

16/09/2011

Health and Social Care Committee  
Inquiry into Stroke Risk Reduction  
SRR 15 – Community Pharmacy Wales



## **Assembly Health & Social Care Committee**

### **Submission for Inquiry into Stroke Risk Reduction**

**September 2011**

Contact Details:

Russell Goodway,  
Chief Executive  
Community Pharmacy Wales  
2 Caspian Point  
Caspian Way  
**CARDIFF**  
CF10 4DQ  
E-Mail [russell.goodway@cpwales.org.uk](mailto:russell.goodway@cpwales.org.uk)

---

*The Face and Voice of Community Pharmacies in Wales.  
Mae'r Wyneb a Llais Fferyllwyr Cymunedol yng Nghymru*

## Part 1:

### Introduction

- 1.1 This response is submitted by Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW) to the Assembly Health & Social Care Committee to inform their inquiry into stroke risk reduction.
- 1.2 CPW is recognised in the National Health Services (Wales) Act 2006 and by the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Health & Social Services as the only organisation responsible for representing all of the 708 community pharmacies in Wales on all matters relating to NHS community pharmacy services.
- 1.3 CPW is the only organisation that represents every community pharmacy in Wales. It works with Government and its agencies, such as local Health Boards, to help protect and develop high quality community pharmacy services and to shape the NHS community pharmacy contract and its associated regulations. In doing so, it aspires to achieve the highest standards of public health and the best possible patient outcomes.
- 1.4 Community pharmacies across Wales provide essential and highly valued health and social care services at the heart of local communities. Community pharmacies operate in almost every community across Wales, including in rural communities, urban deprived areas and large metropolitan centres. It is currently estimated that on an average day the network of community pharmacies across Wales will, between them, deal with more than 50,000 individual cases.

1.5 The community pharmacy network is open seven days a week, 365 days per year and operates outside the hours of 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Consultations are provided without the need for an appointment. Most pharmacies have consultation rooms, which ensures patient confidentiality and most community pharmacies operate a home delivery services for the provision of medicines, appliances and other requirements.

1.6 This unique combination of location and accessibility makes the network an ideal vehicle to raise the awareness of people in Wales to the risk of stroke and to provide valuable information and advice which could contribute to the reduction of such risk.

1.5 There are 10 reasons why community pharmacy has the capacity to make a significant contribution to stroke prevention and to the management of chronic conditions than can often result in stroke:

- Community pharmacies are part of the social fabric and health care infrastructure of local communities and provide essential services to the communities they service and which are especially important in many rural areas across Wales;
- Community pharmacies are well placed to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the local populations, in particular those living in disadvantaged communities.
- Community pharmacies are an ideal channel to deliver health promotion messages right in the heart of the community.
- Community pharmacies are accessible and conveniently located for the provision of healthchecks to the people of Wales.

- The community pharmacy network is an under-used resource that can help reduce demands on social care support services from people at risk of stroke.
- Pharmacists are the medicines experts and community pharmacies offer a high degree of support to those needing help to achieve the effective management of their medicines, both in the community and in care homes.
- Community pharmacies provide a lifeline for vulnerable patients in hard to reach communities and afford considerable support to families providing self care.
- Community pharmacies are a source of expertise, advice and equipment to support independent living.
- Community pharmacies can help support those at risk of falls, particularly those who are living with the after-effects of stroke.
- Community pharmacies are in a strong position to signpost people to other stroke support services.

## Part 2:

### Specific opportunities to engage community pharmacy in stroke risk reduction

- 2.1 In 2009 as part of an initiative sponsored by Joyce Watson AM, CPW and 6 community pharmacies across the Mid & West Wales region, worked with the Stroke Association to **raise awareness of undiagnosed high blood pressure as the single biggest risk factor for stroke and the ease of access to blood pressure tests in community pharmacies.** 1,000 people were tested during the course of the campaign of which 12.5 per cent were found to be at risk and were referred to their GP.

- 2.2 This campaign helped to reinforce the potential of the community pharmacy network to assist in prevention of stroke.
- 2.3 The network also has a clear role in supporting stroke patients, their families and carers during the recovery period at home.
- 2.4 The recent Diabetes **National Public Health Campaign** clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of the Welsh community pharmacy network in raising the awareness of the people of Wales to their risk of developing diabetes. In a two week period over 17,500 people received a risk awareness check conducted by their community pharmacy teams. There is a clear opportunity to mirror this successful campaign and to run a community pharmacy national public health campaign aimed at raising awareness of the risk factors for stroke and the signs and symptoms of a potential stroke episode.
- 2.5 The Party Manifesto of the new Welsh Government recognises the unique role that community pharmacy has in managing the supply and use of medicines. The Manifesto document commits the Government to *'work with community pharmacies to raise awareness of stroke risk and to use Medicines Use Reviews to support the correct use of antihypertensive medication'*.
- 2.6 CPW is discussing with Welsh Government officials the potential for **targeted Medicines Use Reviews** for a range of specific conditions. This should include **hypertensive patients as a priority group**. CPW hopes to work with Government officials on the design of a Medicines Use Review for those patients designed with hypertension and to support this with an additional service that reviews prescribing against evidence based guidance and provides feedback to GPs where prescribing does not conform to agreed best practice.

- 2.7 The Party Manifesto also identifies the need to manage lifestyle risk in its commitment to:- *'instigate a programme of annual health checks, led by GPs, practice nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals, for everyone over the age of 50 in the next Assembly term'*. Community pharmacy is well placed to deliver convenient and accessible annual health checks in the heart of the community and looks forward to contributing to the delivery of this important objective.
- 2.8 For those people, identified as part of the health check process as having a high risk of a stroke or other vascular event, community pharmacies can be commissioned to deliver a full range of risk reduction support services including an enhancement of the existing stop smoking and obesity management services.

### **Part 3:**

#### **Conclusion**

- 3.1 There are a number of ways in which community pharmacies across Wales can support the delivery of the Government's stroke reduction challenge. Three key areas for consideration are:-
- a) The potential of the community pharmacy network to educate the public about those factors that increase the risk of stroke and the signs and symptoms of stroke has not been fully utilised to date.
  - b) Community pharmacy is the most accessible part of NHS Wales and the ideal location to deliver the Welsh Government's planned programme of national health checks. CPW would ask the Assembly to ensure that community pharmacy plays a key role in their delivery plans.

- c) Involving community pharmacy in specific medicines management services for people diagnosed with hypertension would ensure that effective prescribing takes place and that the Assembly receives maximum patient benefit from their investment in antihypertensive medication.
- 3.2. The Inquiry raises the specific query of considering the evidence for an atrial fibrillation screening programme being launched in Wales. Such a screening programme is not within the range of expertise of community pharmacy and CPW does not express a view on this query.
- 3.3 CPW stands ready to work in collaboration with NHS Wales and appropriate partners to reduce the risk of stroke in Wales.
- 3.4 CPW is content for this response to be made publicly available and would like to be sent a copy of any Health Committee report that follows the review.

For further information:

Russell Goodway,  
Chief Executive,  
Community Pharmacy Wales,  
Caspian Point  
Caspian Way,  
**CARDIFF**  
CF10 4DQ  
E-Mail: [russell.goodway@cpwales.org.uk](mailto:russell.goodway@cpwales.org.uk)