



# Fisher Pharmacy

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February 24, 2003

Ronnie Fraser  
Scottish Executive  
Primary Care Division  
St Andrews House  
Regnt Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

Dear Mr Fraser

## **OFT Pharmacy Report on Control of Entry**

I wish to highlight to you the effect the recommendations of this report will have on community pharmacy and in particular community pharmacy in East Lothian.

The OFT report recommends a complete deregulation of entry restrictions. This would replace a system that has worked well for the past 15 years to provide a stable system and encourage pharmacists to develop and invest in their premises. Without a structured NHS pharmaceutical service the platform from which the Scottish Executive intends to implement *The Right Medicine* report will be destroyed.

Community Pharmacies in villages such as Gullane are at the very heart of local healthcare providing healthcare services and advice to local patients where they live. The elderly, disabled, housebound and families with young children are some of the heaviest users of local pharmacies and not only recognise but need these local services.

Large supermarket groups like Asda have lobbied to reform the existing regulations because it restricts their expansion plans. Large supermarkets opening pharmacies without due consideration to a planned NHS infrastructure will lead to local communities losing Pharmacies and contrary to the conclusions of the OFT report lead to a reduction in patient choice and a loss of local service which will be of greatest disadvantage to the most vulnerable groups in our community.

Healthcare requires planning and should be driven by quality of service to patients not supermarket shareholders.

The Scottish Executive has 90 days to respond to the report. I would like you to ensure my views are made known to the Executive and that they consider the implications to Primary care when considering the OFT report.

If you require any further information please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

William Fisher MRPharmS  
Partner