

CPWY

Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Working to represent, support and promote community pharmacy

Press Release

15th February 2019

MP FOR LEEDS NORTH WEST VISITS HIS LOCAL PHARMACY TO HEAR ABOUT THE “HELP US, HELP YOU” CAMPAIGN



MP Alex Sobel (left) with Gurjit Singh (pharmacist owner - right) and Ruth Buchan (Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire) in Otley Pharmacy.



Otley's MP, Alex Sobel has visited Otley Pharmacy to hear about the work the team are doing to help residents in Otley and surrounding areas. During Alex's visit, he learned more about how community pharmacies in West Yorkshire are supporting the NHS England Help Us, Help You campaign. The campaign will raise awareness that community pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals, and experts in medicines, who can offer clinical assessment, advice, reassurance, and over the counter medicines for a range of symptoms, and use of a private consultation room should it be required. It will also remind people that local pharmacy teams offer a fast and convenient clinical service for minor health concerns with no appointment needed, and that the pharmacy

team can refer patients to further professional help where necessary.

Pharmacist Gurjit Singh comments: "Community pharmacy teams are a trusted and very accessible part of primary care. We are the first port of call for healthcare for many people and our regular patients and the wider community really rely on us. We provide much more than a great value

dispensing service – we give people information, advice and interventions without the need to wait for an appointment.”

Gurjit outlined that Otley Pharmacy is open 7-days a week until 11pm on weekdays, 10pm on Saturdays and from 10am-5pm on Sundays so they see patients from across the district including at times when their GP is closed.

During the visit Alex also discussed the NHS Long Term plan and heard how community pharmacy is eager that the Government and NHS make greater use of community pharmacists’ skills to support patients and the NHS. Alex also heard about some of the challenges that pharmacies are facing following NHS funding cuts to pharmacies, the wider impacts this could have on health and care services and the impact community pharmacy closures could have within local communities.

Ruth Buchan, CEO at Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire, said: “Community pharmacies are much more than just places to get medicines. They provide a range of NHS services and ensure local people can get face-to-face professional healthcare advice without an appointment. We believe the Government should be making better use of this network of healthcare locations in the heart of local communities, allowing them to offer a range of additional services that would both suit patients and reduce pressure on other healthcare services.”

Mr Sobel commented, “All NHS services are working harder than ever to manage the increasing demand for healthcare. I have learnt today about how community pharmacies are playing their part in these efforts, helping people when they are feeling unwell or need healthcare advice. Community pharmacies are well placed to take on other roles, such as providing flu vaccinations and supporting people with long-term conditions like asthma and diabetes. I am keen to ensure the Government works to develop community pharmacy services that meet the needs of both patients and health and social care services.”

About community pharmacy

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 11,000 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.

About Help Us, Help You

On Monday 4th February, NHS England is launching a new campaign to raise awareness that community pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals, who can offer clinical advice and over the counter medicines to effectively and safely manage a range of minor health concerns, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy troubles, aches and pains and many more.

As part of the 'Help Us, Help You' initiative, the campaign will highlight that local pharmacy teams offer a fast and convenient clinical service for minor health concerns with no appointment needed and use of a private consultation room should it be required. If symptoms suggest it's something more serious, pharmacists have the right clinical training to ensure people get the help they need immediately and can refer patients to a GP or A&E where necessary.

Don't wait for minor health concerns to get worse – speak to your local pharmacy team to get advice right there and then. Help us, help you, before it gets worse. Visit nhs.uk/pharmacyadvice for more information.

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Notes to editors

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

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