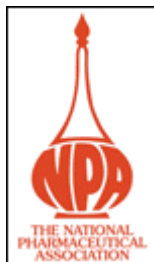


## Press Release



31 March 2004

### **NPA STATEMENT RE: MINTEL BRITISH LIFESTYLES 2004**

The National Pharmaceutical Association welcomes the findings of the latest Mintel British Lifestyles report - which reveals encouraging developments for community pharmacy and opportunities for pharmacists to contribute more to the future of the nation's healthcare. The Association agrees with the Mintel research that the trend for self-medication – and the increasing importance of the pharmacist in self-care – is supported, in part, by the concept of convenience.

According to NPA Head of PR, Judy Viitanen: “Mintel’s new report re-affirms our own independent research, and other national consumer surveys, which all show that the pharmacist’s popularity is growing steadily as a reliable and accessible source of information and advice about healthcare and medicines. The NPA’s *‘Ask Your Pharmacist’* national advertising campaign, which has been running since 1983, has done much to develop this increased consumer awareness, and has actively encouraged the public to make greater use of the pharmacist’s advice when treating minor ailments. We know that the public recognise our core campaign messages – particularly the convenience of getting expert healthcare advice without the need for an appointment. According to ICM Research, commissioned by the NPA last year, 80% of the public regard their local pharmacy as the most convenient place to buy medicines.”

A significant mark of the success of this campaign has been that for the past five years, the Government in England has run a ‘winter healthcare’ advertising campaign which focuses on encouraging the public to seek advice from their pharmacist, rather than their doctor, for the treatment of minor ailments. The NPA’s *‘Ask Your Pharmacist’*

consumer communications strategy has dovetailed with the NHS plan to reduce the need for GP visits, and to enhance the role of the pharmacist as a health advisor and primary healthcare provider.

NPA Chief Executive, John D'Arcy, commented; "Strategically, the pharmacist is gradually becoming the first port of call as a convenient and accessible healthcare resource – especially for treating minor ailments. As the Mintel survey shows, four in ten of those who had suffered health complaints in the previous 12 months had consulted a pharmacist. We believe that this proportion will continue to increase in the future – and the ever-widening array of OTC medicines for an increasingly broad range of complaints makes the pharmacist quite naturally the best, and most accessible, source of information and expert advice on medicine choice, treatment and dosage for minor ailments and chronic conditions."

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. The National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) is the trade association that represents the professional and commercial interests of the owners of around 11,000 community pharmacies in the United Kingdom.
2. For more information, or an interview, please contact: Judy Viitanen or the NPA Press Office team on: 01727-858687, ext 3340, 3327, 3331 or 3265