

**From the Permanent Secretary  
and HSC Chief Executive**



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Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Mr Downey,

## **COMMUNITY PHARMACY FUNDING**

Your letter of 17 December 2018 (received on 27 December 2018) refers in which you provided details of a motion passed by Belfast City Council concerning funding of community pharmacies and a request for a meeting with an all-party delegation from the Council.

This Department and the Health and Social Care Board have been fully committed to finding a way forward to develop sustainable funding arrangements for community pharmacy services that support patient outcomes in the context of new pharmacy contractual arrangements.

In that context, and as a result of ongoing discussions with Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI), the Department was pleased to announce in November a financial package of £11.1m by way of additional funding to support community pharmacy services up to March 2020. This funding is in addition to £104m funding per annum confirmed for 2018/19 and 2019/20 and £5m per annum for public health and pre-registration training.

A copy of the press release setting out more detail on the funding package is attached for information and is also available from: [www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/additional-funding-announced-community-pharmacy/](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/additional-funding-announced-community-pharmacy/)

Since that announcement on 16 November 2018 a further £4.6m has also been made available to support transformational change within the community pharmacy network.

In summary, the Department has committed £121.7m to the community pharmacy economy during 2018/19 at a time of significant financial pressures within the wider HSC. I trust that this provides assurance to members of the Department's commitment to community pharmacy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Pengelly', written in a cursive style.

**RICHARD PENGELLY**

**ENC**

## PRESS RELEASE

### Additional funding announced for Community Pharmacy

Date published: 16 November 2018

A new funding package for community pharmacies has today been announced by the Department of Health.

The additional allocations of up to £11.1m will be made available up to March 2020.

The new package is in addition to £104m per year funding confirmed for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The additional allocations announced today comprise:

- £9m being made available across Northern Ireland up to 31 March 2020 to address immediate pressures within the community pharmacy network and support services for patients in social care settings. This additional funding will include extra support for pharmacies in rural locations;
- Transformation funding of up to £2.1m being made available immediately for launch of a Pharmacy First service for this winter season, which will be the first point of contact for patients for the treatment of a range of common conditions.

Consideration is also being given to further proposals for transformation funding to increase access to pharmaceutical care for patients, utilise the expertise of pharmacists, promote professional cooperation and build capacity in the health system

Today's announcement is the outcome of discussions with Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI) and builds on the draft Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the Department, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and CPNI to develop new contractual arrangements.

Richard Pengelly, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health, said: **“Community pharmacies are often the first point of contact for patients seeking advice on their health, accessing the safe supply of medicines, treatment of common complaints and important public health services. The additional funding being announced today will help ensure that local populations have access to the most visited provider among all of the health services available.**

**“We are very mindful of the growing pressures facing community pharmacists in different parts of the province. Officials from the Department and the Health and Social Care Board have been working very hard to make today's announcement possible.**

**“I would like to thank the individual community pharmacy contractors who I met personally to discuss the challenges facing their businesses.”**