

**For immediate release**

**CARE SERVICES MINISTER, PAUL BURSTOW MP, URGES SUPPORT FOR SELF-CARE AT 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SELF CARE CONFERENCE**

***Behavioural Change for Better Health, Better Care and Better Services***

RIBA, London, Tuesday 8 November 2011

“Today is all about giving people much more control over their health and care. This requires changes in behaviour and attitude, new ways of working where health professionals are working with patients as the experts in their own health. We know that handing more power to patients when combined with the right information and support can make a huge difference to the quality of life, and is key to our ambition to make a reality of a patient centred NHS,” Paul Burstow MP, Minister for Care Services, told the audience at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual PAGB Self Care Conference. He added that the accumulative cost of people’s inability to self-care is significant to their health, to the NHS and to the greater economy. “15.4m people in England are living with one or more long term condition, accounting for 70p in every £1 spent on healthcare. The NHS can no longer do business as usual. We must do things differently, change our model of care and work towards connecting health and social care.” The Minister also used his speech to launch Self Care Week 2011, which will run from 14 – 20 November.

Described as a “social movement” by Lynn Young, primary care adviser at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), the campaign for self-care has achieved significant milestones since its launch in 2010: the Self Care Forum was established in May 2011 and its terms of reference ratified by Mr Burstow; the Supporting Self Care for Minor Ailments online course, first announced in 2010, has been funded by NHS Northwest and is now fully developed by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) and the Proprietary Association of Great Britain (PAGB); and the new Forum has run a pilot with the National Association of Patient Participation (NAPP).

The 2011 Conference was all about the ‘How to’. Three key themes threaded through the day, which was chaired by Dr Ian Banks and comprised a series of brief

presentations from diverse perspectives including Self Care Forum members', patients', nurses', pharmacists' and employers':

- How to enable behavioural change
- Integration between health and social care
- Shared care between patient and professional.

Mike Farrar, chief executive of NHS Confederation was unable to attend in person but promised via a film link that the Confederation is fully committed to self-care as a concept and would support all the Conference outputs.

Key note speaker, Denise Hampson, a former British Women's Track Cycling Champion and systems change engineer at BAE said, to be effective, change must be both desirable and straightforward to achieve. Reward and finding the value of change is more effective than fear. She pointed out that many NHS health and wellness communications are based on statistics that become meaningless out of context, the "Did you know?" that are designed to instil fear in people but are rarely effective.

Stephanie Varah, chief executive of NAPP confirmed that the patient groups involved in the self-care pilot work were resistant to "being lectured to" or made to feel frightened. She outlined the key findings from the pilot were around shifting perceptions of self-care as a way to save the NHS money to "an understanding that actually it's about care at the right time in the right place, 'Helping the NHS to Help You.'"

Professor Nigel Sparrow, a practising GP and head of workforce at the RCGP, formally launched the new RCGP online course, Supporting Self Care for Minor Ailments. Dr Ben Riley, the clinical lead, as well as authors Dr Fiona Baskett and Dr Clare Etherington and editor Dr Ishani Patel took the audience through how the course will work in practice.

Jean Arrowsmith from Coventry Council introduced some highly effective social marketing initiatives including using Lady Godiva to help increase breastfeeding by 9% in one year and a number of healthy eating programmes such as Cook and Eat Well and Food Dudes. She said: "Integration is key to effective self-care."

National Pharmacy Association (NPA) CEO Michael Holden, outlined the key role community pharmacy could play in promoting and enabling self-care, informally as a health and wellness adviser in the community and formally through initiatives like the Healthy Living Pharmacies programme. He said that 1.6m people visit a pharmacy every day and walk-in centres were an unnecessary alternative.

Lynn Young focused on the role of nurse as first and foremost a teacher of health, as identified by Florence Nightingale. She said her ambition was that 500,000 nurses would be taught the basics of social marketing and behavioural change within the next five years. She cited a pilot in Newcastle-upon-Tyne that had shown demonstrable results. She added that “we should brainwash our children to be health literate”, a concept echoed by Dr Simon Fradd, director of Concordia Health, who said: “Children are not a target audience but are agents for change. Harnessed as partners they will spread the self-care message for us.”

Professor Mike Pringle CBE spoke of the importance of: “Understanding people and understanding their motivations. The person is everything and their care is a partnership.” Dr Steve Boorman, former adviser to the Royal Mail, said that it was important we use the workplace to access people, especially men, and address their health issues.

Bringing the day to a close, Dr Ian Banks said that we should expect to see “real change within the next five years.” Gopa Mitra MBE, director of policy and public affairs at PAGB, concluded: “We now have the top-down support we set out to secure, and today we saw resounding support for self-care from the ground up. I am delighted that positive, practical steps are being taken to support professionals and the public to work together to self-care.”

Ends -

**Notes to editors:**

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual self-care conference took place 8 November, RIBA, London, 9.30am – 4.30pm. It was hosted jointly by PAGB, the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP). For media enquiries and resources relating to the outputs of the conference please contact Victoria Mayman at [victoria.mayman@salixconsulting.com](mailto:victoria.mayman@salixconsulting.com) or on 020 8675 4779.

Twitter: @selfcareforum, #selfcare

[www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org)

Please click here for [Agenda, speaker profiles and attendees](#)

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Editor: Dr Ishani Patel, e-Learning Development Fellow, RCGP

Clinical Lead: Dr Ben Riley, Medical Director for e-Learning, RCGP

The course is free to all healthcare professionals who register on the RCGP Online

Learning Environment: [www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk](http://www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk)

RCGP online course steering group comprises:

- Prof Nigel Sparrow: co-chair
- Gopa Mitra: co-chair
- Prof Mike Pringle
- Dr Pete Smith
- Anthony Chuter
- Dr Knut Schroeder
- Carol Basham
- Dr Beth McCarron-Nash
- Susan Summers
- Dr Dean Marshall
- Jane O'Brien
- Sara Richards

The RCGP also recently launched a tool to help GPs and their teams to enhance the care of patients with a long terms condition such as diabetes. [Care Planning – Improving the Lives of People with Long Term Conditions](#) focuses on people with long term physical health problems and provides guidance to help GPs and their teams better support such patients in gaining more control over their health and improving the quality of their lives.