



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society
of Great Britain**

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Statement

For immediate release

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RPSGB RESPONDS TO EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS

Empowering health professionals is a theme that runs through the Government's vision for the NHS. All health professionals including pharmacists will welcome the restoration of faith in the front line practitioner. Those who are closest to patients are best placed to make decisions for their care.

The RPSGB recognises that some pharmacists will have concerns that phrases such as "GP commissioning" and "a clinically lead NHS" point to exclusive rather than inclusive professional leadership. The Society will be pressing Government to ensure that pharmacists have an opportunity to input into service redesign. The Society's joint initiative with the Royal College of General Practitioners, where we have been working through the barriers to collaboration, will report in the Autumn on recommendations about how the two professions will work together to benefit patients.

Government has also been explicit that the community pharmacy contractual arrangements will sit with the new NHS commissioning board, we hope this will lead to more nationally commissioned extended services through pharmacy.

Pharmacists in NHS roles within Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities have enormous expertise in medicines management by ensuring prescribing is safe and clinically effective. They offer tremendous value to the NHS. These pharmacists must be retained within the new structures to make sure the NHS continues to make the most of the medicines prescribed.

Community pharmacists have experienced a post code lottery of local service commissioning. Public health services such as smoking cessation and sexual health should be nationally commissioned to avoid a similar situation developing under these new proposals. The “Any Willing Provider” model is one that is familiar to community pharmacists, but the playing field must be level with the same information and opportunities being given to all providers.

The skills and expertise of hospital pharmacists will be needed both to ensure the interface between primary and secondary care is well managed and that pharmacists in the community are supported with expertise from specialist roles as services move out of hospital.

The prevailing economic conditions mean the challenges laid down in this White Paper require radical thinking about new models of care. Better outcomes for patients while improving productivity, a more responsive service where professionals are empowered to make the right decisions about treatment and a renewed focus on public health are all areas where our entrepreneurial, evidence based and patient focused profession can make a real difference.

The Society’s message to Government is clear - we have the skills, expertise and experience to prevent people becoming unwell through public health interventions, as well as, making the most out of the most common health intervention – medicines.

The Society will be making the case for pharmacy inclusion – as a solution to many of the challenges in healthcare over the coming weeks and months, as well as keeping the profession informed as to how the changes affect them.

Ends

**For media enquiries please contact the
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