

Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into the contribution of community pharmacy to health services in Wales

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Cardiff Bay
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Our Ref LJW/RG
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Dear Sir

Inquiry into the contribution of community pharmacy to health services in Wales

We wish to add our views to the inquiry process, in particular regarding the impact on demand for services in primary care should community pharmacy services be expanded.

Our practice serves 8200 patients from two surgeries on Anglesey.

We have ~2800 patients who use Dwyran surgery and to whom we are allowed to dispense. These live in the rural villages of Dwyran, Brynsiencyn, Newborough and Llangaffo and the surrounding areas. The population of Dwyran village is ~600 residents.

In September 2010 we were faced with the threat of a pharmacy applying to establish in Dwyran. We informed our patients and they wrote 270 letters and 220 emails in objection, the patients also started a petition signed by over 300 local residents.

The application was refused by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board in March 2011 and no appeal was raised by the applicant.

This consultation needs to consider that primary care dispensing subsidises the services available in rural areas. Without a dispensary our practice would lose a least one doctor, other services would reduce, we would not be able to keep our Dwyran surgery open everyday and patients would be faced with travelling 7 miles to our other surgery at other times.

Our patients value the dispensing service. Profits from dispensing are reinvested and maintain healthcare services, not for commercial gain. The ability to see a doctor seems to be valued higher than access to a pharmacy, as demonstrated by our patient's response to the pharmacy application. Also consider our practice scored 97% in the Wales GP access Survey 2010-11 again demonstrating that access to a doctor is highly valued, it is doubtful we would sustain this level of satisfaction if GP dispensing was ever withdrawn as we would not have the same resources to reinvest in services.

Any attempts to introduce more community pharmacies should not be to the detriment of primary care services.

Yours faithfully

Dr Laura Hollingworth