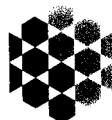


DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH,
SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Michael McGimpsey MLA



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

AN ROINN

Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí

MANNYSTRIE O

Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar

Mr Terry Hannawin
Chief Executive
Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee Ltd
5 Annadale Avenue
BELFAST
BT7 3JH

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 90 520642
Fax: 028 90 520557
Email: private.office@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Our Ref: COR/1124/2008

15 August 2008

Terry Hannawin

Thank you for your letter of 1 August expressing your regret that community pharmacy has in your view been left with no alternative but to withdraw the provision of the Minor Ailments Service. It is disappointing that you have decided to take this course of action and ask your members to withdraw from the provision of the enhanced service; as you will be aware this will now result in patients across Northern Ireland not being able to benefit from this very worthwhile service.

As outlined in my Department's letter to contractors of 31 July 2008 I remain committed to the idea of patients being able to access a minor ailments service from their local pharmacy, and to the benefits the enhanced minor ailments service brings to all parties: patients, pharmacists and GPs.

I remain of the view that the offer made to PCC on 4 July 2008 was fair and reasonable and would have ensured that community pharmacy received the benefit of a substantial injection of new money. I understand that some of your members have concerns with the remuneration model offered; however, as you will be aware, we have built into this offer a review mechanism following a 6 month period of operation. This is a sensible approach and will enable your members to give feedback on the service and allow us to further evaluate the remuneration package to ensure it is fair and reasonable.

The enhanced service remains open to contractors and I would encourage you to consider again the offer that has been made. I welcome your willingness to engage further on this issue and can confirm that the Department's negotiating team are ready to engage with you to clarify any issues you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Michael McGimpsey

Michael McGimpsey MLA
Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety