



ALL-PARTY PHARMACY GROUP

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MPs LAUNCH INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF PHARMACY

EMBARGO 00.00hrs 21 June 2006

The All-Party Pharmacy Group today (21 June 2006) announced the launch of a major Inquiry into the Future of Pharmacy. It will be broad ranging but will focus on pharmacy services in primary and secondary care. The Inquiry will:

- assess recent developments in pharmacy (including the new community pharmacy contract in England and the review of the 'Control of Entry' regulations);
- identify priorities in healthcare service development that could be met by pharmacy;
- examine and highlight the challenges for the profession, policymakers, the NHS and other stakeholders in achieving pharmacy's potential;
- examine what actions need to be taken to realise pharmacy's potential in healthcare (legislative, financial, contractual, professional);
- identify barriers to progress;
- take evidence from a range of interested parties;
- produce a report and recommendations for action by policymakers, the profession and other interested parties.

Speaking at the launch of the Inquiry, the Chair of the All-Party Pharmacy Group, Dr Howard Stoate MP (Labour, Dartford) said:

"We want to examine what pharmacists need to do in order to contribute further to healthcare – both in the community and in secondary care settings. There has been encouraging progress recently, for example the implementation of the new contract in England and the gradual roll-out of medicines use reviews in community pharmacy. But its too patchy, its not consistent and it appears that there's not enough joined up thinking. We need to start looking now at how pharmacy's expertise and resource can be deployed to maximum effect.

Our Inquiry will challenge the profession, policymakers and the NHS to think about how pharmacy services should develop over the coming years. Now is the time to set objectives, to identify the challenges and to start planning. Our work will be separate from the consultation of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain to map a strategy for the profession to 2020, and the two work streams will operate on different timescales. Nonetheless, we hope our Inquiry will be of interest to those engaged in the RPSGB consultation.

We will be calling a broad range of witnesses to give evidence – from the Department of Health and the NHS locally, through the pharmacy profession, other health professionals and patient organisations.

Among our first steps we will be distributing a questionnaire to relevant stakeholders. But we welcome the views of any interested party and our questionnaire can be downloaded from our website – as can other information about the Inquiry. I hope everyone with ideas and views on pharmacy current and future role in frontline healthcare will contribute to this Inquiry"

Notes for Editors

1. The All-Party Pharmacy Group is an all-party group of more than one hundred MPs and peers. Its stated purpose is to raise awareness of the profession of pharmacy, and to promote pharmacists' current and potential contribution to the health of the nation.
2. The first evidence sessions, which we will be held in public, are planned for July. Details will be available shortly.
3. Further information about the All-Party Pharmacy Group's Inquiry into the Future of Pharmacy, including the questionnaire for interested parties, will be available on the Group's website www.appg.org.uk
4. The All-Party Pharmacy Group receives financial support from the Company Chemists' Association, the National Pharmacy Association, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. It receives administrative assistance from Luther Pendragon.
5. For further information:

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