



The Consumer Healthcare Association

14 December 2020

## PAGB welcomes MPs' call for enhanced pharmacy role

The All Party Pharmacy Group of MPs has published a [report](#) examining the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on pharmacy and pharmacy teams and calling for Government action to safeguard the future of pharmacies.

Michelle Riddalls, CEO of PAGB, the consumer healthcare association, said: "This report highlights the enormous contribution made by pharmacy teams during the Covid-19 pandemic, as countless individuals sought health advice from pharmacies which was not easily available elsewhere.

"It also warns very starkly that, without Government intervention, many pharmacies will become financially unsustainable, and urges action to enable pharmacists and their teams to put their skills to best use.

"PAGB warmly welcomes these recommendations, which echo our own ongoing calls for policy changes that recognise and enhance the role of pharmacy in our health system.

"Pharmacy teams have the expertise to encourage and support self care, by advising about symptoms and over-the-counter treatments, as well as to signpost people towards further expert medical opinion where they judge that to be appropriate.

"We believe that:

- Community pharmacists should be empowered to refer people onto other healthcare professionals where appropriate, so that anyone visiting a pharmacy knows they will leave with either the advice or products they need to manage their symptoms, or an appointment to see another healthcare professional
- Community pharmacists should be able to take referrals for consultations about self-treatable conditions from NHS 111 online, not only from the NHS 111 telephone service and GP surgeries
- Community pharmacists should be allowed appropriate access to people's medical records to improve consistency and continuity of care, as well as to increase public confidence in pharmacists' expert role
- National public health campaigns should prioritise self care messaging, signpost reliable online information and highlight the role of the pharmacy as the first port of call for self-treatable conditions

"We were pleased to be able to support the work of the APPG with a written submission to its enquiry detailing the findings of our [self care survey](#) in June this year, which revealed changing attitudes towards self care and pharmacy services in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic."

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**Notes to editors:**

PAGB, the consumer healthcare association, represents the manufacturers of branded OTC medicines, self care medical devices and food supplements in the UK.

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