

Executive Director's Message



As 2006 begins, we wanted to bring you up to date with the key issues surrounding the delivery of essential medicines that affect us all. 2005 was a year of significant change for the industry, so wholesalers have been doing their utmost to ensure that to their most important stakeholders - patients - they remain the invisible but essential part of the supply chain.

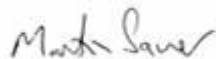
This year, wholesalers will therefore be:

- Working to maintain the integrity of the supply chain, including partnering with industry and regulators to proactively tackle the counterfeit medicines trade
- Working with all our stakeholders as the regulatory and policy changes that were made to the pharmaceutical supply chain in 2005 are implemented, in particular the pharmacy contract
- Playing a full and responsible part in NHS planning for any flu' pandemic
- Ensuring the implications of any future road pricing plans for our deliveries of vital medicines are understood among our audiences
- Above all, we will be retaining our high level of service to the NHS and its patients.

As you may know, the British Association of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers represents the group of eleven companies that supply the full range of licensed medicines to our doctors, pharmacists and hospitals every day. As well as being relied upon for our regular and high quality service, we are fleet of foot - when a prescription hits the pharmacy counter, and the pharmacist hasn't got it in stock, wholesalers can process the order within minutes and have it delivered, ready for the patient, in a matter of hours.

It is important to us that our role in getting medicines to patients is understood by people like you. We look forward to updating you on our news and policy issues as the year progresses.

Kind regards,



Martin Sawyer
Executive Director

Pharmaceutical Wholesale Delivers...



Did you know that full-line pharmaceutical wholesale:

- Employs 9,000 people
- Picks and delivers more than 5 million items **per day**
- Makes more than 235,000 deliveries **a week**
- Picks and delivers more than 2 billion items **each year**

Full-line wholesalers highlight commitment to tackling counterfeits trade

Counterfeit medicines were under the spotlight last year, in Parliament and the media. This focus is set to continue in 2006.

With over a hundred years' experience in supplying patient medicines safely, quickly and effectively, full-line wholesalers have a key role to play in emphasising the importance of patient safety and demonstrating our work in maintaining the integrity of the pharmaceutical supply chain. BAPW members are wholly committed to stamping out medicines counterfeiting, by liaising with suppliers, customers and regulators to co-ordinate action to prevent these products entering the supply chain.

ITV programme 'Tonight with Trevor McDonald', broadcast on 9th January 2006, aimed to expose the ways in which counterfeit medicines could reach the UK market. It scrutinised the licensing procedures of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which assesses applications for, and issues, wholesale dealers' licenses.

Responding to the programme, our Executive Director **Martin Sawer** commented:

"[Full-line wholesalers] are concerned about the large number of wholesaler dealer licenses issued by the MHRA and about the resources available to the agency for its regulatory activities in this area."

Martin made clear the distinction between BAPW members, who supply the full range of medicines, and "short-liners", who distribute only the most profitable product lines. He also explained how the regular MHRA inspections on our members, which can take up to two days, are more rigorous than inspections on other types of wholesaler. As full-line wholesalers, we take pride in our stringent operating practices, which are necessitated in particular by the specific storage and distribution needs of the full range of medicines we supply for patients. We would like to see this level of inspection and standards applied across the board.

Pharmaceutical Wholesale Delivers...



Did you know that full-line pharmaceutical wholesale:

- Stocks the entire range of 20,000 medicines, ready for dispatch at any time
- Delivers over 85% of the medicines dispensed in pharmacies
- Operates over 50 depots nationwide
- Provides about half of the computer systems used in pharmacies

BAPW hosts inaugural annual parliamentary reception



At the end of last year, the BAPW hosted its inaugural annual parliamentary reception, held on the House of Commons terrace. It was attended by approximately a hundred multi-professional stakeholders, including almost 40 parliamentarians.

The event was sponsored by **Sandra Gidley MP** (left), a former pharmacist and previously Liberal Democrat health spokesperson.

Following the opening speech from our Chairman **David Coles**, Minister of State for Health **Jane Kennedy MP** (both left, with Martin Sawer), as guest speaker, gave the keynote address.



The Minister highlighted the vital role of full-line wholesalers in delivering NHS medicines and ensuring patient safety. She noted the significant changes faced by the full-line wholesaling industry in 2005, including implementation of the new Pharmaceutical Pricing Regulation Scheme and revisions to the prices of generic medicines introduced by the new Category M of the Drug Tariff. Particularly in light of these challenges, she welcomed wholesalers' work in ensuring the continued supply of medicines for patients, as well as expressing gratitude for wholesalers' role in the new arrangements for reimbursement of generic medicines. In her concluding remarks, she said:

"I would like to close by repeating my appreciation of the huge contribution you are making. Quietly and without any fuss, you ensure the safe and effective supply of important medicines to so many NHS patients. And you have helped introduce a new system that ensures that the NHS pays a fair price for those medicines. What more could a Minister ask for?"

Forthcoming Events

7th - 8th June 2006

Annual Conference, Hanbury Manor, Ware

18th October 2006

BAPW parliamentary reception, House of Commons

How to get in touch with the BAPW

If you'd like to speak to the BAPW about an issue involving pharmaceutical wholesaling, do get in touch:

Telephone - 020 7031 0590

Fax - 020 7031 0591

Secretariat - swills@bapw.net

Policy - lwhite@bapw.net