

Section 1:

Introduction

What is a pharmaceutical needs assessment?

1.1 Healthcare Landscape

The Health Act 2009 introduced a legal requirement for Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to publish a pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA) by February 2011.

More recently the Health and Social Care Act 2012 established Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) and transferred responsibility to develop and update PNAs from PCTs to HWBs.

Responsibility for use of PNAs as the basis for determining market entry to a pharmaceutical list transferred from PCTs to NHS England from 1 April 2013.

1.2 Objectives

As well as simply providing useful information about community pharmacy in the city, there are two main purposes of the PNA:

1. Informing NHS England decisions on the required location and number of pharmacies in Newcastle - The PNA is a strategic commissioning document and will be used to identify gaps in services which could be filled by market entry.
2. Informing Commissioning Decisions by a range of Primary Care Organisations (PCOs) - This PNA describes the health needs of the population and the pharmaceutical services which are in place, or could be commissioned to meet identified health needs.

More detailed information can be found in Appendix 7 – “What is a pharmaceutical needs assessment?” towards the end of this document. This section describes further the legislation, aims and utilisation of PNAs.

1.3 Newcastle City Council Public Health Priorities

It is important for community pharmacy and the public to understand the objectives within the local health environment. The Council and its partners, through the Wellbeing for Life Board, have agreed a framework for action to improve wellbeing and health in the city. (<http://www.wellbeingforlife.org.uk/our-strategy>)

The top 3 Public Health priorities in Newcastle were identified as reducing smoking, reducing alcohol consumption and to addressing obesity. Newcastle City Council recognises that there are multiple opportunities to provide healthy lifestyle advice and support throughout Pharmacies with a range of Public Health priorities.

1.4 Newcastle CCG Alliance Priorities

The priorities of the Newcastle Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Alliance are:

Objective 1 - Improving prevention and wellbeing for all residents of Newcastle

Objective 2 - Delivering care closer to home

Objective 3 - Joining up care services across the city

1.5 Community Pharmacy

There are 65 pharmacies in Newcastle which provide access to a health care professional for 280,000 people who live in the city. Across England, pharmacy as a resource is well used with over 438 million visits made annually to a network of 11,400 community pharmacies (compared to GPs 320 million visits)¹.

A recent study by Durham University (Reference; Todd A, Copeland A, Husband A, et al. 'The positive pharmacy care law: an area-level analysis of the relationship between community pharmacy distribution, urbanity and social deprivation in England.' BMJ) discovered that nationally, 89 per cent of the population was found to have access to a community pharmacy within a 20 minute walk. Access in areas of highest deprivation was even greater with almost 100 per cent of households living within walking distance.

Table 1: Community Pharmacy Strengths and Weaknesses in Newcastle

Strengths:	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locations – Over 65 pharmacies embedded within communities, on the high street and supermarkets• Footfall – Over 1.8 million patient visits per day in the UK, approximately 7800 per day in Newcastle. Crucially with a different demographic footprint when compared with general practice• Efficiency – Community Pharmacy is an existing skilled health service provider with fixed costs (premises, utilities, core staffing, skill mix).• Engagement – Locally in Newcastle community pharmacy have been highly motivated and supportive of local commissioners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity Challenge – it is unknown how many services can be provided from each site• Inconsistent delivery across the pharmacy estate for some services• Additional training requirements amongst pharmacy staff will mean changes to practice may not all commence equally across the city.

¹ Community Pharmacy - helping provide better quality and resilient urgent care, NHS England, version 2, Nov 2014

1.6 National Community Pharmacy Leadership (Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) 2014)

Community pharmacy is led nationally by the PSNC who promote and guide the overall strategy for pharmacy as a profession in the UK. PSNC promotes and supports the interests of all NHS community pharmacies in England and is recognised by the Secretary of State for Health as the body that represents NHS pharmacy contractors.

The PSNC supports the Local Pharmaceutical Committee (an independent representative group made up of pharmacists from the North East) and seeks to align national guidance.

The PSNC has outlined its latest future vision for community pharmacy in England:

“The community pharmacy service in 2016 will offer support to our communities, helping people to optimise use of medicines to support their health and care for acute and long-term conditions, and providing individualised information, advice and assistance to support the public’s health and healthy living.”²

A 2012 survey of community pharmacy contractors confirmed that the majority of the sector (98% of respondents) supported this vision for community pharmacy.

The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) is now working towards the visions by developing the community pharmacy service across four key service domains:

1. Optimising the use of medicines;
2. Supporting people to self-care;
3. Supporting people to live healthier lives; and
4. Supporting people to live independently.

The core ‘Essential’ and ‘Advanced’ services within the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) all fall within one or more of these domains.

In developing community pharmacy services across these four domains, PSNC believes the NHS community pharmacy service can help the NHS to manage the financial constraints and increasing demands it faces, by becoming the basis of a third pillar, supporting NHS service provision alongside the traditionally dominant pillars of GP-led care and secondary care.

1.7 Local Leadership

Newcastle Community Pharmacies, locally led by their representative organisation North of Tyne Local Pharmaceutical Committee provide a growing range of health

² Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, The Vision for Community Pharmacy, August 2013

services to the public above and beyond the standard expected activities of dispensing medicines, displays of health information and signposting. These additional services will be explored in more detail later on in this needs assessment and their value understood.

1.8 Utilisation of Pharmacy by Commissioners

It is now widely recognised within the NHS and other health services that community pharmacies should play a vital role in tackling major public health concerns such as obesity, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse because of their growing range of existing health services and high levels of accessibility to the public. Easy accessibility to a pharmacy is due to both location (within GP Surgeries, Supermarkets, High Streets, local neighbourhoods etc.) and long opening hours at weekends and later evenings. In addition, services are often provided without an appointment thus amplifying convenience for large sections of the population in Newcastle.

These facts and recent developments set the scene for development of the capabilities of community pharmacies to provide more services in the future. Of particular relevance to this document are the health objectives for the two main commissioners in Newcastle – Newcastle City Council and The Newcastle CCG Alliance. The main priorities of these two organisations can be seen in section 1.4.

1.9 Pharmacy NHS Services:

All Community Pharmacies are required under the NHS Pharmacy Contract to provide the following services for patients in Newcastle (PSNC 2014). The services below clearly highlight pharmacy's position within the UK health system as one of promoting medicines safety, appropriate access to advice and medicines, healthier lifestyle choices and responsible self care.

1. The Dispensing Service – number of prescription items dispensed by community pharmacies in England in 2011-12 was 885 million.
2. The Repeat Dispensing Service – this service allows patients to collect regular repeat prescription medicines direct from a local pharmacy for a predetermined period of time, without having to go back to the GP.
3. Disposal of Unwanted Medicines – members of the public can take medicines to any local pharmacy for safe disposal.
4. Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles - this service provides advice on keeping healthy; this could be advice on healthy eating, stopping smoking and exercise. This can take the form of posters, leaflets, written information and verbal advice to help patients make healthier choices. These are often aligned with local health promotion campaigns such as Holiday Sun Advice and understanding the risks of long term conditions such as diabetes.
5. Signposting to other Services - pharmacy provides patients with contact details for additional help if needed from other healthcare professionals, social services or voluntary organisations.
6. Support for Self-Care - Pharmacy provides advice on treating minor illnesses without the need to visit the GP, e.g. coughs and colds or long term conditions such as arthritis or diabetes. This support may include medicines which patients can buy over the counter from the pharmacy without a prescription.