

## **Clarification questions submitted to the Review Steering Group – Week ending Wednesday 1st June 2022**

**Are contractors being encouraged to vote yes on the proposals and why is there is no alternative option? In addition, what will the consequences/outcomes of a yes/no vote be and can a contractor abstain from voting. In the event of a no vote will the RSG reconvene to renegotiate the terms of its proposals?**

The vote clearly gives community pharmacy contractors the option to reject the proposals by voting no.

If contractors vote in favour of the changes, the RSG envisages that a programme of change could begin from July 2022 through to the end of 2023/24. Any changes would be implemented in a controlled and measured way, led by PSNC and the LPCs, and to be determined by local contractors. As part of this, and early on in the process, PSNC will produce a toolkit and practical implementors to support LPCs to change and offer them support at a regional level (7 NHS regions), starting with LPCs in the Integrated Care System (ICS) early adopter regions. PSNC will look to introduce changes as its additional funding comes on stream over the next two years; the full transfer of additional funding to PSNC will not be complete until 2024/25.

We're encouraging all pharmacy contractors to take part in the vote, which will help the RSG, PSNC and the LPCs to understand the sectors wishes regarding whether the proposals should be taken forward. However, voting is not mandatory.

The RSG proposals bring together the key points of consensus across the sector and set a path for change which could be evaluated, amended and further refined in the future. If contractors do not support change, then they can expect that their representative organisations will continue to struggle to get better outcomes for them. It is unlikely that there will be further substantive discussions in the near future.

**Is there any purpose in a vote being undertaken if contractors are being asked to vote on proposals that they do not properly understand. Would it not have been better to frame the vote question in a way that made clear that the recommendations set out in the RSG proposals only cover the things about which the RSG could achieve consensus?**

PSNC and the LPCs committed to a national vote being held when the terms of reference were given to the RSG and it is therefore only right that this promise is upheld. It is important to have a strong mandate (whatever the result) for the way forward. The RSG is doing all that it can to simplify the proposals and make them as easy as possible for contractors to understand. With this aim in mind, the RSG has produced several short animations explaining the proposals and a two page summary of the proposals.

These are firm proposals and subject to being approved by contractors would be subject to a review.

**When was the PSNC board sent a copy of the RSG proposals whether in draft or final form? Did PSNC receive any information before the official release of the proposals? Were LPCs afforded the same privilege as PSNC?**

PSNC like LPC Chief Officers and Chairs received a presentation in advance of the draft proposals being published. Both LPCs and PSNC have been key stakeholders in the RSG work and have been given the opportunity to shape

the proposals through significant engagement over the last year. Contractors should note that over half of the current PSNC committee are serving LPC members including at least 4 LPC chairs.

**Does the Association of Independent Multiple pharmacies (AIMp) have official seats on the PSNC like the National Pharmacy Association (NPA)?**

There are 3 seats on PSNC for Non-Company Chemists' Association (NCM) multiples. This means any contractor who is not a member of the company of the Company Chemists' Association, that operates retail pharmacy businesses from more than nine (9) premises in England from which NHS pharmaceutical service (including LPS arrangements) are provided or is a member of the Association of Independent Multiple pharmacies (AIMp). If one or more such candidates are nominated, one of the elected representatives must be a candidate nominated by a Multiple Chemist that has fewer than 30 premises on a pharmaceutical list in England. This ensures that smaller Multiple Chemists are guaranteed representation on the PSNC.