



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Professor Angela Timoney  
Director of Pharmacy  
NHS Lothian

Via email only

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Dear Professor Timoney,

### **Health and Sport Committee – Supply and Demand for Medicines Inquiry**

Thank you once again for giving evidence to the Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Committee appreciates your time and the information you have provided.

The Committee has several points it wishes to pursue with you further.

You spoke of pressures in the system in fulfilling prescriptions for patients waiting to be discharged from hospital. You said “Sometimes when things run hot, we get clogs in the system that should not be there. That is the current situation.” The Committee would welcome your view on how such clogs can be eradicated and what your recommended solution, as Director of Pharmacy, would be.

You also suggested you’d like the Committee to focus on the data and technology required to “drive improvements in care”. The Committee has received a lot of evidence suggesting that such changes are required and would welcome more detail on where the driving force for such change should come from. It is unclear to the Committee why the Director of Pharmacy within a health board is unable to achieve this and it would welcome your thoughts on the barriers to this as well as the solutions.

On the sharing of information from secondary to primary care, you said:

“It is probably quite shocking for patients to realise just how little we know about the medicines that they have in hospital. A lot of it depends on having medicines governance systems in place, with formularies across primary and secondary care so that we can look at compliance. We hope that our prescribers, as part of their

continuing professional development and attention to detail, will share that information so that we can see what is happening. At the moment, those systems are not there, but they have to be.”

Again, the Committee seeks detail from you as to the role you, as Director of Pharmacy, can play in ensuring the prescription information for patients is shared from one part of the health service to another. What improvements do you think are required, how can you contribute to that and what are the main barriers?

On skills, you spoke of how tasks and responsibilities are shared among pharmacy staff and suggested clerical staff and support workers could play a bigger role. The Committee is interested in what is being done to facilitate this and to assess who is best placed within a pharmacy setting to carry out which roles. It was also suggested during the meeting NHS Lothian is setting precedent on work on training pharmacy technicians and the Committee would welcome further detail on this, including how this experience will be shared with other boards.

You mentioned NHS Lothian had undertaken research on the minor ailment scheme/Pharmacy First for impetigo and urinary tract infections. The Committee would welcome sight of this research.

The Committee requests a response by 2 March 2020 and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Macdonald  
Convener, Health and Sport Committee