

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**

**PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (PNA) UPDATE AND REVIEW**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. To present the findings of the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities (HHC) and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) Steering Group in relation to Community Pharmacy provision, following the closure of three pharmacies and the reductions in opening hours of 100 hours pharmacies in Sunderland, in accordance with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, which add to and amend the 2013 Regulations.
- 1.2. To assure the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (HWBSC) that the Executive Director of HHC, supported by the PNA Steering Group, has considered the potential implications of the closures and reduction in hours of pharmacies in Sunderland. Both are satisfied that these closures do not leave a significant gap in pharmaceutical services in Sunderland and therefore a supplementary statement to the PNA is not required.
- 1.3. To update the HWSC on the implications of recent pharmacy closures on the status of the current Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA), and subsequent recommendations following a recent PNA update at the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) in December 2023.

**2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A reduction in pharmacy access (both geographically and in-relation to opening hours) may impact on the ability of Sunderland-based pharmacies to deliver on the ambitions of the 'Recovering Access to Primary Care Delivery Plan', and wider elements of the place-plan, fairly and equitably.
- 2.2 Following the closure of three pharmacies, and a reduction in opening hours of '100-hour pharmacies' across Sunderland, the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities for Sunderland City Council, supported by the PNA Steering Group, assessed the potential impact on Sunderland residents, in order to make a recommendation to the HWB on whether a supplementary statement to the PNA was required. Following this assessment, a recommendation was made to the HWB that a supplementary statement was not required.

2.3 The Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities, with support from the PNA Steering Group has provided assurance to the HWB that delegated responsibilities in relation to the PNA will continue to be met in the absence of a supplementary statement.

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

3.1 Following the closure of three pharmacies, and a reduction in opening hours of '100-hour pharmacies' across Sunderland, the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities for Sunderland City Council, supported by the PNA Steering Group, assessed the potential impact on Sunderland residents in order to make a recommendation to the HWB as to whether a supplementary statement to the PNA was required.

3.2 Following this assessment, a recommendation was made to the HWB that a supplementary statement was not required, however changes to the availability and accessibility of pharmacies across Sunderland prompted wider discussion on the role of the Place Committee in influencing pharmacy-based commissioning, with specific consideration of the role of pharmacy in recovering access to primary care, as well as wider ambitions within the Sunderland Place Plan.

3.3 This report describes the current Community Pharmacy provision across Sunderland following the closure of the following three pharmacies:

a) Lloyds Pharmacy Ltd, Inside Sainsbury's, Silksworth Lane, Silksworth, Sunderland SR3 1PD on 13th June 2023;

b) Lloyds Pharmacy Ltd, Inside Sainsbury's, Wessington Way, Sunderland SR5 3JG on 28th July 2023; and

c) Boots UK Ltd, 2-3 Park Lane, Sunderland SR1 3NX on 11th November 2023.

3.4 The potential implications of these pharmacy closures have been considered and are set out in this report.

3.5 Additionally, the impact of changes to the provision of 100-hour pharmacies which now have the option to reduce their hours down to 72 hours, in accordance with changes to the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, has been considered and is set out in this report.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 Section 128A of the National Health Service Act 2006 (NHS Act 2006) requires each HWB to assess the need for pharmaceutical services in its area and to publish a statement of its assessment. Termed a 'pharmaceutical needs assessment', the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, as amended (the 2013 regulations) set out the minimum information that must be contained within a pharmaceutical needs assessment and outline the process that must be followed in its development.

4.2 The PNA for Sunderland (July 2022 to July 2025) was agreed by the Health and

- Wellbeing Board in July 2022, with a recommendation for the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities to continually review the relevance of the PNA in describing pharmaceutical needs across Sunderland for the lifetime of the PNA document. This includes a recommendation to issue a supplementary statement where pharmacy needs significantly change ahead of the next PNA refresh schedule.
- 4.3 A link to the published PNA for Sunderland is available at: [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment - Sunderland City Council](#), along with a list of all pharmacies in Sunderland (last updated 3rd October 2023).
- 4.4 The PNA Steering Group was reconvened to support the Executive Director of HHC to fulfil the delegated PNA responsibilities referred to above. The Steering Group has been established to:
- a) Oversee and drive the formal process required for the development of a PNA for Sunderland;
  - b) Ensure that the published PNA complies with all the requirements set out under the Regulations;
  - c) Promote integration of the PNA with other strategies and plans including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the Healthy City Plan, the ICBs' Commissioning Strategy plans and other relevant strategies; and
  - d) Ensure the appropriate maintenance of the PNA, following publication, as required by the Regulations.
- 4.5 The PNA Steering Group comprises of representation from the Council (Public Health), the Local Pharmaceutical Committee, Sunderland Healthwatch, ICB (Medicines Optimisation / Primary Care), Community Pharmacy and Primary Care Support England (PCSE). The Steering Group is chaired by a Public Health Consultant.
- 4.6 The Executive Director and PNA Steering Group are satisfied that the closures do not leave a significant gap in pharmaceutical services in Sunderland. This is due to the remaining pharmacies located within a 1 mile/1.6 km radius of the closed pharmacies that offer equivalent services. There continues to be adequate out of hours access across Sunderland.
- 4.7 Within the 2022 PNA statement it was identified that: 'There is currently adequate provision of NHS pharmaceutical services across Sunderland. There is no access to community pharmacy services within the Coalfields locality during most of the extended GP hours on weekday evenings and generally on Sundays and weekday evenings. Though these wider opening hours are not classified as part of essential services, their availability in the locality could improve access and choice for the local population. This does not highlight a specific need for additional community pharmacies in the Coalfields locality, though access issues should be better understood to establish whether any further action is required.'
- 4.8 Following the publication of the PNA, Sunderland has seen changes to the provision of 100-hour pharmacies, which now have the option to reduce their hours down to 72 hours, in accordance with changes to the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

- 4.9 The NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, state a 3-month notice period for a 40-hour pharmacy closure is normally given to NHS England.
- 4.10 In June 2023, the Council was informed by NHS England that two pharmacies were closing in Sunderland over the summer and one in November.
- 4.11 The Executive Director of HHC, supported by the PNA Steering Group has made a judgement as to whether any of these closures could leave 'a significant gap' in pharmaceutical services.
- 4.12 The two key issues that the Executive Director of HHC and PNA Steering Group have considered are:
- how patients can continue to receive pharmaceutical services in the area (particularly out of hours); and
  - whether the local pharmacy network can accommodate the potential increase in workload.
- 4.13 The PNA Steering Group has identified no risk to patients' ability to continue receiving pharmaceutical services in each area and conclude that an adequate out of hours provision remains following these closures.
- 4.14 The PNA Steering Group has confirmed that surrounding pharmacies are happy to accommodate the potential increase in workload without disruption to services.
- 4.15 There are existing arrangements in place across the system for out of hours and emergency supply.
- 4.16 It is not deemed that any of these closures leave 'a significant gap in pharmaceutical services', and therefore a supplementary statement to the PNA 2022-25 is not required.

## **5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT COMMUNITY PHARMACY PROVISION IN SUNDERLAND**

- 5.1 Since the Sunderland PNA was published in July 2022, Sunderland has seen changes to the provision of 100-hour pharmacies. This was due to a regulatory change that took effect in May 2023 which gave pharmacies the option to reduce their hours down to 72 hours, in accordance with the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.
- 5.2 Sunderland continues to have 4 former 100-hour pharmacies, all of which have reduced their hours, now delivering between 72 and 88 hours a week.
- 5.3 There have been three pharmacy closures since the PNA was published. In relation to these changes, the PNA Steering Group has concluded that:
- i. Patients can continue to receive equivalent pharmaceutical services within the area (1 mile radius);

- ii. Patients continue to have adequate out of hours provision; and
  - iii. The local pharmacy network can accommodate the potential increase in workload without disruption to services.
- 5.4 Sunderland Healthwatch is part of the PNA Steering Group to represent the voice of patients. Healthwatch has identified that there was little feedback raised about the closure of the three pharmacies. However, what was received was focused on the communication of closures to patients as opposed to concerns around access.
- 5.5 To better understand if there are any Community Pharmacy access issues within the Coalfields area the PNA Steering Group has looked at the current provision and assessed this against expressed need since the PNA was published.
- 5.6 Houghton Medical Group offers an extended access provision within the Coalfields area, opening weekdays until 20.00, Saturday 09.00-17.00 and Sunday 10.00–15.00.
- 5.7 Coalfields has not had any pharmacy closures, with eleven 40-hour pharmacies remaining within the area. Pharmaceutical services are available across Coalfields between 08.00-18.30 Monday to Friday (08.00-19.30 on Wednesdays) and 08.30–12.30 on Saturdays. There is no provision on Sundays.
- 5.8 In addition to the community pharmaceutical services provided in Sunderland, there are also several community pharmacies within County Durham that could be more accessible for some residents who live in the Coalfields area. These include weekend provision, however, weekday evening access remains limited.
- 5.9 Both Healthwatch and General Practices within the Coalfields area have received no patient concerns around access to pharmaceutical services specifically within the area.
- 5.10 Healthwatch and General Practices will continue to work with the PNA Steering Group to ensure that patient feedback is highlighted in all changes to pharmaceutical services within Sunderland. The LPC and Healthwatch closely assess the potential impacts on vulnerable groups and patient groups that could experience access issues.
- 5.11 The PNA Steering Group has considered the current community pharmacy provision across Sunderland and concluded that there is no significant gap in pharmaceutical services. There continues to be adequate out of hours access across Sunderland. The Coalfields area continues to have adequate access. The PNA Steering Group will continue to work with Healthwatch and General Practices to review the impact on patients of any changes to pharmaceutical services across the city.

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO DELIVERING THE HEALTHY CITY PLAN**

- 6.1 The clinical governance responsibilities of the PNA Steering Group will continue to support the improvement of health as set out in the Healthy City Plan by ensuring an adequate provision of Pharmaceutical services is available to residents of Sunderland.
- 6.2 The closure of the three pharmacies has not had an implication on delivery of the Healthy City Plan. Pharmaceutical provision is available across the city and will continue to support the improvement of health across Sunderland.

**7. ROLE OF PHARMACY IN SUPPORTING THE RECOVERING ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE DELIVERY PLAN AND WIDER ELEMENTS OF THE SUNDERLAND PLACE PLAN**

7.1 A paper on the PNA was considered by Sunderland Place Committee at their meeting on 13th December 2023 as relevant to the role of the Place Committee in relation to community pharmacy provision. Recovering access to primary care is a key objective within the Sunderland Place Plan (Priority One: Supporting primary and community care integration). This includes local delivery of key elements of the national [delivery plan for recovering access to primary care](#). Within this plan, pharmacies are identified as playing a key part of primary care recovery, with a specific role in relation to:

- Empowering patients through expansion and investment of community pharmacy services, including provision of oral contraceptives and blood pressure services.
- The launch of ‘Pharmacy First’, and associated access to prescription-only medicines for seven common conditions (i.e. sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bites, impetigo, shingles, uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women).

7.2 Improved access to pharmacy-based support is anticipated to contribute to the redirection of over 15% of GP-bound patients through improved care navigation over the next 2-years. £645 million has been pledged nationally to support this, subject to further consultation.

7.3 These new provisions will add to the existing combination of enhanced, advanced and locally commissioned pharmacy services that are available to Community Pharmacy in addition to essential pharmacy services. A summary of enhanced, advanced and locally commissioned services have been outlined below, with details on where commissioning and/or coordination of these functions currently sits within the ICS.

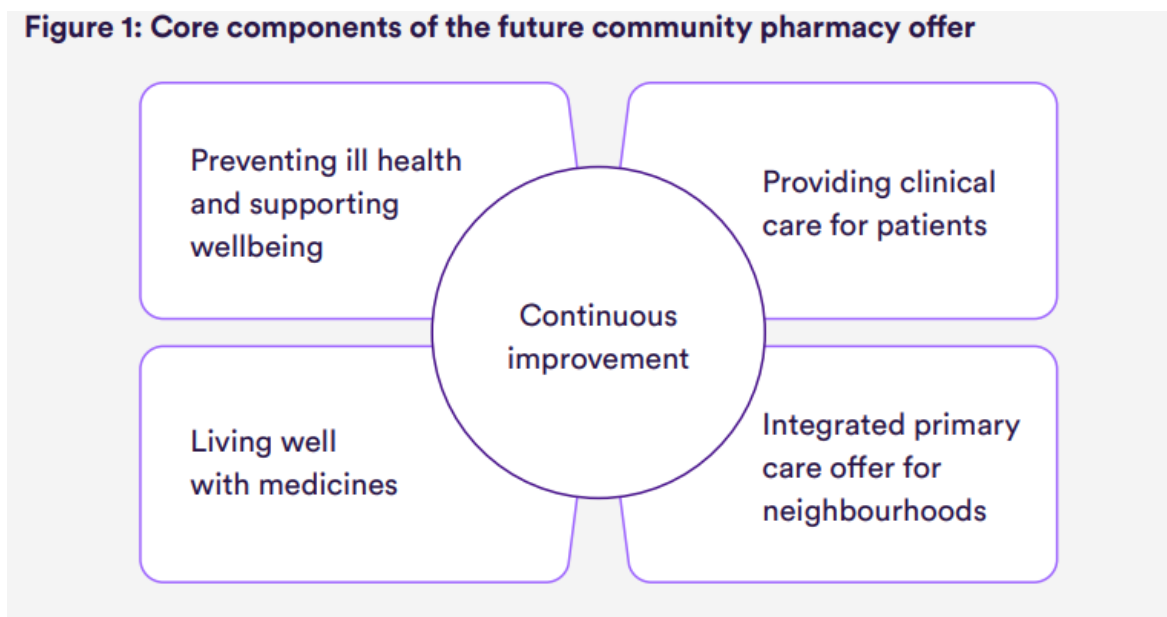
Type of service	Available services	Commissioner/Coordinator
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appliance use review (AUR)</li> <li>• Community pharmacist consultation service (CPCS)</li> <li>• Flu vaccination service</li> <li>• Hep C testing</li> <li>• Hypertension case finding service</li> <li>• COVID LFD service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NENC Primary Care Transformation Directorate/ Medical Directorate (subject to restructure)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New medicines service (NMS)</li> <li>• Pharmacy contraception service</li> <li>• Smoking cessation (NHS Trust referral/maternity)</li> <li>• Stoma appliance customization (SAC)</li> </ul>	
National Enhanced Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 vaccination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System Vaccine Operations Centre (SVOC)</li> </ul>
Locally commissioned (via Public Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoking cessation (Public Health)</li> <li>• STI testing (Public Health)</li> <li>• C-card (Public Health)</li> <li>• Emergency hormonal contraception (Public Health)</li> <li>• Supervised Consumption (Public Health)</li> <li>• Needle Exchange (Public Health)</li> <li>• Community Pharmacy Leadership for Plus Programme (Public Health)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NENC Transformation Directorate/Medical Directorate (subject to restructure)</li> <li>• Local Authority Public Health Teams (needle exchange and supervised consumption commissioned via Wear Recovery service)</li> </ul>

7.4 Whilst a significant element of community pharmacy commissioning is overseen on a NENC-wide footprint, there are elements of localized commissioning and influence (e.g. via HWB’s statutory PNA responsibilities) that may be better supported through Place Committee oversight. This would ensure community pharmacy transformation has an equitable impact across the local population and maximizes opportunities for integration with wider place-based transformation.

7.5 Community Pharmacy England recently commissioned The Nuffield Trust and The King’s Fund, to develop a [‘vision for community pharmacy’](#) which made reference to the contribution of community pharmacy to local health and care systems, with specific reference to four key components of health and wellbeing support as outlined in fig 1.1 below.

**Figure 1: Core components of the future community pharmacy offer**



7.6 The report cited further work carried out by National Voices<sup>1</sup>, in which four core areas of enhanced provision were identified as being advantageously supported by community pharmacy, this included:

- Offer of diagnostic and monitoring services for people with long-term conditions.
- Continuity of care for both long-term conditions and people who need episode care over the life course.
- Holistic care rooted in the needs of communities as well as individual patients.
- A 'no wrong door' approach to health information.

7.7 The Sunderland Place Committee at their meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023:

- Acknowledged the Health and Wellbeing Board recommendation to not produce a supplementary statement of the PNA following the recent changes outlined in the paper.
- Considered how the Place Committee may evolve to better incorporate the role of community pharmacy in supporting key Place Plan priorities and objectives, alongside supporting wider opportunity to influence system-level commissioning of community pharmacy provision.

## **8. PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025**

8.1 A new full PNA will be undertaken in 2024 to be published by July 2025.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee note and comment on the information in the report.

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<sup>1</sup> National voices is an umbrella organisation for charities in the health and care sector