

# CPWY

# Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Working to represent, support and promote community pharmacy

## Press Release

### FIGHT TO PROTECT UP TO 140 WEST YORKSHIRE PHARMACIES FROM CLOSURE TAKEN TO DOWNING STREET

West Yorkshire community pharmacies have this week taken their struggle to protect vital pharmacy services all the way to Westminster.

Pharmacy teams and patients took their concerns to Downing Street on Tuesday 24th May 2016, presenting the Prime Minister with a public petition in support of local pharmacies across the country. The petition has so far been signed by more than 1.5 million people who value their local pharmacies and want to save them from Government plans to significantly cut their funding. These cuts could lead to 140 pharmacy closures across West Yorkshire.

Upon hearing from ministers that the Government's proposals may lead to thousands of community pharmacies closing, pharmacy teams in West Yorkshire have joined the fight with thousands of other pharmacies across England. Patients have been asked to support them by signing up to the petition either in stores or at: [www.supportyourlocalpharmacy.org](http://www.supportyourlocalpharmacy.org)

New research by YouGov commissioned for **Dispensing Health Equality**, published today by Pharmacy Voice, shows that, if faced with a closure, more than one in four people (29%) who would normally seek advice first from their local pharmacy on common ailments would instead make an appointment with their GP practice. According to NHS research, this rises to as many as four in five people in areas of high deprivation.

Robbie Turner, Chief Executive Officer, Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire, said: "Community pharmacy teams are the first port of call for healthcare for many people and our regular patients and the wider community really rely on us.

There is already extreme pressure on GP services and closing pharmacies will pile more pressure on them whilst reducing the role pharmacy teams play in promoting public health.

Many of the services offered, such as home delivery, are a real help to some of our most vulnerable patients – we're very worried about what would happen if those services were lost."

#### **The Government Proposals**

On December 17<sup>th</sup> 2015 the Government published a letter to the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, which represents community pharmacy contractors (owners) on NHS matters in which it announced a funding reduction and range of other changes: You can read the letter at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/486941/letter-psnc.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486941/letter-psnc.pdf)

You can find out more and sign the petition at: [www.supportyourlocalpharmacy.org](http://www.supportyourlocalpharmacy.org)

A summary of the events and announcements that have taken place since the publication of the letter can be read on the PSNC website at:

<http://psnc.org.uk/psncs-work/communications-and-lobbying/community-pharmacy-in-201617-and-beyond/timeline/>

### **About your local pharmacies**

Your local pharmacy is more than just a place to get medicines. It provides a range of NHS services and ensures people can get face-to-face, healthcare professional advice without an appointment.

There are around 14,000 community pharmacies across the UK, so for most of us, there's one very close by. In fact, 96% of people can get to a pharmacy within 20 minutes by walking or using public transport. Community pharmacists provide rapid access, without appointment, to a healthcare professional and offer a range of clinical and public health services. Most pharmacies now have consultation rooms, where you can talk with your pharmacist without being overheard.

You might be surprised at what pharmacies now offer: personalised medicines advice, help to quit smoking and to maintain good sexual health, treatment for common ailments, advice on preventing disease. And more. It's a package of care...not just packets of pills!

What's more, pharmacies are part of the fabric of local communities. They provide local employment and are a health and social care asset close to where people live, work and shop.

**-ENDS-**

### **Notes to editors**

Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire is the Local Pharmaceutical Committee for pharmacies in West Yorkshire.

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