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MP address

Dear *[MP's name]*

The **XX** Community pharmacies are on the front line of Healthcare in *[constituency name]*. They have always been the frontline, and now as we work through this pandemic are dealing with some huge challenges in protecting the health of their local communities, ensuring that their patients and the public continue to have safe and timely access to medicines, by providing public health information and giving advice to minimise the spread of this virus. This work is all going unrecognised by the Department of Health and Social Care, the body that contracts with us.

To that end, we at Community Pharmacy Lancashire have begun our “*Care for Your Pharmacy so that Pharmacy Can Care for You*” campaign; which has been picked up by the local and national press and radio stations. This we see as more of a public service campaign to support our pharmacists and their teams in supporting their local communities throughout this crisis. Sadly, the need to start this campaign was initiated by the many reports of abuse that our teams have been reporting by a small minority of people. Teams being shouted at, suffering verbal abuse and in some cases spat at. In a survey that we conducted with our pharmacies 35% of the respondents said they suffered one incidence of abuse per day, with 30% quoting more than three times a day. This is not something that can be tolerated.

The network of pharmacies in your constituency have seen a huge increase in the demand for medicines, advice and giving reassurance. This is an extremely challenging time for us. We are reaching the limits of our resources and our stamina, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain continuity of service to patients and the public.

Pharmacies are in general small premises found very close to the populations they serve, we work at street level; these small premises make social distancing both for their staff and patients/ customers very difficult, meaning people have to queue outside. Our teams have not received adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE), and are expected to obtain and pay for further supplies via our wholesaler network, with a promise of we will be paid an amount sometime in the future.

Many pharmacies are small businesses who were experiencing cash flow problems due to real-term cuts in pharmacy funding and rising costs, this pandemic has made the situation worse as pharmacies have to pay up front for the extra drugs they have had to buy to meet the increased demand, pay overtime for their staff to keep up with this increase in

**“Putting Community Pharmacy on the local healthcare map!”**

Chair Michael Ball MRPharmS, Vice-Chair Richard Wood MRPharmS  
“Community Pharmacy Lancashire” is the name adopted by Lancashire LPC”

dispensing activity, and for the PPE measures they have had to put in place to protect their teams e.g. Perspex screens.

A cash advance equating to 300m (£200m in April and £100m in May) has been released to contribute to the increase in the pharmacies bills for all this unplanned activity. This equates to £17,500 per pharmacy. However, we have in our footprint reports of wholesaler bills going up by £30,000.

The pharmacists and their teams want to keep their doors open to give the patients the support they need at this time, and maintaining this frontline to the NHS; whilst not forgetting the pharmacists and their teams have families too.

We need PPE for our people, testing so we can keep people in work who currently may be having to isolate because they do not know their COVID status, this obviously then reduces the workforce in our pharmacies; and immediate additional funding to cover our vastly increased costs, allowing us to keep our doors open and maintain this frontline.

We have two asks of you -

1. Recognise the work that the pharmacists and their teams are doing in your constituency – these are your local heroes, working very hard to protect people and save lives
2. Speak to Senior Leaders in government to urgently provide pharmacies with adequate supplies of personal protective equipment, COVID-19 testing for staff and the financial assistance to meet their cash flow needs

Yours sincerely,



Chief Executive Officer  
Community Pharmacy Lancashire