Scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2012-13 and Spending Review 2011

Community Pharmacy Scotland

Who are we?

Community Pharmacy Scotland is the organisation which represents community pharmacy contractor owners in almost every aspect of their working lives, and is the voice of these vital healthcare professionals as they deliver pharmaceutical care to the people of Scotland.

It is empowered to represent the owners of Scotland’s 1232 community pharmacies and negotiates on their behalf with the Scottish Government. This covers all matters of terms of service and contractors’ NHS service activity including remuneration and reimbursement for the provision of NHS pharmaceutical services.

What do we do?

Community Pharmacy Scotland works with the Scottish Government on the development of new pharmaceutical care services and works to ensure that the framework exists to allow the owners of Scotland’s community pharmacies to deliver these services.

The Scottish community pharmacy contract puts the care of the individual right at its centre and with its focus on pharmaceutical care and improving clinical outcomes, community pharmacy contractors and their employee pharmacists are playing an increasingly important role in maximising therapeutic outcomes and improving medicine safety. Community pharmacy is at the heart of every community and plays an important part in the drive to ensure that the health professions provide the services and care the people of Scotland require and deserve.

We welcome the review of the role of the pharmacist in contributing to the healthcare of patients in the community which was announced by the Scottish Government on 17 October. Our members will be keen to input innovatively and constructively to the review process.

Community Pharmacy Scotland is happy to provide further information to the Health and Sport committee as required in support of this submission.

Our Response to the call for evidence:

Proposed Scottish Government Budget for 2012-3 and years ahead

Community Pharmacy Scotland notes with concern the proposed budgets for the forthcoming years. Pharmacy contractors are the only group of independent contractors who are forecasted to receive a drop in their budget line over the coming years.
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<th>Contractor Group</th>
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Prior to the preparation of this response we have been unable due to time constraints to speak with department civil servants to find out the reason for the unexpected fall.

Community Pharmacy Scotland is concerned this fall in funding does not recognise the extra workload being taken on by community pharmacy contractors to support the delivery of the four core services and sends out the wrong message in the early stages of delivery of the Chronic Medication Service. This service is key to supporting improved clinical care of patients and a reduction in the level of waste medicines.

We will be speaking to officials in the coming weeks about the reasons for the proposed reduction in the budget line.

**Preventative Spending**

Community Pharmacy Scotland broadly welcomes the preventative spending approach proposed by the Government. Community Pharmacy will be keen to be part of the delivery of services in this area as required. Community Pharmacy contractors recognise that as front line practitioners who engage daily with members of the public (both well and unwell) we have a role to play in supporting this strategy.

- **Keep Well**

We currently are involved in the provision of Keep Well checks in certain Health Boards and are awaiting further information on each NHS Board’s mainstreaming plans for Keep Well.

- **Integration of Health and Social Care/Change Fund**

Our experience of working in the community means we daily see the importance of closer integration of health and social care. We welcome the focus on maintaining older people at home, healthier and for longer and see potential for increasing pharmacist involvement with the provision of support to patients and their carers together with our social care colleagues. The ultimate aim must be to prevent unplanned hospital admissions.

We believe that the Chronic Medication Service will support closer working with our GP colleagues through improved sharing of information and ensuring patients get the best from their medicines. We also believe that through time
we will see increasing complexity of care required at home especially in the frail older population. We are keen to foster closer working relationships with colleagues throughout the profession and therefore will be looking for solutions to support the sharing of pharmacy care plans and discharge information between primary and secondary care.

Community Pharmacy Scotland welcomes the continuation of the Change Fund but is concerned that independent contractors may not have had access to the discussions on the use of these monies or influence on the development of schemes to support carers. One such example would be to look at ways whereby carers could administer medicines using medicines administration charts rather than from a monitored dosage system. We have committees in each NHS board area well placed to engage in such discussions.

**Prescription Costs**

Community Pharmacy Scotland notes the Health and Sport Committee is keen to look at prescription costs. Looking at the information on the ISD website total costs of prescription items have increased year on year. This is however, a reflection on increasing volumes of prescriptions dispensed in Scotland year on year and with the projected demographic changes it is hard to see how this increase could be reversed.

As it can be seen above the net ingredient cost per item has fallen in recent years. This is a reflection of the Scottish Government incentivising pharmacy contractors to purchase generic medicines as cost-effectively as possible. Community Pharmacy Scotland is keen that the system in place is maintained as it has clearly helped reduce costs to the NHS of generic medicines.

The Health and Sport Committee may wish to know the following drugs populate the Top 10 spend on medicines in NHS Scotland.
The Health and Sport Committee may also be keen to know that the patent expires on Atorvastatin Olanzapine and Quetiapine during the coming two years. Once a patent expires several companies can manufacture the drug and this can lead to substantial savings to the NHS.

CPS proposes that an element of the identified expected savings from generic medicines should be ring fenced to support delivery of further pharmaceutical services in the future, for example the provision of an enhanced level of community care support.

Community Pharmacy Scotland also believes that pharmacy has a key role to play in the support of reducing polypharmacy. By increasing the levels of registration for the Chronic Medication Service we will increase the level of patient conversations around areas such as non-adherence. If a patient is identified as being non-adherent there is a risk the full benefit of the medicine will not be achieved (leading to waste and inefficiency). By speaking with patients a person-centred shared agreement on the way forward can be identified. There are three possible outputs from any conversation on adherence:

- improved concordance and understanding of the way forward
- status quo leading to uncertain outcomes and waste
- termination of prescription in accordance with GP and patient

We expect that by having these conversations with patients the increasing volume of prescriptions will start to level off and inefficiency in medicine wastage will be reduced.

Community Pharmacy Scotland also recognises the valuable role played by the Scottish Medicines Consortium in accessing medicines and their eligibility for use within the NHS in Scotland. We note the development work currently underway by the Department of Health on Value Based pricing of medicines which in our belief will provide value to the NHS in Scotland for future medicine pricing.
eHealth

Community Pharmacy Scotland is delighted the Health and Sport Committee is taking evidence on eHealth. The establishment of the ePharmacy Programme for Scotland has been integral to development of the pharmacy contract. The ePharmacy team has led on the development of the Pharmacy Care Record as the part of Chronic Medication Service. This record will be a rich source of information on care issues and medicine usage across Scotland. Population of these records will be a key focus in the coming years for community pharmacy.

Community Pharmacy Scotland notes the eHealth strategy recommends that by 2014 we will have enabled an accurate and up-to-date electronic medication summary to be available to the appropriate healthcare workers involved in a patient’s journey through the healthcare system.

Community Pharmacy Scotland believes it is essential that pharmacists are able to access further records subject to patient consent from all parts of the Health Service to supplement the Pharmacy Care Record. Further useful information to support medicine usage and safety are:

- **Cholesterol results**

  Results for patients who are taking cholesterol lowering medicines (statins) if the patient is not reaching target levels and previously was the intervention of a pharmacist could support improved adherence along with lifestyle advice without requiring increased doses of medicines.

- **Warfarin blood results**

  Warfarin requires careful monitoring and patients must achieve a certain target level (INR). This level is maintained in a dose response relationship and it would be helpful for pharmacists to have sight of an e-copy of the required dose and current level. Patients are currently expected to provide their Warfarin Book but routinely forget to bring it.

- **Chemotherapy prescribing by secondary care**

  Community Pharmacy currently has no visibility on prescribing in secondary care. This would be helpful in this instance if a patient presented feeling unwell in the unscheduled care period. There is a risk if a patient does not inform the pharmacist they are undertaking chemotherapy that infection which is more severe in immunocompromised patients is not escalated appropriately.

- **Electronic Discharge Summaries**

  We also believe that the receipt of electronic discharge summaries by community pharmacy would support the safer use of medicines in primary care. We could act as a useful backstop to General Practice to make sure any
medicines which have been stopped during an admission are not reissued to patients subsequent to their discharge.

Community Pharmacy Scotland believes that, as a minimum, pharmacists should have access with patient consent to the Knowledge Information Summaries alluded to in the eHealth strategy. Having access to further information would support medicines reconciliation in all sectors of care and decrease the incidence of medicine misadventure.

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18 October 2011