

CPWY

Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Working to represent, support and promote community pharmacy

Press Release

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LOCAL MP JOHN GROGAN VISITS COMMUNITY PHARMACY

FOR THE LAUNCH OF 'LOOKING OUT FOR OUR NEIGHBOURS' CAMPAIGN



MP John Grogan (centre) with Martin Cant (pharmacist owner - right) and Ruth Buchan (Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire - left) in Steeton Pharmacy.

John Grogan has visited Steeton Pharmacy to help launch the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership 'Looking out for our Neighbours' campaign that aims to help prevent loneliness and social isolation in communities. The campaign encourages local people to do simple things to look out for one another to help improve the wellbeing of other residents in the area.

According to research from The Health Foundation (December 2018), social isolation can increase the risk of having a stroke by a third, and older people who live alone are 50% more likely to visit A&E than those who live with others.

The Looking out for our Neighbours campaign hopes to inspire people to reach out to those who live alone or might need help, and encourage them to do simple things for them that will make a real difference to their wellbeing. This could be anything from picking up some shopping, to saying “hello” or even something as simple as giving a wave next time they see their neighbours.

During the visit MP John Grogan also heard about how the Steeton Pharmacy team help the community of Steeton and how pharmacies look out for and support those within their community. John heard about the essential services pharmacies provide, including advice for patients with minor ailments, supporting and advising patients with their medicines for long-term conditions such as asthma and diabetes and offering NHS flu vaccinations.

Pharmacist Martin comments: “Community pharmacy teams are a trusted and very accessible part of the NHS. We see it part of our day job to look out for those in our community and are proud to be able to support the Looking out for our Neighbours campaign. This campaign is a helpful reminder that it’s often the smallest acts of kindness that make the biggest difference to a person’s life.

We are the first port of call for many local people and our regular patients and the wider community really rely on us. As well as making sure everyone has the medicines they need, we help people to understand and make the most of those medicines and offer them advice on common ailments.”

During the visit John 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 communities, patients and the NHS. John 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.

MP John Grogan commented: “I’m delighted to be able to support the Looking out for our Neighbours campaign. Steeton is a village with a strong community spirit and I am sure the campaign will work well there. I heard during my visit about the great work of community pharmacy and how they support their community with more than just their medicines. The local chemist is the first port of call for many people seeking medical advice and their expertise reduces pressure on doctors and hospitals. These days the only payments many community pharmacists get is for issuing prescriptions. I think we need to go back to the situation we had a decade ago where they were also getting payments to expand their advice and preventative work’

Ruth Buchan, Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire said: “It’s great to be able to launch the Looking out for our Neighbours campaign in a community pharmacy. As many patients will know, our local community pharmacies are doing far more than just dispensing medicines. They work hard to support their communities, offer a whole range of services and are keen to offer so much more.

We believe the Government should be making better use of this network of healthcare locations in the heart of communities, allowing community pharmacy to offer a range of additional services that support communities and patients, and reduce pressure on other healthcare services.”

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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.

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

Campaign background

In August 2018, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership allocated £1m to go toward supporting voluntary and community organisations through the WY&H HCP Harnessing the Power of Communities Programme. Community and voluntary partners were allocated additional resources through their partnership work with local councils and the Health and Wellbeing Boards to help tackle loneliness and social isolation which has a major impact on people's health and wellbeing.

'Looking out for our Neighbours' is a social marketing campaign which aims to prevent loneliness and its associated health issues by encouraging communities to look after each other, therefore reducing demand on health and care services through early help and preventing ill health. The campaign aims to inspire communities to engage in simple activities that will positively impact on their neighbours' wellbeing.

About West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership

West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership focuses on the health and care needs of local people across Bradford District and Craven; Calderdale, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. The partnership is made up of a number of organisations who work together to help 2.6 million people in the area including the NHS, councils, Healthwatch, voluntary and community organisations. You can find out more at www.wyhpartnership.co.uk

For community pharmacy enquiries and further details please contact Ruth Buchan, Chief Executive, Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire on 0113 27 27 560 or 07718 192 287. Alternatively, email ruth@cpwy.org

For campaign enquiries, please contact Karen Coleman, Communication & Engagement Lead, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership karen.coleman2@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk, 07811766006