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Royal
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English Pharmacy Board

Dr Brian Curwain has been elected as the new Chair of the English Pharmacy Board. He gives his personal view of some key issues for the future.

Clearly, the next few months – running up to the demerger of the Society’s regulatory functions – will form a key period for the national Boards, and for the ongoing development of the Society as our professional body and, most importantly, for our engagement with members.

Pharmacists fulfil major functions in the delivery and development of medicines and health services, as well as important roles in academia, industry, journalism, regulatory bodies, private consultancy and elsewhere.

In order to succeed in developing pharmacy practice in England, the English Pharmacy Board needs to connect with pharmacists in all areas of practice – whether they work in patient facing, administrative, educational, regulatory, advisory or research-based roles. The Board was set up constitutionally to be broadly representative and it’s important that we respect this. The



Dr Brian Curwain

recent Board meeting in Birmingham (see p2) highlighted a strong commitment towards engaging with all sectors of practice. We intend to be as inclusive as possible in our approach to create a strong sense of cohesion and shared purpose.

My vision for our professional body is simply that it will be the organisation that most pharmacists (and some non-pharmacists) want to be a

part of. It will succeed in this once it is seen as providing not only what pharmacists want, but in helping us to identify what we need.

I believe that Board members, and in particular the Chair, must make and develop productive relationships with a broad range of individuals and organisations to exert real influence. I will give the chairmanship the time and energy it needs for the Board to be successful in this task – I want pharmacy to be a major player in a joined-up game, not a voice in the wilderness!



Dean Rhodes (left) and Desmond Swayne MP with pharmacy staff at Hordle Pharmacy

New Forest pharmacy visit by Desmond Swayne MP

Desmond Swayne, Conservative MP for New Forest West, met EPB Chairman Brian Curwain and pharmacist Dean Rhodes at the Hordle Pharmacy in Hampshire recently.

Hordle Pharmacy serves several GP surgeries, including a part-time surgery in the same building, and Mr Swayne was shown prescription medicines already dispensed and awaiting collection by patients. A discussion took place about how the liability for dispensing errors under current law rests with pharmacists, including sharing liability for errors in pre-bagged medication dispensed by other pharmacists.

The MP remarked that he was aware of the

Society’s campaign to decriminalise single dispensing errors. He has signed Early Day Motion 1561 calling for the law to be changed. Mr Swayne was particularly interested in the range of additional services that pharmacy can provide, especially those that focus upon public health.

He was given a tour of the premises and learnt how deliveries and monitored dosage systems are undertaken for all patients who need them, rather than just for those who qualify under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Mr Swayne commented: “I use pharmacies all the time but never realised what else is offered to patients. The stop smoking service at Hordle is exactly the right type of help and advice that people need to support them pursuing a healthier lifestyle.”

The pharmacy visit is part of the English Pharmacy Board’s communications programme to engage directly with MPs in their constituencies ■

Devolution for the English!

A personal view by Howard Duff, Director for England

Much of the debate over the recent Charter changes vote focused on issues of devolution.

The arguments and misconceptions aired were similar to those often cited when discussing the development of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, such as duplication of workload or fragmentation at the expense of the strength of the whole. England's voice is often forgotten in the devolution debate, yet through the new professional leadership body and its boards, we will have the chance to deliver our own priorities in the most appropriate way for our own country, too.

The English Pharmacy Board was created to deal with matters of pharmacy practice particular to

England. There is a default assumption among the media and the public that Government health policy applies equally across Great Britain or the UK, but this is not the case, and has not been so for a decade:

- The Department of Health exists to "improve the health and wellbeing of people in England"
- Community pharmacists operate under a contract which relates to England and Wales (and with differences between the two)
- The recent pharmacy White Paper is "Pharmacy in England"
- Primary care trusts work to an English agenda, which is mirrored less and less in Wales as it moves towards a unified health board structure

- The provision of secondary care is specific to each country
- The NPSA and NICE do not cover Scotland and work slightly differently in England than in Wales
- Connecting for Health (and NPfIT) operate in England only
- CPPE is funded to educate English pharmacists and technicians

The need for the recognition of devolution in England is real. The strength of the EPB as the voice of pharmacy practice in England will become more tangible to members once the new professional leadership body is underway, as the Boards will be the driving force of the new body. Our time has come!



Campaign steps up pressure

The English Pharmacy Board held an open meeting on 23 June at Aston University, Birmingham, inviting pharmacists from across the West Midlands. The aim was to gather feedback from members on key issues of concern.

- An update about the work to create the new professional leadership body was given to the 70 attendees with particular emphasis on the new local practice forums (LPFs).
- The Board listened to the concerns of those

members who attended and took the opportunity to address these at the time. A full list of the issues and answers is available at www.pharmacyplb.com.

There were a large number of questions raised about the Responsible Pharmacist regulations, particularly around the new concept of absence. Some of these were answered, but members are urged to read the Society's new toolkit in order to prepare for 1 October. Click [here](#) to see the online Responsible Pharmacist toolkit.

EPB members plan to repeat this successful event in London on 16 September after the next Board meeting ■



BOARD TO PUBLISH ITS MEMBERS' EXPENSES The English Pharmacy Board has agreed that its members' expenses should be published in line with the annual terms of office for members (May–April) to provide greater transparency.

Pharmacy clinical services at the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Planning is underway to meet the demands on pharmacy services from the Olympic Games. EPB member David Mottram, Professor of Pharmacy at Liverpool John Moores University, is involved and he explains more.

In preparation for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, a Pharmacy Clinical Services Group, under the leadership of Mark Stuart, has been set up. The group held the first of its monthly meetings in April at the headquarters of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The role of the group is to supply the pharmaceutical needs of the athletes, officials, media and Olympic family. The main outlet will be a fully stocked pharmacy within the polyclinic at the Olympic Village. However, medical services will be provided at 35 competition venues, 41 training venues and 55 non-competition venues across eight UK cities. It is expected that 250,000 people will fall under the care of the Olympic medical services, with around 40,000 people living in the Olympic Village during the course of the Games.

The Games formulary will comprise around 200



drugs, the range of medicines reflecting the global medical community and the specific needs for sports medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy, podiatry, optometry and massage therapies.

The group will be recruiting volunteer pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to staff the pharmacy outlets over the period of the Games. A strategy of education and training for these and other medical volunteers is being developed. It is also planned to provide education and information to pharmacists and technicians within the regions where competition events are located and, indeed, on a national basis.

The group acknowledges the complexity and extent of the task ahead and appreciates the expressions of support that it has received from many pharmacy-related organisations, including the English Pharmacy Board ■

Holidaymakers told to top up at pharmacies

Question *When do summer holidays turn into summer horror days?*
Answer *When the public don't turn to their community pharmacist for travel advice and treatment.*

That was the message of the Society's "holiday health" campaign in June, when celebrity and adventurer Ben Fogle championed the role of pharmacy in travellers' safety and well-being. The campaign, fronted by Ben in conjunction

with Great Britain Rx Factor winner Paul Johnson, received wide-spread media coverage from outlets including the BBC, ITV's Loose Women and the Daily Mail.

In total, Ben and Paul completed 21 radio and television interviews between them. These were broadcast on stations including BBC News, BBC Kent, Heart 103 and Swansea Sound. A web video featuring Paul was also produced, resulting in coverage on websites such as Yahoo and The Times' online edition ■



New sexual health toolkit due soon

The Society will publish a toolkit in the summer to help pharmacists develop their knowledge and skills around sexual and reproductive health.

As well as an overview, the toolkit will provide country specific-guidance on clinical standards, training, competency frameworks and local public health data.

The toolkit will also highlight ways to initiate new and innovative services, roll out or extend existing ones or adopt an already successful service model. Details on national sexual health networks, legal and ethical issues, models of good practice and a summary of key resources will also be included ■

Communications plan for pharmacy in England

Health Minister Mike O'Brien announced in June that the Department of Health had conducted research to form the basis of a communications plan to improve awareness and understanding of the roles pharmacists in providing health services.

The research outlines target audiences for the communications programme, focusing on people with long term conditions (LTCs) and those affected by health inequalities, and divides them into four types according to behaviour:

Traditionalists: often older people, and people with severe

or multiple LTCs.

Enthusiasts: often women 35+ with responsibility for others
Indulgiers often younger women including those with LTCs who visit the pharmacy for health and beauty products initially
Avoiders: teenagers, younger or older men who rely on others to visit the pharmacist for them.

All these groups welcomed the idea of pharmacists playing a greater role in medicines advice and screening services. They saw pharmacies as places offering quick and easy access to healthcare, an informal environment and preventative advice and treatment ■

Strategy highlights pharmacy role in end-of-life care

The national end-of-life care strategy identified pharmacists as a key workforce group in the delivery of high-quality end of life care.

A set of core competences and principles for health and social care staff is now available, covering communication skills, assessment and care planning, symptom management and advanced care planning.

Commissioned by the Department of Health and the National End-of-Life Care Programme, the document emphasises the importance of individualised care and inter-agency working to improve communication and provide joined-up services. For further information visit <http://www.endoflifecareforadults.nhs.uk/eolc/eolcpub.htm> ■



Volunteer rewarded

Peter Homan FRPharmS, a retired community pharmacist, has been a volunteer with the Society's Museum for 15 years.

In recognition of this achievement, Peter was presented with a Highly Commended Long Service Award at a reception on board HMS Belfast in June. The award is part of a new initiative by the London Museums Hub to recognise the valuable contribution volunteers make in museums across the capital ■

Time to choose

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk was launched in 2007 and aims to provide health care professionals and the public with high-quality online medical and healthcare information.

The Health A-Z pages contain details of around 750 different conditions, enabling individuals to play a more active role in their treatment. They also allow pharmacists to reinforce their role as expert health professionals, providing comprehensive advice

and sign-posting to relevant further sources of help and information.

The Behind the Headlines feature provides a same-day, evidence-based analysis of the day's health related news. Linking to research papers where relevant, the service helps separate fact from fiction enabling pharmacists to provide answers to patients who arrive clutching the latest news clippings.

The site details providers across

both primary care and acute sectors of the NHS, including details of where pharmacies are located and what services they provide. It is anticipated that in 2010, pharmacists will be able to update their own profiles on the site.

The NHS Choices team is able to visit local branches, committees and LPFs to explain the website in more detail. For further information please contact Guy Lavis, Head of External Affairs and Involvement at Guy.Lavis@dh.gsi.gov.uk ■



NHS choices