



FEBRUARY 2022 BLOG

By CPCW's CEO Adam Irvine



I cannot begin to express how proud I am of community pharmacy for everything our teams have been able to do of late and indeed continue to do under unprecedented pressure, putting patients and their care at the heart of everything. Thank you to all of you for your perseverance, persistence and dedication.

It is difficult to believe that the decision makers are not following through on that with funding to support following the first [annual review of our 5 year Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework](#). It is under that context that I wanted to write out to you all to encourage you on a couple of key topics.

As PSNC head into the 4th year negotiations, we have the [advice audit live now](#). It went live on the 31 January and will run for at least 2 weeks. We'll be amplifying this via our communications channels and newsletters (indeed this is what I'm doing right now) but I wanted to stress how very important this is. It brings data and evidence into negotiations – stories around personal experiences and anecdote are fine but you need actual evidential data, from the majority of the sector to really win the argument. We don't, as a sector, by default capture all the really good activity that occurs in our pharmacies so this is a way of looking for evidence on both cost and activity to then present and use in the negotiations. The response rate is critical so any encouragement is appreciated – we had 10k responses to the first one and 6k to the second – the position that we can say this is the majority of contractors is massively important to maintain and so I urge you all to respond to it

It's unheard of to have that sort of response rate amongst primary care contractors and it speaks hugely to the level of importance it holds for our full sector. It provokes conversations as part of the pre-amble to the year 4 negotiations, has been well received by negotiators and the fact we are doing it at the same kind of time of year as we have done previously allows us some crucial comparison and trend data. The contractor feedback we receive in to CPCW is massively weighted around capacity issues – so the evidence needs to demonstrate this so that PSNC can have the conversations around providing the money and resources to support this capacity constraint.

It's a huge PR win too – the last one was credited as being really important in getting the Covid cost bid persuaded to MPs. Almost all the MPs who stood up in the debate (approximately 10 of them) supporting the motion were able to quote numbers from our advice audit.

One point that's being measured this time is to try to look at the complexity of patients – the narrative that we're now seeing more complex cases is important to build and prove. The way it's being measured is getting the pharmacist to think about the urgency of referrals they escalate and using that as a barometer. That's how it's captured so please make sure proper thought and consideration is given in this area when you answer that particular question.

Our early feedback from the audit from those who've seen it was positive – contractors feeling that what they do in the audit makes a difference to expressing their situation & view and I wanted to really stress that.

There's a very informative video from Mike Dent, PSNC's Director of Pharmacy Funding describing more about how the data is used and why it's important – it's viewable here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/january-video-update-from-psnc-policy-team/>

Separately there's a [pressures survey](#) which will help. Snippets from this will inform PSNC on the scale of problems – there's 2 different ones to fill in with separate links – one for teams and one for contractors/head office representatives. I'd also like to encourage people to do that – it takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you again. Adam