



In brief

Hep C test success

A Blackpool pharmacy managed to screen 110 patients for hepatitis in a single week, detecting 71 positive results, last year. Results from the testing scheme, which was carried out at a nurse-led clinic at Whitworth Chemist last June, were released from the Gilead Fellowship.

EPS sign-up warning

Independent pharmacies should use the roll out of electronic prescription service (EPS) release 2 systems to sign patients up for the service and get ahead of the competition, Numark has warned.

STI rates fall

Rates of STIs have fallen for the first time in a decade, with diagnoses in 2010 down 1 per cent on 2009. Almost 200,000 more chlamydia screening tests were carried out last year than in 2009, the Health Protection Agency has said.

NCSO endorsements

The Department of Health and national assembly for Wales have agreed to allow NCSO endorsements for the following items for June prescriptions: lofepramine 70mg tablets, mebeverine 135mg tablets, moclobemide 150mg tablets, and sertraline 100mg tablets.

BAPW conference

Pharmacy minister Earl Howe has been announced as guest speaker at the BAPW conference. The conference will be held at the Radisson Edwardian Bloomsbury Street Hotel, London, on June 20.

Pharmacist MBE gong

Pharmacist Ian Simpson has received an MBE for services to the College of Pharmacy Practice and to the Guild of Healthcare Pharmacist, in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

[More in brief online
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GP permission for NMS unnecessary, says Senate

EXCLUSIVE Doctors don't have the right to "veto" service

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Pharmacists should contact their local GPs about the new medicine service (NMS), but should make sure it doesn't sound like they are asking for "permission", C+D's Senators have advised.

Pharmacists should not implement the new service without telling GPs, but not suggest doctors could veto the move, Pharmacy Voice chief executive Rob Darracott told the C+D Senate Live in London this month.

"We should tell doctors there are some changes," Mr Darracott said.

"My concern is that we [will] give doctors the wrong message, which is that they think they have some kind of veto over this."

Pharmacists must also implement the service to a high standard to make it easier for GPs to get



It is important not to give doctors the wrong message, insists Rob Darracott

involved, warns NHS Employers lead negotiator for pharmacy Felicity Cox. "If the uptake is very slow it makes it very complicated for them, so actually the more pharmacies that implement the service to a high standard, the easier it will be for GPs

in implementation," she said.

NHS Future Forum member Ash Soni had similar reservations. "GPs have six minutes with a patient on average and they have to deliver a number of messages during this time," Mr Soni told the Senate.

'Massive flaw' if pharmacy not at heart of EU anti-counterfeit plans

Pharmacy must embrace European plans to track medicines through the supply chain more closely to demonstrate the profession's value, the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) has said.

It would be a "massive, historic flaw" if pharmacy was not at the centre of the plans, PGEU secretary general John Chave told the European Association of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers (GIRP) conference on June 5.

The anti-counterfeiting plans,

which are likely to see pharmacists checking medicine serial numbers for authenticity, could highlight the importance of pharmacy in the supply chain, Mr Chave said.

"There can be no doubt pharmacy is being asked to demonstrate its added value more and more," he said. "Our position in the supply chain is not as secure as it once was and we can't be complacent, so this is our opportunity to show the value of community pharmacy."

The NPA has called the EU plans

"one of the most significant European directives for community pharmacy in recent years".

"It is important that pharmacy representatives come together with manufacturers, wholesalers, national government and the European Commission to implement the directive in an appropriate way," said public affairs manager Gareth Jones.

"We need minimum bureaucracy while ensuring the highest standards of patient safety." **EW**

...but measures could affect supply chain speed

Anti-counterfeiting plans could slow the delivery time of medicines, wholesalers have warned.

The new EU plans, which would require them to verify the serialisation codes of medicines, could impact on the speed of medicine delivery to pharmacies, wholesalers said at the European Association of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers (GIRP) conference.

Wholesalers should not have to check every pack for authenticity, GIRP stressed. "If individual pack scanning is involved, it will present insurmountable challenges to the smooth operation of the distribution chain," said GIRP director general Monika Derecque-Pois.

"We still have major concerns because [the EU directive] says that wholesalers will have to verify that

medicines aren't falsified," she said. "We hope we will find a reasonable solution and be able to selectively verify where there's a risk." **EW**

What other professions think of pharmacists

Doctor and nurse views on p18