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THE BUCKLEBURY PRACTICE

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25 September 2008

Dear Patient,

I am writing to let you know that the Government is thinking about changing the rules over where patients can get their medicines.

At the moment patients who live more than one mile away from a chemist, can get their medicines from us here at the doctor's surgery. If the rules change, these patients may no longer be allowed to get their medicines from the surgery.

We doctors are asking the Government to keep things as they are and not change the rules. We think it should be the patients' choice where they get their medicines and it is particularly important that elderly, disabled and those with transport difficulties can continue to get their medicines from the surgery.

The Government is asking everyone affected, including patients, to tell them what they think. If you want to have your say please see below the details of who to write to. You may also wish to write to your Member of Parliament about this local issue.

1. What changes are being considered?

The Government says it may change the rules that regulate dispensing doctors (those whose surgeries give medicines to their patients), or that they may leave them as they are.

The four options are:

Option One: leave things as they are. **We are supporting Option One** because we believe it is important that our patients can continue to have the choice to get their medicines at their surgery.

Option Two: let the local Primary Care Trust decide (we are not supporting this as we are not sure it will allow doctor dispensing).

Option Three and Option Four: changing the rules so that instead of allowing those patients far from chemists to have their drugs dispensed by their doctors, only doctors who are more than a certain distance from a chemist may dispense to anyone. In practice this would end most doctor dispensing.

2. Your chance to have your say

If you want to continue to have the choice to receive your medicines from your doctors' surgery, rather than have to go to a pharmacy, please write in support of Option One – keeping things as they are, to:

Gillian Farnfield
MPI – Community Pharmacy Policy
4th Floor, Skipton House
80 London Road
SE1 8LH

Or email: PWPCONS@dh.gsi.gov.uk

There is a form for responding to the proposals available online here:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_087324?IdcService=GET_FILE&dID=172052&Rendition=Web

The questions which concern Dispensing Doctors and their patients are Questions 20-27. These are the most important ones to answer.

If you are not comfortable using the form, please instead make your views known through a letter or email – **it is very important you let the Government know what you think, every response is counted.**

The most important thing is to express your personal view about whether you should be able to receive your medicines from your doctor. The Government wants to hear about your personal experience of being a patient of a dispensing practice, and what that means to you. **Please copy your response to your MP.**

Please be sure to put your views across in time for the deadline of 20th November 2008

For further details about the proposals please see the consultation document online here:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_087324?IdcService=GET_FILE&dID=171238&Rendition=Web

We very much appreciate your time and support.

Yours sincerely,

The Doctors at Chapel Row Surgery