

**PRESS RELEASE MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**Local Professional Networks a chance to put pharmacists at the heart of commissioning, say pharmacy bodies**

It is a matter of urgency that pharmacists engage with Local Professional Networks (LPNs), according to the national pharmacy bodies, which today jointly issue a call to action to pharmacists across England.

By April 2013, all primary care trusts and strategic health authorities will be abolished, to be replaced by new commissioning structures which will include approximately 30 pharmacy LPNs as part of the new NHS Commissioning Board (NHSCB). LPNs are intended to feed into commissioning decisions, engage with local representative committees and improve the quality of health services, including safety.

The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, Pharmacy Voice and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society met in August to consider how they might together encourage pharmacists to get involved with LPNs and to engage with LPNs productively. The bodies agreed that the first task is to map the Pharmacy LPNs against the new NHS structures and secondly to collectively provide support to the local pharmacist leaders who are forming LPNs.

In a joint statement, the pharmacy bodies said today:

“LPNs will be an integral part of primary care commissioning and important for the future of a vibrant community pharmacy sector. LPNs are the opportunity for pharmacists to put medicines at the heart of commissioning and directly improve local services - we mustn't let this opportunity go begging. That is why the national pharmacy bodies have come together to issue this call to action. This is a matter of urgency – engagement 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”

**Ends:**

- The members of Pharmacy Voice are the Association of Independent Multiple Pharmacies (AIMp), the Company Chemists' Association (CCA) and the National Pharmacy Association (NPA).