

To General Practitioners

13 December 2010

Dear Colleague

CHRONIC MEDICATION SERVICE UPDATE

We are writing to update you on progress on implementing the Chronic Medication Service (CMS)

The final core service of the new community pharmacy contract in Scotland is underway with the initial implementation phase of the (CMS) running until the end of the year. CMS has been designed to formalise the current contribution of community pharmacists to the management of individual patients with long-term conditions by building on existing best practice with pharmacists working in partnership with patients and GPs to help improve patients understanding of their medicines and maximise the clinical outcomes from their therapy. CMS will contribute to a significant part of the clinical quality agenda, as highlighted in the *Delivering Quality in Primary Care Action Plan*.

Progress with implementation

The implementation phase has been designed to afford each community pharmacy the maximum flexibility to provide CMS in an orderly way and at a pace which allows them to fully prepare for and provide the service. We are aware of the issues practitioners face in implementing the service in full and have established a CMS Reference Group, chaired by Professor Lewis Ritchie and involving both community pharmacists and GPs, to monitor the progress of the implementation phase and provide advice on the resolution of any operational issues. In addition, we shall be issuing further support including practice manager guidance and a generic CMS serial prescription protocol with the first draft ready to support the serial prescribing early adopter sites (see later).

Many GPs will be particularly interested in our plans for **serial prescribing and dispensing**.

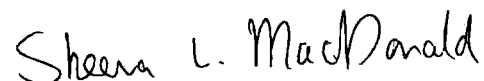
We have reviewed the timescales for the roll out of the serial prescribing and dispensing element of CMS. For a variety of reasons, including issues relating to changes in GP IT systems, we have decided that the next step should be to establish a small number of Early Adopter (EA) GP practices and community pharmacies in each NHS Board. This will allow time to ensure that the GP IT system suppliers can migrate CMS data as GP practices move from GPASS to one of the two other GP IT systems, assist in the development of national guidance and working processes to support serial prescribing and dispensing and fully equip local GP and community pharmacy 'champions' to help with the wider roll out. The serial prescribing and dispensing EA phase will start in January 2011 with a number of GP practices and community pharmacies participating in the first phase. We are grateful to those who have agreed to take part. It is likely that there will be a further EA phase thereafter. As a consequence of the delay in fully rolling out serial prescribing and dispensing, the CMS patient registration notification messages to GP practices when patients register for CMS will until further notice remain switched off with the exception of the EA sites.

We very much hope you will continue to work with us to support the development of CMS and to ensure that the patients and communities you serve benefit from improved pharmaceutical care and effective partnership working between GPs and pharmacists.

Yours sincerely



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