

## Press Release



*18 August 2003*

### **NPA CALLS FOR LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR STOMA APPLIANCE SERVICES**

The National Pharmaceutical Association has submitted a vigorous response to the Department of Health's consultation on stoma appliance contractors' remuneration.

For many years, appliance contractors have enjoyed profits far higher than community pharmacists for providing what is, in effect, the same service. The NPA believes that it is time to set the record straight and introduce a level playing field whereby services are properly remunerated and that the service providers, whoever they may be, are rewarded equally.

Colette McCreedy, Director of Practice, said: "Appliance contractors appear to have held the DoH to ransom with their sponsored stoma care nurse positions and 'additional services' such as home delivery, flange cutting and patient helplines. Not only is this a huge waste of NHS resources, but it inhibits close working relationships between nurses and pharmacists – a practice which is not only encouraged by the Government but which can also lead to better patient care."

The NPA's response dispels myths about "additional services" provided by appliance contractors – pharmacists can and do provide home delivery, they are available for face-to-face as well as telephone consultation and, with training and access to a patient's template they can also provide a flange cutting service when required.

If the DoH did not reward appliance contractors so freely, it would discover that it could afford to fund its own independent stoma care nurses. Examples of how this would also benefit patients are given in the NPA's response.

The NPA calls for a properly structured and tiered remuneration system that would apply to any provider of stoma care services. It envisages a standard payment for supply and extra payments for additional services pre-identified by GPs in consultation with the patient and other members of their healthcare team.

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#### **Notes to editors**

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Copies of the NPA response (with four appendices) to the DoH Consultation document Making best use of resources to Achieve High Quality Patient Care are attached:

- [Making best use of resources to achieve high quality patient care](#)

- [Appendix I - A model for improving pharmaceutical care for Stoma patients](#)
- [Appendix II - ThackrayCare Nurse Specialist](#)
- [Appendix III - Sponsorship and nursing](#)
- [Appendix IV - Hollister \(home delivery\)](#)

For more information call 01727 858687 ext. 3340, 3227 or 3311.