

Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing (IP) Pathfinder Programme – Conclusion March 2026

March 2026 update

The national [NHSE Independent Prescribing \(IP\) Pathfinder Programme](#) will conclude as planned on 31 March 2026. Under this programme, 11 community pharmacies in West Yorkshire have been supporting patients through three clinical models:

- **Extended Minor Illness** - Broaden the range of minor conditions that can be treated and managed to resolution within community pharmacy.
- **Community Pharmacy Enhanced Support for Quality, Optimised and Safer Prescribing (QOSP)** - Enable the community pharmacist prescriber to contribute to quality, optimised and safer prescribing by enabling relevant changes to prescriptions. This includes the management of unavailable medicines.
- **Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)** - hypertension management, targeted CVD case finding and supporting lipid initiation and optimisation.

As the programme ends, each participating community pharmacy is ensuring a safe and smooth transition for patients, liaising with local GP practices where required. For general practice and NHS 111, patients with minor illness will continue to be supported through existing Pharmacy First referral pathways.

The primary purpose of the IP Pathfinder was to inform future commissioning frameworks for community pharmacy clinical services incorporating NHS prescribing, and to capture the ways in which community pharmacy IP can benefit patients and the wider public.

West Yorkshire has delivered a successful IP Pathfinder, meeting all NHSE programme requirements. This has included:

- Testing the delivery of independent prescribing in community pharmacy
- Identifying the governance, clinical supervision, and IT processes required
- Demonstrating safe, effective patient care across multiple clinical models

This success has been achieved through the hard work and dedication of many individuals and teams, including community pharmacist prescribers and their pharmacy teams, GP practices who collaborated and supported service development, the West Yorkshire ICB IP Pathfinder Steering Group, the project team, clinical supervisors and peer support networks and contributors involved in developing the clinical protocols.

The NHSE funded IP Pathfinder evaluation on the impact and learning from the Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing Pathfinder Programme can be accessed here: [Findings from Independent Prescribing Pathfinder Evaluation published](#)

Although the Pathfinder programme is coming to an end, it has fulfilled its purpose. By definition, a pathfinder leads the way, and this has certainly been achieved across West Yorkshire. Insights

and learning from the programme are directly shaping the future of NHS community pharmacy prescribing, aligning with the ambitions set out in Fit for the Future: 10-Year Plan.

The West Yorkshire IP Pathfinder Steering Group would like to express its sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of this programme. Your hard work, professional commitment and willingness to innovate have helped pave the way for the future of community pharmacy clinical services. Thank you for your dedication and for the difference you have made to patients across West Yorkshire.

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