

# **SOS** **Dounby**

Mailed to :- Chair of Board NHS Orkney  
f.a.o.  
Appointed Chairperson  
The Pharmacy Practices Committee  
NHS Orkney  
Garden House  
New Scapa Road  
KW15 1BH  
Alan Jones

Chairperson  
SOS Dounby  
c/o Dounby Surgery  
KW17 2HH

23rd March 2009.

## Re: Norspharm's Application for a Pharmacy Licence in Dounby

Dear Sir or Madam,

In the due process of your considerations of the application by Norspharm for a Pharmacy Licence in Dounby, we earnestly request that you reject this application.

The deep concern throughout the community about the negative impact of a pharmacy in Dounby resulted in the attendance of over 200 people at a recent public meeting who unanimously supported the formation of an action group of Dounby Surgery patients (SOS Dounby).

We believe that Norsepharm has been recently established by Torquil Clyde, one of the 4 family members who are Directors of WHS Sutherland and Alex Johnstone, a retired pharmacist from Shetland whose business was sold to WHS Sutherlands.

On behalf of this community we desire you to reject this application primarily, but not exclusively, on the grounds that this is provision is neither "necessary or desirable" {NHS (Scotland) Act 1978} for the following reasons.

The community overwhelmingly agree that it is well served by the established provisions. With regard to the requirement under the Act and the proposed amendments as outlined in the current consultation paper: - 'MODERNISING NHS COMMUNITY PHARMACY In Scotland'

Dounby Surgery provides a trusted, high quality, responsive and effective service with a fully integrated dispensing service, within a modern well equipped environment. Dounby Surgery benefits from having a central location in West Mainland to serve a rural and distributed population.

Whilst legislation inhibits the point-of-sale, over the counter medications at the surgery, there is a well established national supermarket chain store nearby that fulfils this purpose with extended hours of opening.

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Personnel at both the Dounby Surgery and the Co-op have a generational history of being promptly responsive to expressed needs of the local community, in ways that contribute to the health and well being of the community that can be measured in contemporary policy targets and outcomes.

The Dounby Practice has for the last 30 years been at the forefront in the application of, evidenced-based public health and clinical practice. Providing technologically supported innovative and cost effective service in this rural area. This requires a quite different approach to the emerging policy, which has a bias towards less successful provisions in areas of dense urban populations.

However in this matter, the GPs as contracted providers, are discriminated against unfairly, as expressed in the letter of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 written by the BMA to the Public Petitions Committee

Should the application by Norspharm be successful, contrary to the fact that it is neither “necessary or desirable”<sup>{NHS (Scotland) Act 1978}</sup> as outlined above, the effect will immediately terminate the contract with the NHS Orkney of the GP dispensing service.

The some of the distinct factors that will ensue are:-

- Significant reduction of income to the surgery.
- Redundancy of valuable, skilled and highly trained staff
- Loss of comprehensive services provided by pooled resources.
- Fragmentation of care and support for all patients.
- Halt to planned service improvement in response to identified needs
- Widening of inequalities.
- Increased dependency of vulnerable people

The impact will undoubtedly result in:-

- Increased workload for the few remaining staff
- More costly fragmented services
- Fall in quality standards
- An unviable general practice service
- Service closure
- Inaccessible service provision geographically distant
- Deterioration in social capital
- Increased vulnerability and lowered resilience
- Increasing rate of social, emotional and physical ill health
- Increasing cost of secondary health and social care.
- Conflict with wider and related contemporary policy drivers

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Although it is not directly within the statutory remit of The Pharmacy Practices Committee we would urge you to also consider that:-

- This community have no history of obstructing well consulted evidenced based change and progress that makes practical and economic sense to benefit the community as a whole.
- Any rationale that includes evidence to support this application based on potential local population increase (new housing development) or increased wealth and employment to sustain an additional commercial provision – is woefully misleading.
- The success of the proposed Norsepharm Pharmacy provision depends entirely on active disinvestment in a currently successful public service
- The likelihood that a pharmacy would be commercially sustainable in a fragile rural situation is questionable.

We believe that The Pharmacy Practices Committee will be made up of people who have in no way any vested interest in the applicant or parties who should benefit and will exercise their duty with due diligence to all the factors outlined herein, affirming in their recommendations to NHS Orkney Board that this application does not warrant approval .

On behalf of the Community we welcome a favourable reply at your earliest convenience

Yours faithfully,

Alan Jones  
Chairperson  
SOS  
Dounby