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## Press release

21 November 2012

For immediate release

### PSNC meets with buying group representatives

Earlier this month three independent contractor members of the PSNC committee – Gary Warner, Mark Collins, and Mark Burdon – along with PSNC chief executive Sue Sharpe, met with representatives from buying groups to discuss their members' concerns about the interim funding arrangements announced in October.

Three of the invited groups attended the meeting on November 6, and the discussion focussed on questions about funding, both for national and local services, and concerns that contractors do not receive enough notice of changes that will affect their businesses.

During the meeting PSNC explained that it is not involved in negotiating funding for local services as this is a role for LPCs. The work PSNC does to audit prescription pricing and push for improvements and to communicate with contractors through Community Pharmacy News, the PSNC website and by attending LPC meetings, was also outlined.

Committee members said that, as contractors, they too would feel the impact of the October funding changes on their businesses next year, but they explained that reductions are made at this time every year and so should not be a surprise to contractors or those working to represent them. PSNC also explained why the October reductions had been made by the Department of Health following the most recent margins survey, and the fact that surplus purchase profits have been a significant benefit to the sector in recent years.

The committee members also explained that LPCs are the local representatives for contractors and as such are the best first port of call for all questions on funding and other matters. PSNC sent briefings to LPCs following the October interim funding announcement this year and has offered to help them to engage with contractors and improve their understanding of the contractual framework.

As independently elected representatives for contractors, the committee members also explained that they have a say in all funding decisions and, through regular contact with LPCs, work to ensure that the committee is aware of contractors' concerns and takes their views into account.

#### **Independent contractor and chair of the PSNC LPC and Implementation Support Subcommittee Mark Collins said:**

“As a contractor myself I understand the very real impact that funding changes have on pharmacy businesses and as such I welcome all genuine opportunities to help us to communicate better with contractors.

I hope that our discussion with the buying groups helped to improve their understanding of community pharmacy funding and the work that PSNC, LPCs and regional representatives do to negotiate the best possible deals for contractors and ensure that they are properly represented.



I would encourage contractors wanting to make their views known to PSNC to contact their LPCs, or even regional representatives, in the first instance, as this is the best way to get questions answered and to ensure that your voice is heard.”

## **Notes to Editors**

### **About PSNC**

- PSNC (The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee) is the body that represents community pharmacies in England and Wales on NHS matters.
- The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) is recognised by the Secretary of State for Health as the representative of community pharmacy on NHS matters. PSNC's main objective is to secure the best possible NHS service opportunities, remuneration, terms and conditions for NHS pharmacy contractors in England. PSNC represents and promotes the interests of 10,500 pharmacy contractors (pharmacy owners) in England. It is the role of PSNC to liaise with the Department of Health and representatives of the NHS in England to negotiate the contractual terms for the provision of NHS community pharmacy services.

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