

What a Community Pharmacy Does – an introduction to the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework

A brief by Lancashire and South Cumbria Local Professional Network (LPN) – Pharmacy

Background

There are over 390 community pharmacies operating in Lancashire and South Cumbria (LSC), found in a variety of areas including High Street locations, residential neighbourhoods, supermarkets, and medical centres.

They are all run under the direct supervision of a pharmacist who is supported by a team of people including Registered Pharmacy Technicians, Dispensers, Medicines Counter Assistants and delivery drivers.

89% of the population can reach their local community pharmacy within a 20-minute walk, and in LSC they dispense over 33 million prescription items per year, along with having an estimated 54,000 visits per day of which 75% are for health-related reasons. Community pharmacies are accessed by people who may not access other NHS services, helping to reduce health inequalities.

Community Pharmacy and the NHS

NHS income for a typical community pharmacy accounts for 85 - 95% of their total turnover, with the pharmacy owners being contracted by the NHS to provide a range of services, including the dispensing of medicines, described in the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework.¹

Pharmacies also provide services that are commissioned locally by the Integrated Care System and Local Authorities.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-2019-to-2024>

The NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF)

The CPCF, also known as “the pharmacy contract” sets out service provision in line with the aims of the NHS Long Term Plan along with the funding arrangements.

Some services are essential whilst others are optional known as Advanced Services. The contract also allows for localised commissioning to meet local needs.

Essential Services are mandatory and they include –

- Clinical Governance
- Dispensing Medicines & Appliances
- Discharge Medicines Service
- Disposal of unwanted medicines
- Healthy Living Pharmacy
- Public Health (Promotion of Healthy Lifestyle)
- Repeat Dispensing and electronic repeat dispensing (e-RD)
- Signposting
- Support for Self Care

Advanced Services are optional and include -

- Appliance use reviews (AUR)
- Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS)
- Flu vaccination service
- Hepatitis C Testing Service
- Hypertension case-finding service
- New Medicines Service (NMS)
- Pharmacy Contraception Service
- Smoking Cessation Service (SCS)
- Stoma Appliance Customisation (SAC)

National Enhanced Services are optional and include -

- Covid-19 Vaccination Service

Local Authorities and the Medicines Optimisation Teams based at place within the Integrated Care System are able to commission services from pharmacies. These are referred to as locally commissioned services, and by definition their provision varies by location, examples of which are –

- Anti-viral services
- Chlamydia screening service
- COVID vaccination service
- Emergency Hormonal Contraception
- End of life care /Just in case / palliative care
- Evacuee services
- Needle and syringe exchange
- Minor Ailments Service
- Safeguarding
- Stop Smoking
- Supervised consumption

Pharmacy Quality Scheme

The Pharmacy Quality Scheme² (PQS) forms part of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF). It supports delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan and rewards community pharmacy contractors that deliver quality criteria in three quality dimensions: clinical effectiveness, patient safety and patient experience.

² <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacy-quality-scheme-pqs-launch-year-5-scheme-202324>