

# BALERNO PHARMACY

Mr. Ronnie Fraser,  
Primary Care Division,  
Scottish Executive,  
St. Andrews House  
Regent Road,  
Edinburgh, EH1 3DG.

24<sup>th</sup> February, 2003.

**Re: OFT Recommendation that the control of entry regulations for community pharmacy should be abolished.**

Dear Mr. Fraser,

As you consider the prospect of new members of the Scottish Executive having new visions for the Health Service in Scotland after the forthcoming elections perhaps you could take time to consider the following scenarios:

**The Dream.** Easy access for the public to medicines and comprehensive healthcare advice in every High Street and community across Scotland.

**The Nightmare.** Limited access for the public to medicines and healthcare advice – such services only to be found clustered around doctors' surgeries and in large shopping complexes leaving many smaller communities without any access to such services.

#### **Which of these is the reality in Scotland today?**

The Dream is well on the way to becoming reality as community pharmacies across Scotland embrace the recommendations laid down in the document 'The Right Medicine – A Strategy for Pharmaceutical Care in Scotland'. You will be aware the document set out a 4 year plan – which commenced in 2002 – outlining how Pharmacy in Scotland should work towards improving the public's health by providing better access to care, delivering better quality services to patients, users and carers and developing the role of the pharmacist as part of health care teams. You may further be aware that independent community pharmacies in particular are already rolling out many of these recommendations. For example, community pharmacies in Lothian are organising and running both one to one smoking cessation clinics and group sessions. Some pharmacies are taking part in projects to carry out patient medication reviews – these reviews can be carried out in the patients homes or in the pharmacy. In North West Edinburgh the local pharmacies are dispensing Head Lice treatment directly to the patients thus improving access to treatment and hopefully eventually helping the control of outbreaks. In other parts of Scotland community pharmacies are piloting a project where they dispense directly to the public medicines previously only available from the patient's doctor. This project is giving the public easier and speedier access to treatment and it allows the pharmacist to use their expertise to the good of the patient while freeing up some of the doctor's time.

However, the recommendations of the OFT to remove the controls of entry into retail pharmacy puts all I have described above in jeopardy – the nightmare described above could become the reality.

**24. MAIN STREET, BALERNO, EDINBURGH, EH14 7EH**

TEL: 0131 449 5477 FAX 0131 449 4966

**A MEMBER OF EDINPHARM – PUTTING HEALTH FIRST**

February 24, 2003

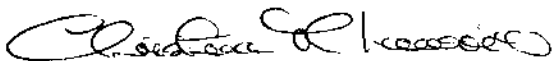
The OFT has failed to acknowledge the prime purpose of community pharmacy in Scotland today – to provide Pharmaceutical Services under the National Health Service. It has purely concentrated on the retail activities of community pharmacy which in a typical independent pharmacy accounts for less than 20% of the business. You should be under no illusion – the supermarkets want to cash in on the retail side of community pharmacy but have limited interest in the development of the new and improved services I have already referred to. If the Scottish Executive decide to implement the recommendations of the OFT there will be huge damage to the NHS Pharmaceutical Services and developments that are ongoing at the time of writing this letter. To be able to carry out and enhance these services to the public those of us in community pharmacy need a stable environment to work in and to ensure the long term viability of such improved pharmaceutical services.

Indeed, I believe the OFT Report puts into jeopardy the entire Strategy for Pharmaceutical Care in Scotland as detailed in the document 'The Right Medicine'. This document is a Scottish Executive publication and as such was surely the Executive's preferred option for the Pharmaceutical Profession's development at the time of publication in 2002. The Scottish Executive presumably still believes the Pharmacy profession can deliver all the actions laid down in that document so I would suggest its action should be to reject the OFT recommendations as detrimental to the improvement and development of the Health Service in Scotland.

My businesses in Edinburgh – Balerno Pharmacy and Dundas Pharmacy – are both heavily involved in the development of Pharmaceutical Care to the public. I would find it difficult to maintain this development of patient services if pharmacies were springing up within every supermarket and next to every Health Centre – as may well happen if the OFT recommendations are implemented – as this could lead to a drop in the number of prescriptions I would be asked to dispense by the public and ultimately my businesses may not be commercially viable.

I have worked within the Health Service in Scotland for the past 25 years and I truly believe the Pharmacy Profession has an enormous contribution to make to improving the health and the healthcare of the public in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I would ask the Scottish Executive to ensure I and my fellow pharmacists can continue our work in Primary Care by rejecting the recommendations of the OFT to remove the control of entry into community pharmacy.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. C. M. Lawrie, M.R.Pharm.S.  
Contractor Pharmacist and Proprietor.