

UPDATE ON PHARMACIES AND PRESCRIPTION SERVICES

Officer Contact

Dr Ellis Friedman, Joint Director of Public Health, NHS Hillingdon and London Borough of Hillingdon

Papers with report

None

REASON FOR ITEM

To enable the Committee to receive updates and review the work being undertaken with regard to pharmacies and prescription services within the Borough.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

- Question the witnesses using the suggested questions/key lines of enquiry
- Ask additional questions as required
- Make recommendations to address issues arising from discussions at the meeting

INFORMATION

Brief description of how the pharmacy system works summarising rules in England

Community pharmacists were known in the past as chemists. Like GPs, community pharmacists are part of the NHS family. Every day about 1.8 million people visit a pharmacy in England.

Community pharmacies are situated in high street locations, in neighbourhood centres, in supermarkets and in the heart of the most deprived communities. Many are open long hours when other health care professionals are unavailable. There are several different types and sizes of community pharmacies, ranging from the large chains with shops on every High Street or in edge of town supermarkets, to small individually owned pharmacies in small communities, in the suburbs and often in deprived areas or rural settings.

The traditional role of the community pharmacist as the healthcare professional who dispenses prescriptions written by doctors has changed. In recent years community pharmacists have been developing clinical services in addition to the traditional dispensing role to allow better integration and team working with the rest of the NHS.

The Pharmacy in England White Paper, April 2008 sets out a vision for building on the strengths of pharmacy, using that capacity and capability to deliver further improvements in pharmaceutical services over the coming years as part of an overall strategy to ensure safe, effective, fairer and more personalised patient care.

The Drug Tariff, published monthly by the Department of Health, contains the details of pharmacy services within England and remuneration information in relation to the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework.

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework comprises three types of services:

- **Essential services** provided by all contractors – dispensing of medicines, repeat dispensing, disposal of unwanted medicines, promotion of healthy lifestyles, signposting, support for self care and clinical governance.
- **Advanced services** provided by accredited contractors – medicines or appliance use reviews.
- **Enhanced services** – locally commissioned by PCTs which may include out of hours rota, advice to care homes, smoking cessation, needle exchange, supervised methadone consumption, palliative care and emergency hormonal contraception.

Although a number of these contractual elements are agreed and funded nationally, there remains significant scope for PCTs to commission community pharmacy services locally, e.g. via the enhanced service route.

Description of hospital and outside hospital prescribing system including who can prescribe, over the counter medicines, etc.

Prescribing within hospitals is the remit of the relevant hospital chief pharmacist and their pharmacy department. Prescribing outside hospitals is generally referred to as primary care prescribing and there are a number of healthcare professionals that are able to prescribe medicines. The majority of primary care prescribing is undertaken by GPs (general practitioners or doctors) although there are other independent prescribers such as nurses and pharmacists that have undertaken the relevant training and qualifications for writing prescriptions.

Medicines can be POM (Prescription Only Medicine – can only be dispensed against a prescription), P (Pharmacy only - sold from registered pharmacies under the supervision of a pharmacist) or GSL (General Sales List – sold from anywhere). Additionally, some medicines are classified as Controlled Drugs and have further rules and regulations governing them. P medicines are often referred to as over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.

Brief description/discussion on the situation in Hillingdon including the availability of pharmacy services, the relative costs of the service, how performance is monitored and how we do locally.

The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) is a statutory document that supports commissioning of pharmaceutical services. It describes pharmaceutical services that are currently delivered and options for improvement within existing services. It also provides a rationale for future new entrant pharmacies. It focuses on the strategic commissioning priorities for NHS Hillingdon (NHSH), a primary care trust (PCT). The PNA is designed to assist NHSH in commissioning services from both current and potential providers through a systematic process of identifying needs and seeking to address them.

The PNA plays an essential role in equipping NHSH to deal with applications to provide pharmaceutical services under the Control of Entry processes and to reduce the associated risk to NHSH. It also provides a framework to enable the strategic development and commissioning of community pharmacy services to help meet the needs of the local population.

The PNA enables the health and pharmaceutical needs of the local population to be clearly identified and through this helps to enable clear decisions to be made regarding commissioning of pharmaceutical services.

Contractual monitoring of Hillingdon community pharmacy services is conducted by North West London team.

Witnesses

Representatives from the following organisations have been invited to attend the meeting:

- NHS Hillingdon (PCT)
- Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)
- The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Hillingdon Community Health

SUGGESTED SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

Members to question representatives from the organisations present on the pharmacies and prescription services provided within the Borough and decide whether to take any further action.

BACKGROUND REPORTS

Information from the PSNC

http://www.psn.org.uk/pages/about_community_pharmacy.html

Information from DH white paper

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_083815

Link to electronic copy of the latest Drug Tariff

<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/924.aspx>

Hillingdon PCT Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA)

<http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media.jsp?mediaid=21774&filetype=pdf>