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Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Working to represent, support and promote community pharmacy

Press Release

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LOCAL MP HOLLY LYNCH VISITS COMMUNITY PHARMACY

TO HEAR ABOUT SAME-DAY APPOINTMENTS FOR PATIENTS WITH MINOR HEALTH ISSUES



MP Holly Lynch (centre) with Amanda Smith (pharmacist - left) and Ruth Buchan (Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire - right) in Heath Pharmacy, Halifax.

MP Holly Lynch visited Heath Pharmacy to find out more about the NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service which will start from October 2019. Amanda Smith, pharmacist, outlined that

patients calling NHS 111 with minor conditions, such as earache or sore throat, will be offered a same-day consultation with a local pharmacy. The new NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service will ensure faster access to advice and treatment for patients and help reduce pressure on GPs and emergency departments. Community pharmacists are well placed to provide these services, as pharmacists receive 5 years of training to gain a Masters degree and registration with the General Pharmaceutical Council, giving them expert knowledge of medicines and drug interactions.

Pharmacist Amanda comments: “Community pharmacy teams are a trusted and very accessible part of the NHS. We are the first port of call 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 help people to understand and make the most of their medicines and offer them advice on minor ailments and their health and wellbeing without the need to wait for an appointment. We are looking forward to the start of the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service in October as we will be able to support more patients who need a same day appointment for their minor ailment.”

Holly heard about the new 5-year Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework which will take effect from October and how it plans to increase the role of community pharmacy in prevention, urgent care and medicines safety to help more people stay well in their community. This includes the possible expansion of the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service to include referrals from GPs and A+E.

During the visit Holly also heard about how the Heath Pharmacy team already make a huge contribution to the health and wellbeing of the Savile Park community by providing services such as supporting patients starting new medicines for conditions including diabetes and blood pressure, giving advice on staying well and keeping healthy, and offering NHS flu vaccinations.

MP Holly Lynch commented: “I’m pleased that the clinical skills of community pharmacists will be better used as part of the new NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service. As part of this initiative patients calling NHS 111 with minor conditions, such as earache or sore throat, will be offered a same-day consultation with a local pharmacy. This is a positive change and should help relieve pressures on GPs.

Having worked in a local pharmacy when I was still at school, I understand the great work they do and how they support their community with more than just their medicines.

I am keen to ensure the Government works to develop further community pharmacy services that meet the needs of communities, patients and health and social care services and that this increased role is adequately funded by the Government.”

Ruth Buchan, Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire said: “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 much more.

The Community Pharmacist Consultation Service is a welcome development in the journey for community pharmacy in expanding its role in offering patients more NHS clinical services. The new service could see millions of appointments being provided by community pharmacists relieving pressure on the wider NHS.”

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The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-2019-to-2024>

The framework focuses on prevention, urgent care and medicines safety to help more people stay well in their community.

Areas the framework will expand over the next 5 years include:

- online training for all pharmacists to spot the early signs of sepsis
- developing and testing an early detection service to help identify people who may have undiagnosed cardiovascular disease
- checking all patients with diabetes who come to the pharmacy to ensure they have had their annual foot and eye check
- ensuring pharmacists receive the latest guidance on how to assist anyone with dementia
- running the Healthy Living Pharmacy scheme to all pharmacies in England to help people lose weight or stop smoking
- hepatitis C testing for those enrolled in needle exchange programmes
- exploring how pharmacists can be better supported to spot the warning signs of suicide
- introducing proactive medicine safety checks to avoid patients receiving dangerous combinations of drugs

The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) commitment to help older people age well will see better use of community pharmacists' medicines expertise. Pharmacists will be able to offer patients recently discharged from hospital more advice and support, including helping with repeat prescriptions without having to return to the GP.

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.

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