

Scottish Pharmacy Board 1 October 2008

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Policy on Co-payments

Purpose

To advise Council on the English Pharmacy Board's response to the Department of Health's review of co-payments.

Strategic objective domain

- Assist the development of Council policy and implementation in Scotland and develop and implement policy specific to Scotland.

Action required

To review and comment on the English Pharmacy Board's response to the Department of Health's review of co-payments (Appendix 1).

1. Background

The English National Clinical Director for Cancer, Professor Mike Richards, was asked by the Secretary of State for Health to review the issue of co-payments for medicines following adverse publicity about current Department of Health policy. The review covered the English NHS and was announced in mid-June 2008 with a report due in October 2008.

The Society has existing policy on prescription charges, which mentions co-payments. However, on examination of the existing policy the English Pharmacy Board felt that the policy was insufficient to adequately cover this review.

The English Pharmacy Board responded to the Department of Health's review in August and Council will consider the policy developed by the English Pharmacy Board on co-payments and amend the existing policy on prescription charges as appropriate.

At present the policy in Scotland is that those who want to pay privately for a drug also have to pay for other elements of care ie. co-payments are not allowed within NHS Scotland. The Scottish Government Health Department is expected to make a statement on the current status of the co-payments policy however nothing has been confirmed.

2. Risk Implications

The Society needs to have a policy on prescription charges that adequately addresses the issue of co-payments.

3. Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications.

Lyndon Braddick

Secretary to the Board