

## Press Release



24 September 2002

### Dispensing Veterinary Prescriptions – The door is ajar

The NPA is pleased with the Competition Commission's provisional report that concludes that anti-competitive monopolies exist in the supply of veterinary prescription medicines and these operate against the interest of animal owners.

Although the Commission's final report will not be published until January, the NPA believes that as a result of its interim findings, members will soon have greater opportunity to dispense veterinary prescriptions.

Chief Executive, John D'Arcy said " We have battled long and hard for this, not only because it will provide a valuable service to pet owners but also because it will provide a great business opportunity for our members. Pharmacists are well equipped to deliver this valuable, professional service and it will give pet owners more choice and better value for money."

He continued, "Visiting a pharmacy, particularly for repeat prescriptions for pet medicines will be so much more convenient for owners without any compromise of safety. The Commission has already said that the current monopoly has kept prices artificially high and we're sure that community pharmacy will be able to change this. The door is beginning to open for better value and more convenient pet healthcare."

The NPA's new resource, *Pet Medicines in Pharmacy* will be launched in November. It will be available to members free of charge and it will explain the marketing, legal, product knowledge and training aspects of providing this additional service to community pharmacy customers.

The NPA believes that rural and urban pharmacies can achieve significant benefit from this market, estimated to be worth over £350 million.

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#### Notes to Editors

1. For more information, please contact the NPA Press Office on 01727 858687 ext. 3227, 3340 or 3311.
2. The NPA represents the owners of 11,000 pharmacies in the UK. We have in membership virtually all pharmacies except Boots the Chemists Ltd. We are therefore the principal body representing the community pharmacy sector.