

PHARMACY LPN BRIEF FOR PHARMACY PROFESSIONALS

INTRODUCTION

The transition to the new health and care system is accelerating, particularly primary care commissioning. The NHS Commissioning Board (NHSCB) will be responsible for planning, securing and monitoring primary care services, which includes community pharmacy contracts. The NHSCB will discharge its responsibility through regional and local area teams (LATs).

Pharmacy professionals are important providers of quality pharmaceutical care to the public. For your services to be recognised and fully deployed, local primary care commissioners need to be thoroughly appraised of your key position in health and social care and public health. The purpose of this brief is to encourage you to engage at a local level with members of the primary care commissioning team and specifically pharmacy Local Professional Networks (LPNs).

WHY LPNs ARE IMPORTANT TO PHARMACY PROFESSIONALS

Primary care teams within local area teams (LATs) will be an integral part of the NHSCB, with responsibility for securing local dental, optical and pharmaceutical professional and clinical advice. They will be advised by Local Professional Networks (LPNs), which will provide clinical leadership and engagement, intending to ensure effective service planning and delivery.

All LPNs will have the following functions that will affect pharmacists:

- Ensure that pharmacy is considered as part of the solution when redesigning care pathways
- Engage with HWB/CCG/Local Area Teams, Regional Directors
- Contribute to the commissioning agenda specifically embedding and implementing commissioning decisions.
- Provide clinical leadership and facilitate clinical engagement at grass roots
- Be a feeder mechanism into other clinical networks/senates and national strategy
- Engage with local representative committees
- Improve quality and make best use of resources
- Identify, resolve and discharge issues of safety, and have regard to quality

A strong LPN locally will ensure that the voice of pharmacists is heard. This will be important to

- ensure the realistic commissioning of new and existing services through direct advice to NHS and local authority commissioners and the proper functioning of future Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments
- provide advice about what training pharmacists and their teams will require locally
- ensure that locally managed contractual and performance issues are dealt with appropriately

By April 2013, all primary care trusts and strategic health authorities will be abolished and there will be an estimated 27-30 pharmacy LPNs in England.

OUR APPEAL, AND OUR PROMISE, TO YOU

Pharmacy LPNs present a genuine opportunity to set pharmacy and medicines at the heart of commissioning agendas locally. LPNs will be an integral part of primary care commissioning and important for the future of a vibrant community pharmacy sector.

Engagement is a matter of urgency – it can not be put off until April 2013. Belief systems and working relationships are already developing locally and these things are not limited by statutory deadlines.

So, find out what is going on locally, apply to join your LPN or start agitating for one if none exists in your area!

The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, Pharmacy Voice and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society met in August and agreed to work together to help pharmacists engage with LPNs productively. We encourage you to think about getting involved - and we are jointly committed to supporting pharmacists who step forward.