



T 0844 381 4180
E info@psnc.org.uk
www.psn.org.uk

Press release

05 October 2012

For immediate release

Better use of pharmacists needed to make \$500 billion savings globally, IMS says

Pharmacists' role in medicines management should be strengthened as part of a strategy that could help health systems across the world save half a trillion US Dollars (£309 billion) per year, health ministers have been told.

An IMS report - presented to ministers gathered in the Netherlands during the annual International Pharmaceutical Federation congress - looked at the potential for health cost savings to be made through medicines optimisation and identified six key levers that could help to achieve this.

The levers included increasing patient adherence and ensuring timely medicine use, optimising antibiotic use, preventing medication errors, using generics where available and managing polypharmacy.

The authors said improving the use of medicines was an "urgent health policy priority" and they called on ministers to understand the links between medicine bills and other NHS costs, taking into account the financial impact of adverse events caused by adherence issues.

They said "immediate action" was needed and that ministers would need to implement policies to trigger improvements in medicines use and align incentives to optimise clinical and/or dispensing practices.

Pharmacists were at the heart of several of the five key recommendations made to ministers, which were:

- Strengthening the role of pharmacists in medicines management.
- Investing in medical audits to help elderly patients manage polypharmacy.
- Implementing mandatory reporting of antibiotic use.
- Encouraging behaviour change among health professionals to support error and problem reporting
- Supporting targeted disease management programmes for high-risk patients with chronic diseases.

Alastair Buxton, Head of NHS Services at PSNC, said: "This report confirms what we already know – that medicines adherence problems are costing the NHS huge amounts of money and that community pharmacists must be at the heart of a comprehensive and pro-active solution. Most community pharmacies are already offering extended medicines

management and optimisation services, but this vital role must be further developed in the reformed NHS – PSNC is already working to achieve this.

Mark Burdon, a community pharmacy contractor in County Durham and chair of the PSNC Resource Development and Finance subcommittee, said: “Community pharmacy is in an ideal position to affect the six levers of opportunity outlined in the IMS report. All of this is in the remit of every community pharmacist, whether through the traditional supply role or the newer services such as MUR and the New Medicine Service (NMS). Through our efficient procurement, the NHS already saves millions of pounds every year on generic medicines, and this is before we factor in the added value from pharmacists' input in optimising their patients' use of medicines.”

Notes to Editors

For more information on the IMS report please visit: <http://www.responsibleuseofmedicines.org/>

For more information from PSNC please contact:

Zoe Smeaton, Communications Manager, PSNC

zoe.smeaton@psnc.org.uk

0203 122 0839

07775 000 232

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.