



Tuesday 27th July 2010

Consultation launched on provision of collection and delivery services within Northern Ireland pharmacies

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland has this week published a consultation on new guidance to pharmacists on the provision of prescription collection and delivery services.

The draft guidance advises pharmacists that, whilst it is important that patients have access to convenient pharmaceutical services, the best, and safest, pharmaceutical service is provided where the opportunity exists for direct contact between patients and a pharmacist, which would normally take place in a pharmacy.

Commenting on the draft guidance, Ms Andree McCollum, Chair of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland's Legislation, Standards and Practice Committee said:

"This draft supplementary professional guidance is designed to assist pharmacists in achieving best practice around such issues as patient consent, data confidentiality and professional accountability when offering a prescription collection and delivery service.

"We hope both pharmacists and members of the public will engage with the consultation to ensure all relevant factors in relation to collection and delivery services have been taken into account."

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. More details on the consultation on guidance to pharmacists on the provision of collection and delivery services can be found here:
<http://www.psni.org.uk/professionals/current-consultations.php>

2. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is the regulatory body for pharmacy in Northern Ireland. It protects public safety in pharmacy by:
 - setting and promoting standards for pharmacists' admission to the register and for remaining on the register;
 - maintaining a publicly accessible register of pharmacists, and pharmacy premises, in Northern Ireland;
 - handling concerns about the Fitness to Practise of registrants, acting as a complaints portal and taking action to protect the public; and
 - ensuring high standards of education and training for pharmacists in Northern Ireland.

3. The Draft Supplementary Professional Guidance is ordered under 3 key principles to be observed when offering a Collection and Delivery Service:
 1. The Responsible Pharmacist overseeing the arrangements of a collection and delivery service, has professional accountability for the process and systems during the period of his involvement.
 2. The quality and safety of a pharmaceutical service is best assured where the opportunity exists for direct contact between patient and pharmacist at the point of supply, which would normally take place in a pharmacy.
 3. A pharmacist must respect and protect confidential information and provide a high standard of practice and care at all times

4. The Draft Supplementary Professional Guidance also gives advice on some specific matters that may arise within a Collection and Delivery Service, such as:
 - Arrangements relating to Controlled Drugs;
 - Compliance aids and monitored dosage systems within a delivery service;
 - Collection and delivery from central points;
 - Advertising and customer reward schemes in relation to Collection and Delivery Services; and,
 - Handling complaints in relation to Collection and Delivery services.