

Oireachtas Joint Committee on Health



A delegation from the IPU including President Dermot Twomey, Kathy Maher (Chair of PCC), Sharon Foley (Secretary General) Susan O’ Dwyer (Head of Governance and Pharmacy Services) and, Jim Curran (Director of Public Affairs and Communications), appeared at the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Health on Wednesday morning (8 March) to discuss the potential of community pharmacy and the significant contribution the sector can make to the development and future of healthcare.

Several key areas were discussed with committee members including:

- Widening the scope of pharmacy-based minor ailment services;
- Accessing contraception via a structured consultation with a pharmacist
- Proactive management of medicine shortages;
- Developing a national strategy for pharmaceutical care by appointing a Chief Pharmaceutical Officer;
- Increasing resources in community pharmacy through re-investment and fee restoration; and
- Addressing pharmacist shortages.

The delegation received a very positive response from the Committee who committed to:

- Forwarding a motion to call for the Minister for Health to allow contraception without prescription via community pharmacy.
- Progressing our proposals on the Minor Ailment Scheme and the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer with the Minister for Health.

The Committee members understood our need to ensure that there is investment in the sector and that members are reimbursed fairly for the work they do. They also noted our concerns with pharmacist shortages and endeavoured to raise this issue with the relevant parties including the Minister for Further and Higher Education.

Finally, they requested we revert to the committee with further ideas on a Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and the need for a national strategy for pharmaceutical care.

This was an extremely positive event and another very important milestone in furthering the mission of the IPU.

Please [click here](#) for a recording of the meeting and pictures from the event.