

Government introduce chronic medication service

People with long term conditions are to be given 'care plans' by their pharmacist to help them manage their ill-health better, it was announced today.

Through an integrated patient record sharing system between GPs and pharmacists, the Chronic Medication Service, once fully implemented, will:

- * Use pharmacists skills more effectively
- * Allow patients to register with their pharmacist, building up a relationship and receiving personalised care
- * Ensure that patients receive the right medication at the right time – improving patient safety and medicine wastage
- * Allow GPs to issue serial prescriptions lasting up to 24 or 48 weeks

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said:

“The Chronic Medication Service will transform the role of pharmacists, making better use of their skills and expertise as they work alongside GPs to provide quality care for the millions of Scots who use our pharmacies the most.

“As well as improving patient care, this service will also help to reduce drug wastage. In these tough financial times it is important to be as efficient as possible. Thanks to this new system, patients will receive a new five star service within existing budgets.”

Over 80 million prescriptions are dispensed each year. Around two-thirds are given for long term conditions.

A long-term condition is a health problem that is likely to last longer than a year and needs ongoing medical care, like

high blood pressure or diabetes.

The new community pharmacy contract is designed to meet the needs of the Scottish people. It builds on the principles outlined in Better Health Better Care by improving access to NHS services and promoting collaborative working between community pharmacists and GPs to further improve patient care. It comprises of four core services:

- * Acute Medication Service (AMS)
- * Minor Ailment Service (MAS)
- * Public Health Service (PHS)
- * Chronic Medication Service (CMS)

CMS is being implemented from May-December 2010 – community pharmacy contractors are each registering up to 50 patients during this period. Fees to community pharmacies for providing CMS will be provided from within the existing Community Pharmacy Global Sum.

Fees to community pharmacies for providing CMS will be provided from within current budgets so there are no additional costs

Development work for CMS has also been carried out within existing budgets. The estimated cost to deliver ePharmacy, including processing community pharmacy payments, is £5.2 million per year. As CMS will use existing infrastructure it is not possible to isolate a cost for CMS.