

16th November 2004

'PUBLIC HEALTH IN POLE POSITION'

NPA RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER ON PUBLIC HEALTH

The National Pharmaceutical Association, representing the nation's community pharmacy owners, welcomes the publication of the Government's long-awaited White Paper – '*Choosing Health*' – on improving public health in England. The Association believe the proposals and recommendations will make a valuable contribution in the Government's plans to tackle smoking, obesity, sexual disease and alcohol related health problems – and will push public health towards pole position across the whole spectrum of Government.

NPA Chairman, Ash Soni, commented: 'Pharmacists' advice on and support for healthy lifestyles, smoking cessation and reducing unwanted pregnancies already makes a proven contribution to improving public health. Many of the aims of this White Paper integrate with the strong emphasis on health promotion and advice contained within the essential services level of the proposed new pharmacy contract. This will allow local pharmacists to further improve the health of the nation and reduce health inequalities - which has got to be good news for patients, pharmacists and the Government! The initiatives in the White Paper have the potential to play a hugely important part in turning healthcare in England from a sickness service to a health service. Community pharmacists have a vital role to play to help put this into practice.'

Ends