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Correspondence

Thank you to all community pharmacy staff: letter from Jo Churchill MP

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From: Jo Churchill MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

To: All community pharmacy staff

Dear colleagues,

Thank you to all community pharmacy staff

I am writing to thank all community pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and their teams for their work throughout the pandemic. The exceptional circumstances we are facing as a country underline the critical role you play in our lives.

Community pharmacies had to adapt early in response to the pandemic to be able to continue to provide medicines and health advice. A role that is important under normal circumstances but is of vital importance at this moment. You have remained open throughout the pandemic, innovated in response to the challenges it brought and shown immense resilience.

I know how hard you have worked to support your communities by ensuring they have continued access to their medicines and health advice. You have done an incredible job on the medicine's delivery service for shielded patients and you are central to the delivery of this year's expanded flu vaccination programme. My ministerial colleagues and I remain hugely grateful for the efforts community pharmacy teams continue to make to support all of us.

It goes without saying that we face a very tough winter. COVID-19 infections are rising again as we all move into a period of further nationwide restrictions this week. We are better prepared now than we were earlier this year. You now have the experience of working in a COVID-secure environment, protecting your staff and patients and local business continuity plans are in place to help. The actions taken by the department and NHS England & NHS Improvement, and the changes made earlier this year to support your work, will also help us this winter. I am nevertheless talking to frontline community pharmacy staff regularly, together with national bodies for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, about what more we can do to support you.

It will be more important than ever that the NHS works together to ensure all patients can access the services they need as safely as possible – whether they have COVID-19 symptoms or other health needs.

We all rely on and trust community pharmacy to provide medicines and health advice and support for patients. I know that you will rise to the challenge. Finally, I would just like to ask you to take care of yourselves and your families.

Kind regards,

Jo Churchill

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