

PSNC JOINS PHARMACY BODIES IN CALL FOR DECRIMINALISATION IN MEDICINES CONSULTATION

PSNC has submitted a joint response to the MHRA consultation broadly welcoming the consolidation of UK medicines regulations.

In the joint response PSNC, Pharmacy Voice and Community Pharmacy Wales comment on the decriminalisation of dispensing errors, stating that the MHRA could have taken action in the course of the consolidation, to remove the criminal provisions, where a genuine mistake leads to an error in supply.

The joint response also opposes the proposal to remove the exemption that allows pharmacies to trade in small quantities of medicines with other pharmacies and with other healthcare professionals.

Stephen Lutener, Head of Regulation at PSNC said "Pharmacy is the only healthcare profession that commits a criminal offence for making a genuine mistake. The profession has been pressing for the criminal provisions in the Medicines Act 1968 not to be applied where such an error occurs, as there are other more appropriate ways of regulating the dispensing of medicines."

He adds: "There appears to be widespread support from policy makers, but the MHRA has not incorporated in the review, an amendment that would achieve this aim. This is an opportunity lost, which leaves pharmacists and their staff liable to criminal prosecution as well as deterring the sharing of learning when errors do arise. Further discussions are taking place, but appropriate amendments during this Review could have brought about a more timely solution."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The consultation can be found <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Publications/Consultations/Medicinesconsultations/MLXs/CO N132054> .
- 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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