

LPC NEWS

SUE SHARPE VISITS THE NORTH

PSNC Chief Executive visits Local LPC

Recently, Gateshead & South Tyneside LPC held their daytime LPC meeting with a bit of a difference – they invited PSNC's Chief Executive Sue Sharpe and were delighted when she accepted. In honour of the occasion, the LPC held their meeting at the Hilton Hotel followed by an evening dinner so we could invite other local stakeholders to meet her.



Sue Sharpe is CEO of PSNC and although her background is in the legal profession, she has been heavily involved in pharmacy for a great many years. It is fair to say that her depth of knowledge of the profession is beyond that of many working pharmacists.

Sue gave a detailed presentation during the afternoon (a copy of which can be found on the

Gateshead & South Tyne Side LPC site) as well as a speech at the dinner and participated in a question & answer session.

During the afternoon she also saw a presentation from head of Medicines Management, Jeanette Stephenson. It was interesting to note that a common theme in both presentations was Medicines Optimisation, and how the skills of the pharmacist can be utilized.



At the dinner, we also had a speech from Pam Lee from the PCT Public Health. She spoke to us about her involvement with pharmacy including the Stop Smoking Service,

NHS Health Checks and the Healthy Living Pharmacy initiative. In her closing remarks she said what really impressed her when working with pharmacists was that they were so open to new ideas, for themselves and their whole pharmacy teams. Guests at the dinner included colleagues from other representative committees such as GPs and Optometrists as well as key PCT personnel, Public Health, Council Members as well as colleagues from Sunderland LPC and other neighbouring LPC's.

Several contractors' questions were put to Sue, and many of the answers can be seen on our website. Topics such as Direct to Pharmacy arrangements & Manufacturers quotas were discussed as well as the New Medicines Service & how it can be difficult for pharmacies not located near to GP surgeries to participate. The eligibility of Internet pharmacies was also mentioned. Other questions centered around the new tariff arrangements for Specials and the reasoning behind the paper consent now required for Advanced Services.



The meeting was a resounding success. Committee members commented on what an amazing lady Sue was - "she is so knowledgeable and speaks with great clarity about all aspects of the profession."

It's comforting to know that she is at PSNC always arguing the corner of the pharmacist and negotiating on our behalf.

One member said that after listening to Sue speak, she thought she must be "married to the job" then was amazed after chatting to her in the Ladies to find out that she was really just another working mum like her.

Sue was asked at the end of the day about her thoughts. She commented "I enjoyed the day tremendously right from the beginning. The discussion on the opportunities that pharmacist have from services and that was brilliant. I enjoyed listening to your medicines management colleagues, I think just that sense of energy and recognition of positive spirit (within the committee) was tremendous. I have learnt a lot about contractors concerns which was great for me. This LPC, in terms of relationships with GP's, Medicines management has positioned itself well. I really enjoyed the day."

The LPC Comms team filmed Sue and Pams speech as well as the questions and answers from the night and all the media can be found on the Gateshead & South Tyneside LPC website www.gandstlpc.net



MEDICINE TWEETS

A recent research project undertaken in the RDTG assessed the quality of medicines information which appears on the social networking site Twitter.

The project assessed tweets about an article which appeared in the BMJ regarding the safety of tiotropium via the RespiMat device.

Tweets were given a red, amber or green rating depending on the quality of information included in the tweet or associated link.

The study found that the majority (63.5%) of tweets were of poor quality, 16.7% were of amber quality, and 20% were of good quality.

This research has identified a need for a good quality, reliable medicines information twitter feed, and identified that UKMi would be well placed to provide such a service.



ALL PARTY PHARMACY GROUP (APPG)



If you are involved in any pharmacy visit from your local politician and need any help from the LPC just get in touch with us. May we also suggest that you use any visit to encourage the MP or councillor to join the All Party Pharmacy group.

This group covers all the main political parties and also encourages them to take an interest in the profession. You can assure the MP that they won't be expected to commit a lot of time to it however by being on the list it helps heighten the profession's profile. If you require further information about this please don't hesitate to get in touch.

It is important that we engage locally with politicians so that we get pharmacy in their minds. You may have recently read in the Chemist and Druggist that Ed Milliband (Labour Leader) visited a pharmacy and admitted that pharmacy had not been high on his agenda however after his visit he was going to look at more expert advice on what was happening with the profession. He also said he would keep an eye on the APPG.

New Sunderland LPC Lead for Service Development

Ann Gunning is going to be working with Sunderland LPC as the lead for Service Development, effective from 12th September 2011. She is going to be working particularly on the Healthy Living Pharmacy Pathfinder, the New Medicines Service, the Community Pharmacy Flu Vaccination service and NHS Healthchecks; as part of this she will also be helping contractors maximise their delivery of enhanced services.

LPC Secretary, Kathryn Featherstone said 'Ann has a lot of experience working with community pharmacy and Public Health from her past role in PCTs north of the river and her current role working with the new North of Tyne LPC on pharmacy enhanced services. I am delighted she is now going to be working with us as well.'

Ann commented 'I'm pleased to have this opportunity to join you and work with you to maximise the potential community pharmacy has to offer to patients, customers and the NHS. This is a time of significant change for both pharmacy and the NHS and although there are potential threats, I see great opportunities for pharmacy and look forward to working with you to realize that potential.'

Ann's contact details are:

Email: anngunning@northtynelpc.org.uk

Mobile number: 07810 332042



New Medicine Service

The LPCs across the North East commissioned nine New Medicine Service learning events from the four local CPPE tutors. Two evening events took place in South of Tyne & Wear, one in Sunderland and one in South Tyneside and the Sunday regional event was also held in our area, at the Holiday Inn in Washington.

The events have seen approximately 350 pharmacists attend the training offered by the LPCs, with nearly capacity turnout at every event.

CPPE tutor, Ann Gunning said 'The learning events have been very well attended and delegates should be congratulated on their willingness to participate in the events and make best use of the practice sessions provided to them. Hopefully delegates left the events with a greater understanding of the service, with practised skills for engaging patients and with more confidence to provide the service.'

The CPPE tutors will collate the questions which were asked at the events and forward those to Mark Burdon, PSNC Northern Region rep. He will discuss the questions with Alistair Buxton of PSNC and produce a FAQ document which will be circulated by the LPCs to all contractors. Whilst the CPPE learning events provided the opportunity to practise the skills needed for an effective patient consultation, the LPCs are also discussing the possibility of commissioning further training to support pharmacists with their clinical knowledge of the four NMS target areas, i.e. respiratory disease, anticoagulants and antiplatelet drugs, hypertension and type two diabetes.

Look out for further information about forthcoming training events.

NHS flu vaccination service

Following the successful completion of four practical training sessions commissioned by the LPCs from Novartis, the NHS flu vaccination service goes live on 1st December. Patients who can be vaccinated in the community pharmacy are those falling into one of the at risk groups, who have not been vaccinated by another healthcare professional in the preceding six months. Pregnant women and children under 18 years of age are excluded from the pharmacy vaccination service and should be signposted to their GP practice.

The agreement for the NHS service runs for two months, from 1st December until 31st January 2012. The latest information from the Director of Immunisation at the Department for Health highlights the fact that there are still a significant number of patients in at risk groups who have not been vaccinated this season. This is pharmacy's opportunity to prove what it can do as a profession to support the public health agenda and increase the uptake of flu vaccination.

If you have not already done so, please ensure you have downloaded the Service Level Agreement and Patient Group Direction from the LPC website and you have signed and returned a copy of the SLA to the PCT. Without a signed SLA, the PCT will be unable to pay the pharmacy for services provided. All accredited pharmacists providing the service within a pharmacy should also sign the PGD stored in the pharmacy. This document is essential to provision of a safe and legal service, as it provides the legal authority for supplying and administering a prescription only medicine. For those pharmacists who accepted the offer of free training from Novartis, via the LPC, you must use Novartis vaccines for this service. Both AAH and Alliance Healthcare have sufficient stock of the vaccines available in local depots.

The 'worried well' can of course be vaccinated against flu using the private Novartis PGD and this service is already running. The PGD expires on 29th February 2012, so you can continue to provide private vaccinations for a further month after the NHS service ends. In addition to those in at risk

groups, the private PGD allows you to vaccinate those patients who do not have any specific additional risks for contracting flu. Again, children under 18 years of age and pregnant women are excluded.

Please encourage all patients to complete a post-vaccination questionnaire. Novartis will use the data from the questionnaires to write an evaluation report for the service. The LPCs will be using this report as the basis for negotiating the ongoing commissioning of the pharmacy flu vaccination service and hopefully its expansion in future years.

Healthy Living Pharmacies

Following the deadline for Healthy Living Pharmacy applications, three panels have reviewed the applications received to determine whether the applicants should be awarded Healthy Living Pharmacy status. Cath McClelland from Medicines Management sat on all three panels to ensure consistency of the decision making process. The panel also had a public health consultant and an LPC representative.

Those pharmacies which have been approved for HLP status will be receiving letters of congratulations from the PCT with an invitation to attend an award ceremony.

Those who were unsuccessful at this time will be offered support by the LPCs to reach the qualifying criteria for wave 2 of applications which will probably be in July 2012.

Successful pharmacies will be launched as HLPs in the new year. Marketing materials will be provided to highlight their status to the general public. Media activity will also raise public awareness of the award.

Staff are already undertaking training to meeting the Royal Society of Public Health level 2 award. Further training around leadership and change management will be offered to the pharmacy manager to support them with the cultural change needed from staff to be more proactive in providing public health and healthy lifestyle advice.

Kathryn Featherstone, Sunderland LPC secretary, said 'The standard of applications was very high for Healthy Living Pharmacy status. In addition to meeting the minimum standards for enhanced and advanced service delivery, staff who have been nominated to undergo level 2 training had to provide a personal statement. It was obvious from reading these that we have some truly dedicated members of pharmacy staff who want to provide advice and support to their patients and customers about healthy lifestyle choices and make a real difference to their quality of life.'

The list of successful pharmacies can be found on the LPC website.

EHC training

The PCT is actively reviewing the level of commissioning in the patch, especially in Sunderland (where there is currently very limited commissioning) and will be writing to contractors offering to extend the service and providing additional EHC training evenings. This is expected to happen in January 2012, so keep an eye out for more information from the PCTs.

The LPCs have also been involved in working with the PCT to ensure the claim form is made easier to use for the future. With regard to the updated EHC service, the Sexual Health team will provide the EHC information packs, the Chlamydia screening packs and eventually all areas should also get condoms included in the packs.

Stop Smoking Success

After several years of hard work in the area of stop smoking South Tyneside has moved up the PCT league tables of stop smoking performance. Some of this will be due in part to the hard work of the pharmacy stop smoking advisers as well as our colleagues in the specialist service, the commissioners and others who engage with the public around the benefits of stop smoking.

Marietta Evans, Director of public health for South Tyneside PCT and Council said "South Tyneside actually comes out as 8th best performing PCT in the country which is brilliant. You may also be aware that according to the latest Household Survey smoking prevalence in South Tyneside has fallen to around 23.5%. We still need to make progress in relation to routine & manual workers and pregnant women. All that remains now is to keep up the hard work!! Many thanks"

Dave Carter, Chairman of Gateshead & South Tyneside LPC added "This news is great. For years we have believed that Pharmacy Stop smoking services have had a positive contribution on the local community and the news that we have seen a big improvement in South Tyneside has shown how pharmacy has helped improve public health and its great that that's a Joint effort with other organistaions."

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF PRESCRIPTIONS (ETP)

Upgrade Soon!

LPC News assumes that most pharmacies should have been operating release 1 of the ETP service for some time now and familiarising themselves with the idea of ETP and focussing their thoughts on how to manage such a major shift in the way that we might dispense medication in a paper prescription free world.

All pharmacists will be aware that despite some thoughts to the contrary, release 2 of this service is just around the corner – the future is release 2 – although, at the moment, the time scale for full deployment is unknown. We do know, however, that in pilot areas like Sunderland, it is expected that GP practices will move to EPS 2 faster than in non pilot site areas and indeed many PCTs have approval for rollout.

The rate limiting steps for the rollout of release 2 of ETP are technical: GP system readiness and pharmacy system readiness (with associated training). Dave Carter, LPC Chairman said "The LPC urges all contractors to embrace the idea of ETP release 2 by contacting their system suppliers to check whether their particular system is compliant for release 2; and to consider an upgrade to Release 2. There will be a cost, but most of this cost will be recouped by a special one off payment of a £1000 from the prescription pricing authority once a successful test prescription ("golden token") has been received"

He added, "with release 2, remember, there are no more paper prescriptions - and all prescriptions will be sent from the GP to the nominated pharmacy electronically...rather like an email. In order to access this signal, every member of staff will need their own smart card. So, once the upgrade has been agreed, please contact your PCT to inform them of the fact and to arrange training and smart card distribution."

LPC News believes that it is far better to be in the healthy position of being able to receive a prescription electronically - before the GPs begin the service; than the other way around...where prescriptions might be lost to competitors.



MAVA Concept Ltd – Scam letter

Be aware that a company called MAVA Concept Ltd is sending letters to pharmacies, with an invoice that looks quite convincing, for listing the pharmacy on a website. This, as you have probably guessed, is a scam – please do not send them any money!!

Googlemail hacking

There has been a spate of hacking attacks on people with googlemail addresses.

If you have a googlemail / gmail address and you receive an email similar to the box below, under no circumstances should you click and fill in your login details.

From: Gmail Team <mail@noreply.com>
Date: 6 October 2011 22:47

Subject: Google Alert

Dear Email Client,

We detected an unsuccessful login attempt from an unfamiliar location.

For the security of your account, kindly Re-Login Below

www.gmail.com

The Google Team

Although the link says www.gmail.com if you click it or you hover your mouse over it you will see the true address (beneath the link) is actually not a gmail address at all and is in fact a site somewhere else.

This is called phishing. The link will be designed to open up a page that looks a lot like a gmail login page and you will put your details in and then they will use your account to send dodgy messages asking for money to all your email contacts.

Website Hacking

The Gateshead & South Tyneside Website has also been hit by hackers and the site was brought down. We have worked hard to bring the site back up again and we apologise for any inconvenience.

Drug Alerts

LPC News has received the 2 drug alerts to the right to pass on to pharmacist. For further information about the alerts please contact

STEP – Harm Reduction Service South Tyneside (NECA)
96-98 Fowler Street
South Shields
NE33 1PD
Tel: (0191) 275 8000

DRUG ALERT

'30mg' Diazepam Capsules

Importance: High

We have received information from North Tyneside regarding capsules currently circulating in the local area. They are marketed and packaged as 30mg Diazepam capsules. These are capsules and not tablets and clients claim they are of foreign origin.

Symptoms reported:

- Stronger than 'normal' reactions to diazepam even in those users who are prescribed or regularly use benzodiazepines
- Extreme drowsiness possibly leading to unconsciousness
- Loss of memory
- Loss of control both physically and psychologically

Remember:

- **Never use on your own**
- **Capsules are not designed to be injected – they may cause severe damage to veins**
- **Benzodiazepines are extremely dangerous when taken with other drugs, especially heroin or alcohol.**
- **Call 999 if you witness an overdose**

TACKLING DRUGS
CHANGING LIVES

DRUG ALERT

'10mg' Benzodiazepine Tablets 'WHITE ELVIS'S'

Importance: High

We have received information from Newcastle regarding potentially dangerous 10mg Benzodiazepine tablets currently circulating in the local area. They are known as White Elvis's, are white in colour and the only marking is a white line.

Symptoms reported:

- Stronger than 'normal' reactions to Benzo's even in those users who are prescribed or regularly use them
- Overdose !

Remember:

- **Never use on your own**
- **Benzodiazepines are extremely dangerous when taken with other drugs, especially heroin or alcohol.**
- **Call 999 if you witness an overdose or other severe effects**

TACKLING DRUGS
CHANGING LIVES

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