Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Community Pharmacy: A Vital Partner in Neighbourhood Health - Supporting Integrated Neighbourhood Teams to Deliver Local Health Priorities

Introduction: A readily available health resource in every community

Community pharmacies are an underutilised but essential partner in tackling local health challenges. Embedded in every neighbourhood, they offer walk-in access to clinical and preventative care services and are staffed by regulated healthcare professionals. They bring care closer to home and are critical to delivering the 'left shift' ambitions outlined in the 10 Year Health Plan by reducing reliance on hospital and GP services and improving care in the community.

This document will help **local NHS systems** (including **ICBs, Place Partnerships, and Neighbourhood Teams**) understand the full potential of community pharmacy as a **proactive partner in integrated care**, especially in relation to **prevention, early intervention, medicines optimisation**, and **reducing health inequalities**.

The value of community pharmacy in meeting local health needs

Pharmacy Strength	How it Supports Local NHS Priorities
Walk-in access, no appointment needed, often evening and weekend opening.	Reduces pressure on GPs and A&E; enables same-day care and early intervention.
Located in the heart of communities supported by staff from within the community.	Ideal for tackling health inequalities and engaging underserved populations.
Skilled, regulated healthcare teams comprising pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.	Enhance clinical capacity and support multi-disciplinary team working.
Trusted by the public.	Support behaviour change, adherence, and self-care through long-standing relationships.
Strong in prevention and early detection.	Vital partner for cardiovascular, respiratory and sexual health priorities.
Expert in medicines safety and optimisation.	Reduces admissions and supports safer prescribing and use of medicines.

Pharmacies in Action: Core Services that Support your Priorities

1. Prevention and Early Detection

Community pharmacies already deliver high-impact NHS services that contribute to **population health goals**, such as:

- Hypertension Care-Finding Service – Identifies undiagnosed high blood pressure and refers for GP follow-up.

- **Vaccinations** – Adult flu, COVID-19, Children's Flu, with HPV catch-up to be commissioned soon.
- Pharmacy Contraception Service– Expands access to oral emergency and regular contraception and supports women's health.
- Smoking Cessation Service – Seamless transfer of care from secondary to community settings.
- **Locally Commissioned Services** – typically commissioned by the ICB or local authority, tailored to local population health needs.
- All pharmacies meet **Healthy Living Pharmacy (HLP)** standards, ensuring patient interventions support behaviour change and health promotion.

2. Access to Medicines and Same-Day Care

Pharmacies help streamline access and reduce system burden through:

- **Dispensing and electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD)** – Ensures safe and efficient supply of medicines, freeing up general practice time.
- Pharmacy First Service – Over 95% of pharmacies now offer consultations and NHS supply for seven common conditions (e.g. sore throat, sinusitis, UTIs), as well as minor illnesses referred via NHS 111, UEC or GP practices.
- **Independent Prescribing**: Currently a pathfinder programme is testing pharmacist-led prescribing for acute and long-term conditions. Responsibility is being transferred from NHS England to ICB management from January 2026.
- **Palliative and End-of-Life Support** – Ensures readily available access to essential medicines and support to patients and carers in community settings, helping patients remain at home.
- **Self-Care and OTC Support** – Enables people to manage minor illnesses, often as first contact or via NHS 111 referrals.

3. Living Well with Medicines

Pharmacies help people make the most of their medicines – essential for long-term condition management and medicines safety:

- Discharge Medicines Service (DMS) – Reduces readmissions and improves transitions of care. Findings of the York Health Economics Consortium Report on '*Economic Analysis of Expanding the Role of Community Pharmacy Services in Medicines Optimisation*' found that the readmissions rate for patients who received a DMS was 12.8% compared with 34.9% for patients who did not receive a DMS. In addition, readmitted patients who previously received a DMS stayed for 7.23 days compared with stays of 13.1 days for those without a DMS.

- New Medicine Service (NMS) – Supports patients starting treatments for long-term conditions. Key findings of the York Health Economics Consortium Report on 'Economic Analysis of Expanding the Role of Community Pharmacy Services in Medicines Optimisation' found that nationally, the New Medicine Service already delivers £661m of savings to the NHS, and improvements in patient outcomes equivalent to 204,982 Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs). For every £1 spent on the New Medicine Service (NMS) in community pharmacy, there is a cost saving of £4.60 for the NHS and a health gain valued by NICE at £28.57.

Population Health Link: Medicines optimisation and adherence support contribute to reducing avoidable admissions and improving outcomes for people with long-term conditions such as CVD, asthma and diabetes.

4. Local Services commissioned within West Yorkshire

Local Services	Area
ENT Assessment Service	Leeds (restricted to specific areas)
Needle Exchange	Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield
Pharmacy Access to Self-Care (ASC) – Minor Ailments Service	Leeds
Stop Smoking	Calderdale, Kirklees, Wakefield
Supervised Consumption	Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield
Head-lice	Calderdale, Kirklees
Minor Ailments Service	Calderdale, Kirklees (HD1/HD2), Leeds (See ASC)
Palliative Care Service	All areas

Enabling Population Health through Community Pharmacy

Community pharmacies are ideally positioned to **support neighbourhood-level population health goals**, particularly in:

- Reducing health inequalities
- Improving prevention and early diagnosis
- Managing long-term conditions
- Avoiding unnecessary admissions
- Enhancing medicines safety

Strengthening Collaboration with Community Pharmacies – Next Steps

To unlock the full potential of community pharmacy in your PLACE, we recommend three immediate actions:

1. Engage with your Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC)

The LPC is your expert local partner for pharmacy integration. Work with the LPC to:

- Map existing pharmacy service provision.
- Identify quick wins to relieve GP or urgent care pressures, for example optimising Pharmacy First referrals from GP practices.
- Explore opportunities to co-design and commission innovative local services that align with your population health priorities

2. Include pharmacy data in population health analytics

- Integrate pharmacy activity data into your BI tools and dashboards.
- Use this data to target prevention, early intervention, addressing unwarranted variation and service redesign.
- Understand uptake and variation in service delivery across neighbourhoods.
- Consider how pharmacy data can support your strategic goals.

3. Involve community pharmacy in pathway redesign

- Include LPC and other pharmacy leaders in Place and neighbourhood planning and transformation discussions.
- Embed community pharmacy in multidisciplinary neighbourhood teams and encourage multidisciplinary working that routinely includes community pharmacy.

- Invite the LPC to participate in local care pathway redesign activity; particularly in areas such as cardiovascular disease, long-term conditions, prevention and other medicine-related pathways.

Let's Work Together

No matter your neighbourhood's current development stage, community pharmacies are ready to support your ambitions. Their ability to deliver high-quality, high-volume services at the point of need within their local community makes them an invaluable asset in any integrated care model.

To explore how community pharmacy can support your neighbourhood priorities, **contact Phil Wiles using the contact details below.**

Thank you,
Phil Wiles

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