting the UK as a destination of choice for international life sciences investment.
- The ABPI Cymru Wales Office was established in 2003 to represent member companies who research, develop and manufacture branded medicines.
- Over 30 companies with a special interest in Wales have come together under the umbrella of the ABPI Cymru Wales Industry Group (WIG).
- Since establishment, we have developed partnerships within the Welsh Government, National Assembly for Wales, NHS Wales, professional organisations, patient organisations and academia.
- The ABPI Code of Practice, which outlines the self-regulation of the industry, celebrated 50 years in 2008. The Code was updated earlier in 2011, and saw big changes in its scope, including in the evolving relationship between the medical community and the pharmaceutical industry.

Further information on ABPI Cymru Wales and this submission is available from:

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Inquiry into the Contribution of Community Pharmacy:

Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our views to your inquiry into the role of community pharmacy in Wales. As an important partner for the pharmaceutical industry and an integral component of the medicines supply chain, community pharmacy plays an important role in the delivery of healthcare to patients throughout Wales. Community pharmacists can develop lifelong relationships with its customers, some of whom are from hard to reach patient groups. Community pharmacists could be instrumental in providing quality-led, cost-efficient health care, so necessary in these difficult economic times.

However, there are issues which the profession and Welsh Government need to resolve, in order to successfully implement expanded professional service delivery. Doubts around the validity of the England / Wales Pharmacy Contract, and the lack of cost of service data, is obviously of concern to community pharmacists and needs resolution to successfully monitor service delivery and ensure appropriate financial reward for the professional services delivered.

Response to Inquiry Questions

In principle, we support the policy direction for community pharmacy as proposed by the Welsh Government in their programme for the coming Assembly. We recognise that community pharmacy is in a unique position to gain access to a large proportion of the population, both well and ill. In particular, the sector has the opportunity to engage with the hard to reach populations - including those that do not attend their GP practice. We are sure that both Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW) and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) in Wales will be outlining the challenges and practicalities which need to be overcome in order for community pharmacists to fully assume their position alongside other healthcare service providers.

However, there are some issues that we feel deserve further interrogation by the Committee as part of its inquiry. Members should keep in mind during their deliberations that community pharmacists have to continually balance their role as healthcare professionals, advising patients and providing care, with their position as business-people, maintaining either personal or company-based profitability. Whilst they have the potential to deliver healthcare closer to patient's homes', with their 708 premises across Wales, many of the opportunities to expand their professional services are yet to be fully embraced.

The timely supply of medicines to patients in Wales is core to the business of community pharmacy. This has been impacted over recent times by the decision of some community pharmacists – and others – to participate in parallel exporting of critical medicines across the European Union and further afield. These commercial business decisions can be to the detriment of patient care and we have been strongly encouraging our professional and association colleagues in pharmacy to address this with their members. We remain hopeful that this will happen; reducing the necessity for the proposed extra dispensing fee for branded medicines (being introduced on the 1st October 2011) and ensuring that access to medicines and thereby patient care is impeded as little as possible.

The Pharmacy Contract agreed in 2005 clarified the distinction between the core services that community pharmacy provide (such as premises, dispensing, purchase and supply, etc.) and other



more advanced or enhanced services, which individual community pharmacists may choose, or be commissioned, to supply. These have included Medicines Usage Reviews (MURs) and STOMA Services (advanced, commissioned, services) and enhanced services, which have been developed on an ad-hoc and local basis, such as the Emergency Contraception service.

Community pharmacies in Wales may undertake up to 400 MURs each year (at a cost of £28 per MUR), however we understand that at present only 38%/40% of pharmacies are delivering this commissioned service. We would support a comprehensive and consistent approach to MURs for patients on multiple medicines, especially the elderly or patients from difficult to reach patient groups. Unfortunately, the evidence suggests that harnessing the potential opportunities offered by advanced / enhanced services appears to be taking longer than originally anticipated in Wales.

We recognise the potential patient benefit from introducing the proposed all-Wales service - reconciling medicines on discharge from hospital. It has the potential to reduce, waste, harm and variation within the medicines supply chain. However, we understand that this service, introduced from the 1st October has been costed at £7.2m for the first 18 months with the aim to save £5m from the medicines budget.

One of the questions asked in your inquiry is specific to the further provision of services that could be made available via community pharmacies. We would urge the Committee to consider how the pharmaceutical industry could further support community pharmacy in its role to deliver advanced/enhanced and other services, for the benefit of the NHS and its patients in Wales. Preventing as well as treating the burden of disease in Wales is a huge undertaking and innovative collaborations may be part of the solution. We have several examples¹ where companies have worked with community pharmacy to develop services that can create real patient benefit and improve health outcomes: services that make use of all the advantages of community pharmacy and contribute to the goals of NHS Wales. ABPI Member companies have “joint-working” case studies that include asthma MURs, cardiovascular risk assessment, smoking cessation and vaccinations, to mention just a few. We believe that a more tacit recognition and support of the potential for joint working between community pharmacy and the pharmaceutical industry may have significant benefits to both commercial partners, the NHS and the people of Wales.

¹ For Example - **ESyDoc COPD Integrated Care Project**: in this project based in East Surrey industry worked in collaboration with Secondary Care, GP practices, NHS Surrey Medicines Management Team, Community Pharmacy, Community Respiratory Outreach Team and SE Cambs to assist in up skilling and supporting health care professionals to develop a patient-focused COPD pathway, working collaboratively across healthcare teams. The project has led to a 7% decrease in emergency admissions and a 21% reduction in bed days. The length of stay in hospital has also reduced from 6.8 to 5 days, with a decrease in 30 and 90 day readmission rates. A patient survey recorded high levels of patient satisfaction with their care and a high level of awareness of the self management plan issued to support their treatment.