

Your Voice

Pharmacies in Lancashire

November 2017

“I always come here. It’s close to my GP and the staff are so friendly.”

“More staff are needed, they seem to be very busy.”

Joining together findings from 24 visits to pharmacies across Lancashire from January - March 2017.

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Disclaimer

This report relates only to the service viewed at the times of the visits, and is only representative of the views of the people who met the staff team of Project Officers on those dates.

Introduction

Over the past four years, we have received little independent feedback regarding public perceptions of pharmacy services. However, the public are increasingly encouraged to use pharmacy services for minor illnesses or ailments, partly to reduce pressures on primary or secondary care services including A&E. As such, the aim of our pharmacy programme was to gather views and experiences from the public about pharmacy services across Lancashire.

Healthwatch Lancashire, Healthwatch Blackpool and Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen were approached to help Community Pharmacy Lancashire gain feedback on their pharmacy services to the public across Lancashire. The three local Healthwatch collaborated and developed a programme of work which ran from January 2017 to March 2017.

About Community Pharmacy Lancashire

The Lancashire Local Pharmaceutical Committee are known as Community Pharmacy Lancashire. A Local Pharmaceutical Committee, or LPC, is a statutory body that works within NHS regulations to represent and support community pharmacists and owners of community pharmacies. Community pharmacies (also known as chemists) can be found across Lancashire e.g. in health centres, supermarkets and high streets, villages and local housing estates and also online.

Community Pharmacy Lancashire works with the local NHS England area team, local authorities and other healthcare professionals to help plan health care across the area (including Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire County Council areas). The LPC works with commissioners to implement community pharmacy services. They are available to advise community pharmacists and owners, as well as allied professions such as GPs and hospitals. This advice is also available to those who want to know more about what their local pharmacy can offer them, or those people who are simply visiting the area.

Acknowledgements

Local Healthwatch would like to thank Community Pharmacy Lancashire, and all the staff working in the individual pharmacies that we visited for making us feel welcome. We would also like to thank the people that took the time to share their experiences of their local pharmacy during our visits. Lastly, we would like to thank local Healthwatch volunteers who supported this project.

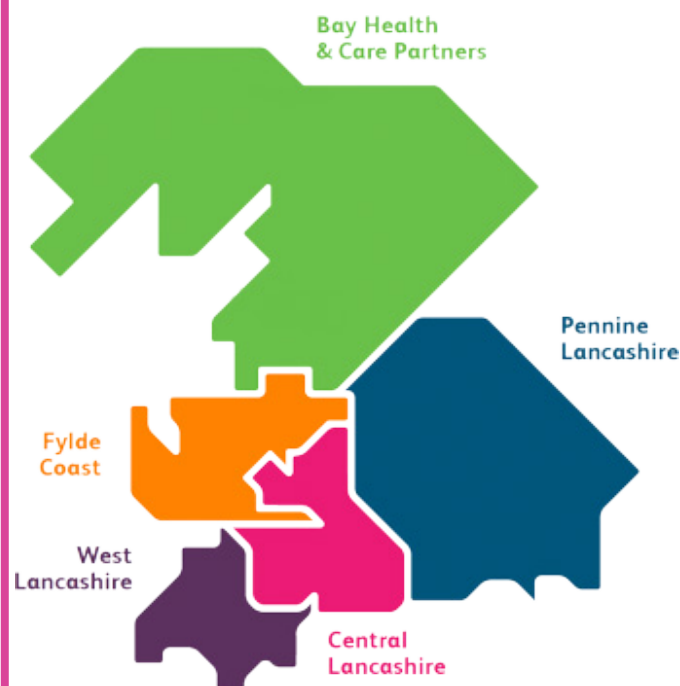
Reference for the reader - STP and LDPs explained

Throughout this report, we refer to Local Delivery Plan (LDP) areas. The five LDPs operate as part of the Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Partnership also known as the STP.

The STP is a group of organisations including Local Healthwatch who work together to improve health and care in our region. For more information visit www.lancshiresouthcumbria.org.uk.

Information in this report is provided to organisations within the STP to ensure that the public voice is used to influence change in service improvement and redesign.

Map of Local Delivery Plan area



Below are the LDP areas in Lancashire:

- **Bay Health & Care Partners:** Lancaster and Morecambe
- **Pennine Lancashire:** Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley and Blackburn with Darwen
- **Central Lancashire:** Preston, Chorley and South Ribble
- **West Lancashire:** Ormskirk and Skelmersdale
- **Fylde Coast:** Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre

Methodology

We chose to explore trends and themes about pharmacies from people that shared their experiences and to see if we found any variation dependent on LDP areas in the following:

- Experiences of accessing pharmacies and why people chose the pharmacy they attended
- Awareness and use of community pharmacy services
- Quality of care provided
- Whether using the pharmacy means that people use other health services differently. For example, people choosing to attend their pharmacy rather than going to their GP.
- Awareness, use and helpfulness of the Electronic Prescription Service. Please note, this service is provided by NHS Digital rather than the pharmacies. For more information on this service please visit the NHS Choices website here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/pharmacists/Pages/eps.aspx>

The three local Healthwatch spoke to people in a selection of community pharmacies across Lancashire:

- 24 different pharmacies were visited across the county of Lancashire, including Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.
- A broad range of community pharmacies were visited, including those found in health centres, shopping centres, high streets, supermarkets and housing estates.
- 326 people shared their views and experiences.

The distribution of visits by Local Delivery Plan footprint were as follows:

- Six in Pennine (includes Blackburn with Darwen) of which we received 33% of responses.
- Six in Central of which we received 19% of responses.
- Six in Fylde Coast (includes Blackpool) of which we received 19% of responses.
- Three in West Lancashire of which we received 19% of responses.
- Three in Bay Health & Care Partners of which we received 10% of responses.
- A breakdown of who we spoke to in terms of ethnicity, gender, age and percentage of respondents by location can be found in appendix 1 on page 22.

A link to all individual reports can be found on our website here:

<http://healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/reports/reports/>

For Blackpool-specific reports visit:

<http://healthwatchblackpool.co.uk/reports/read-our-reports/>

For Blackburn with Darwen-specific reports visit:

<http://www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk/reports-and-publications>

Note, the number of respondents varied for each question, as often once people were served or received their prescriptions they did not have time to fully complete the survey. The number of people that answered each question is detailed in brackets under the results of each question.

* The Minor Ailment Service is used across the county of Lancashire; where pharmacies can provide selected medicines free of charge to people who do not pay for their prescriptions. However, this service is not provided consistently across Lancashire. For example, in Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire North Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area. In Blackpool, the service is provided to children only. The Fylde and Wyre CCG area have a service where the emphasis is on giving advice and messages about self-care, but also provide selected medicines free of charge to people who do not pay for their prescriptions.

Summary of our findings

Of the 326 people we spoke with:

The vast majority of people had no difficulties getting to their pharmacy. Of the few that did, issues were raised with lack of disabled access, struggling to walk to the pharmacy, car parking issues and poor bus services.

The majority used the same pharmacy each time they needed the service.

The majority chose their pharmacy for convenience, although 18% said they chose based on the quality of the service provided.

The majority used the pharmacy to collect prescriptions although many also used the service for health care advice and over the counter medication.

40% said that they felt attending the pharmacy means they do attend other health services less because they get advice initially from the pharmacy. The majority said it did not make a difference as they would still want or prefer to see their GP.

The vast majority said they were happy with the service they received and many positive comments were shared about the staff, including that they were excellent, friendly and helpful.

The majority said they did not think the pharmacy could improve its services. Those who thought that the pharmacy could improve, cited issues relating to waiting for prescriptions to be dispensed, pharmacies being too busy, not having adequate seating and not having items in stock.

The majority said they were aware of the different services available at the pharmacy, although most people only mentioned a few of them.

66% of people we spoke with had not used the Minor Ailment Service. Many positive comments were shared from those that had used the service including that the service was good, helpful, saves time, convenient and informative.

Almost half said they had attended a consultation with the pharmacist. Many positive comments were shared from those that had used this service, including that the service was helpful, the staff were friendly, the service had helped them to understand their medication, the service was private, confidential and useful and that they were very confident to use the service.

Just over half of people we spoke with had used the Electronic Prescription Service. Most shared positive comments, including that the service was good, quick and convenient, that the online system works well, the service was great, easy to use and that they get texts when their prescriptions are ready to collect.

Breakdown of findings for Lancashire

Experiences of accessing pharmacies why people chose the pharmacy they attended

We asked 324 people if they had experienced any difficulties getting to the pharmacy that day, of which:

- 96% of people said they had no difficulties in getting to the pharmacy.
- We received a further 82 comments after asking the above question. Most stated that they had no difficulties because the pharmacy was accessible for them, including the pharmacies close proximity to where they live, their GP, or the town centre. Some commented on the delivery service if they could not get to the pharmacy in person and others said they received a lift so did not struggle to get to the pharmacy.
- A minority did comment on their difficulties, including problems with car parks, having a disability and struggling to walk, heavy doors on access to the pharmacy and infrequent buses.

We asked 321 people if they usually attended that pharmacy, of which:

- 85% of people said they usually attend that pharmacy.
- We found that people living within the LDP areas of Pennine and Central were most likely to attend the same pharmacy at 90%.
- We found that people living within the LDP area of Bay Health & Care Partners were the least likely to attend the same pharmacy at 68%.

We asked 256 people that said they usually attend the same pharmacy why they chose that pharmacy, of which:

- 78% of people said they usually attend the same pharmacy for convenience. 22% said they chose it for the good service it provided. 44 people said for both the convenience and good service.
- We received a further 197 comments after asking the above question. Overall, a majority of people said they chose the pharmacy because their GP is on site or nearby or they live locally.

Awareness and use of community pharmacy services

We asked 322 people what they use the pharmacy for, of which:

- 54% of people said they attend the pharmacy to pick up prescriptions. 17% said for healthcare advice, 16% said for over the counter medication, 12% said for other reasons including buying toiletries and 2% said because they could not get an appointment with their GP. Approximately 263 people out of 322 gave multiple answers.

We asked 315 people if they were aware of the services available at the pharmacy, of which:

- 83% of people said they were aware of the services available at the pharmacy. 17% said they were not aware of the different services.
- We received a further 57 comments after asking the above question of which a small number referring to specific services people were aware of. The most mentioned services were blood pressure checks, healthcare advice and the flu jab.

We asked 267 people if they had used the Minor Ailment Service at the pharmacy, of which:

- 66% of people said they had not used the Minor Ailment Service. 34% said they had used the Minor Ailment Service.
- We found that people living within the LDP area of Central had the highest percentage of people that had used the Minor Ailment Service at 58%, Fylde Coast followed at 34%, West Lancashire 29%, Pennine 27%.
- We received a further 159 comments after asking the above question. Many of these comments referred to their views on the quality of the service, which is discussed in the quality section below. Of the other comments received, 24 people said they had not needed the service, 20 said they did not want to use the service, 18 said they were unaware of the service and a small number said they were unsure on what the service covers or their eligibility

We asked 318 people if they had attended a consultation with the pharmacist, of which:

- 48% of people said they had attended a consultation with the pharmacist.
- We found that people living within the Central and West Lancashire areas had the highest percentage of people that had attended a consultation with the pharmacist at 52%, followed by Fylde Coast at 51%, Pennine at 48% and Bay Health and Care Partners at 26%.
- We received a further 222 comments after asking the above question. Most of these comments referred to their views on the quality of the service, which is discussed in the quality section below. Of the other comments received, the vast majority said they had attended a consultation for a medication review. Of the people that had not used the service, the vast majority of people said they had not needed it. A small number said they were unaware of the service or did not want to use it, either as a preference, or because they had more serious or long-term health conditions which they felt required a GP.

Quality of care provided

We asked 316 people if they felt the pharmacy could improve its services, of which:

- 84% said they did not think the pharmacy could improve its services. 16% said they felt the service could be improved.
- We found that people living within the West Lancashire area had the highest percentage of people that would like to see improvements at 23%, 18% for Pennine and Fylde Coast and 7% for Bay Health & Care Partners and Central.
- We received a further 153 comments after asking the above question. The majority were positive and often referred to staff being excellent, friendly and helpful.
- Of the comments made for improvements, the most common issues raised were with:
 - Waiting for prescriptions to be dispensed
 - Being too busy and more staff required
 - More seating required during busy periods
 - Having items in stock
 - A small number of other issues were raised including the need for longer opening times, more awareness of services available and staff being more helpful

We received 159 additional comments from people after asking them if they had used the Minor Ailment Service, of which:

- The majority said they were happy with the service, with many comments received including the service was:
 - Good and helpful
 - Saves time
 - Convenient
 - Informative
- Some negative comments were received including:
 - People needing their passport to access free medication
 - Confusion over the eligibility criteria, how the service works, and what medication is available
 - Unhelpful information provided
 - The pharmacy being too busy
 - Difficulties in attending appointments at the pharmacy when looking after children
 - People preferring to be seen by their GP

We received 222 comments from people after asking them if they had attended a consultation with the pharmacist, of which:

- The majority of people that had attended a consultation with the pharmacist said they were happy with the service provided including that the service was:

- Helpful and friendly
 - Helped people to understand their medication
 - Private and useful
 - Confidential
 - They were very confident to use the service
- A small minority of negative comments were received from those that had used the service including:
 - Being asked irrelevant questions
 - Being given poor advice
 - Still needing to go to their GP for long term health conditions

Does using the pharmacy mean that people use other health services differently?

We asked 321 people if they felt attending the pharmacy meant that they attend other health services less, of which:

- 60% of people said they think attending the pharmacy does not mean they attend other health services any less. 40% said they felt it did mean they attend other health services less
- We found that people living within the Central area had the highest percentage of people that said they did attend other health services less at 56%, followed by Fylde Coast at 49%, West Lancashire at 37%, Bay Health and Care Partners at 32% and Pennine least at 30%
- We received a further 131 comments after asking the above question. 55 people said that they attend their GP less because they could see their pharmacist for minor illness or as a starting point. A small number said the pharmacist was better than seeing their GP. 25 people said it made no difference to them because they still need or prefer to see their GP with 12 of those referring to long term health conditions.

Awareness, use and helpfulness of the Electronic Prescription Service

We asked 319 people if they used the Electronic Prescription Service, of which:

- 53% of people said they use the Electronic Prescription Service. 47% said they do not use the service.
- We found that people living within the Fylde Coast area had the highest percentage of people that said they used the Electronic Prescription Service at 67%, followed by Central at 54%, Pennine 52%, West Lancashire 50% and Bay Health and Care Partners at 35%.

We asked 198 people that had used the service how they had found it, of which:

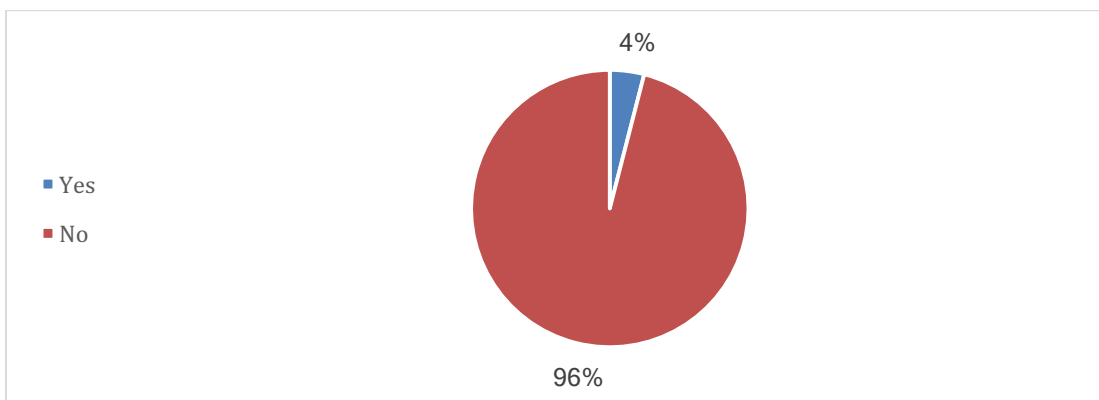
- The majority of people made positive comments about the Electronic Prescription Service, with many comments received including:

- The service is good
 - Quick and convenient
 - The online system works well
 - It is a great service
 - It is easy to use
 - They receive texts when their prescription is ready to collect
- A small number of negative comments were received including:
 - Items missing from prescriptions
 - Forms not being user friendly
 - The Electronic Prescription Service only being available for repeat prescriptions
 - They would prefer to order in person
 - They do not like using computers
 - That certain items were not available electronically
 - Problems between doctors and the pharmacy, including time taken on each end and communications

Lancashire Findings

This section provides further detail on the views of the 326 people that we spoke with at 24 different pharmacies across Lancashire.

1. **We asked: 'Have you had any difficulties getting here today?'**



(324 people answered)

82 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 43% said no, as the pharmacy is local or on public transport routes.
- 19% said no, as the pharmacy is accessible for them.
- 25% said they had experienced difficulties (non-specified).
- 3% said yes, and specified lack of disabled access.
- 3% said yes, and specified the car park is too small.

- 2% said yes, and specified the pharmacy is not on public transport routes.
- 5% made other comments.

Examples of comments:

“I’ve walked and I live locally.”

“I haven’t had any difficulties really, I drove here. Sometimes there is nowhere to park, but generally it’s ok.”

“It’s very handy as it’s next to the GP.”

“There’s parking in town, so it’s easy access as it’s on main shopping street.”

“I get the bus into the town centre.”

“Due to my back pain, it can be difficult to get here.”

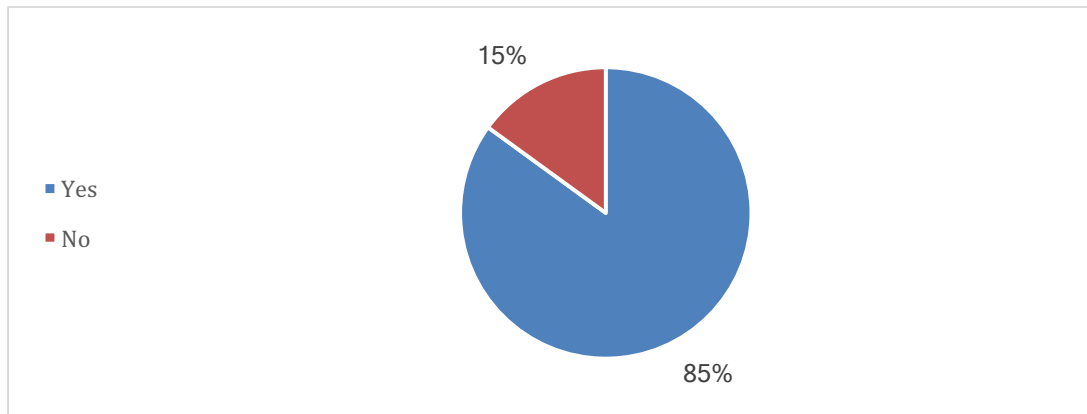
“There is no local parking and the door to the pharmacy is heavy.”

“I need to get a lift here as the buses are not frequent or reliable.”

“I have to walk, but if I asked them they would deliver my prescriptions.”

“I don’t want my prescriptions delivered as it gets me out.”

2. We asked: ‘Do you usually come to this pharmacy?’



(321 people answered)

26 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 58% of people who chose to comment said that they always attended that pharmacy.
- A further 8% chose to tell us that they usually attend that pharmacy but also use others.
- 17% said that they sometimes attend that pharmacy.
- 17% said that they do not usually attend that pharmacy.

Examples of comments:

“Sometimes, there is one closer to home though.”

“It’s convenient when I come into town.”

“I usually come here, there’s a dispensing service at my GP practice but I don’t like it as much as this one.”

“I come to this pharmacy as much as I can.”

“It is the only pharmacy for miles.”

“It’s the nearest and a good service.”

3. We asked those that answered yes to the above question: 'why is this?'

78% said for the convenience

22% said for the good service provided at this pharmacy

(256 people answered - 50 people said it was for both the good service and convenience)

197 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 36% said they choose their pharmacy because the GP is on site/nearby.
- 27% said they choose their pharmacy because it's very local to them.
- 18% said they choose their pharmacy because of the good service they receive.
- 6% said they choose their pharmacy because it's accessible for them.
- 5% said they choose their pharmacy because they've been using it for a long time.
- 4% said they choose their pharmacy because they pick up their prescriptions from there/the GP sends prescriptions there.
- 2% said they choose their pharmacy because it's big and/or stocks the things they need.
- 2% said they choose their pharmacy based on where they are at the time.

Examples of comments:

"I always come here. It's close to my GP and the staff are so friendly."

"There's a bigger choice on things than at the one closer to home."

"It's local but also excellent service."

"Easy access. They know me and are helpful."

"I've been coming here for about 20 years. It's close to where I live."

"It's a large pharmacy and has the medicine I need in stock."

"I love the staff here, it's what makes me come back."

"The one next to my GP is not good. You have to wait too long there so I prefer this one."

"I have used others but I prefer this one as they are more friendly. The pharmacy that is next to my GP practice is more of a dispensing service. It is too busy for personal attention. I would rather walk here than go elsewhere."

4. We asked those that said they do not usually attend that pharmacy: 'why did you choose this pharmacy today?'

45% said because their GP is still nearby

45% said they were in the area

4% said their usual pharmacy too busy

4% said they prefer it for quality/specific service

2% said they were home from University

2% said they felt like a change

(51 people answered)

Please note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore do not add up to 100%.

Examples of comments:

"It was on my way home today."

"The Health Centre one was busy today."

"I just use any pharmacy."

"It depends where I am as to which pharmacy I use."

"For a change."

"I use any pharmacy. I don't have regular medication so I only go to one when needed."

"I usually go to the pharmacy at my doctors but I forgot. We have come for Calpol on the Minor Ailment Service."

"I have come here because my dentist is close by and she has given me a prescription."

5. We asked: 'What do you use the pharmacy for?'

54% said for prescriptions **17%** said for healthcare advice

16% said for over the counter medication

12% said for other reasons

2% said because they were unable to get a GP/nurse appointment

(322 people answered of which 263 gave multiple answers)

Please note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore do not add up to 100%.

Examples of other reasons given:

"Follow up appointment."

"Toiletries."

"I also pick up shampoo and other health products."

"I purchase hair products."

"Flu vaccination."

"For children's health."

"My prescriptions are usually delivered to my home address because I work, but I just got an extra prescription from my GP so I called in to pick it up."

"I rarely visit so don't use the services."

"Stop smoking service."

"I will buy things that are on offer/bargains."

"I've had a consultancy session at my request and had a medicine check. I'm happy with the service."

"I have a prepayment certificate - they told me about it here so I stay here as they are honest with me."

"My doctor is far away but this is close, so I often come here."

"I ask if I can buy the medication and if it's cheaper to do that rather than pay prescription price."

"The doctors were closed over the public holidays hence this visit today."

"It is quicker than getting appointments with GP."

"I get a daily prescription. I get healthcare advice such as for my inhaler."

6. We asked: ‘What do you think of the service you get here?’

314 people answered this question. Of the comments received:

- 62% of comments said the service received was very good and good.
- 23% of comments said the service was very good because of the staff.
- 7% of comments said the service was okay.
- 4% of comments said the service was slow (waiting times and being busy).
- 2% of comments said the service was not good.
- 1% of comments said the service was good because it is convenient.
- 1% of comments said they did not know.
- >1% of comments said the service is good because the pharmacy is well stocked.

Please note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore do not add up to 100%.

Examples of comments:

“It’s always been first rate.”

“I am very impressed with the service. It’s top notch. It’s highly useful and I would recommend it. I have received advice on lowering my blood pressure on a number of occasions.”

“Very good service. They are helpful and thorough.”

“I’m pleased with service.”

“Friendly, nice and efficient.”

“Today has not been good - they have lost my prescription from last week. It’s usually good service.”

“It’s okay, sometimes slow with prescriptions, can take three to four days.”

“Not good, my prescription items are out of stock.”

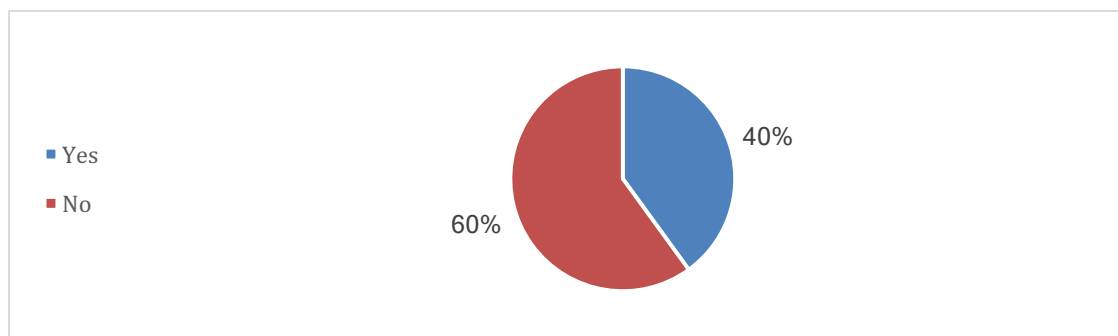
“Brilliant. It’s better than Lloyds pharmacy. The delivery driver here is so much better. He rings the bell and waits patiently for my mother to answer the door which means she isn’t rushing and doesn’t fall over. When it was Lloyds, they wouldn’t wait and my mum rushed to the door and would often fall over.”

“It’s very good, better than the GP. I can ask for advice and it’s more private and friendly.”

“They’ve helped me so much. At every point the pharmacy have helped me. Extra advice that I could never have expected. They go the extra mile. They are so helpful, they can’t help me enough. This pharmacy is the first port of call.”

“Good people. They can translate for me too.”

7. We asked: ‘Do you think that coming to the pharmacy means you attend other health services less?’



(321 people answered)

131 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 46% said they do not use other health services less because they still need or prefer to see their GP first.
- 39% said they do use other health services less because they go to the pharmacy for advice before attending their GP.
- 9% said they sometimes use other health services less.
- 5% said they do not use other health services less because they 'self-treat'.
- 1% made other comments.

Examples of comments:

"I definitely see the pharmacy as the starting point and I am well aware of the range of services so I am happy to use them."

"It's much easier getting help here than going to the GP."

"It's just an addition. If it's not an important complaint I would ask to see if they think I should see GP."

"It's quite easy to come here and so helpful. I still use GP but happy to come to pharmacy with questions."

"If it's anything like a cold or anything minor, I would use the pharmacy."

"I just go to my GP. I wouldn't come here especially for advice."

"I have some medical conditions but I know when I can come to the pharmacy for advice and when to go to the GP."

"I come here first then go to the GP if needed. It saves time and appointments are then available for those who really need them."

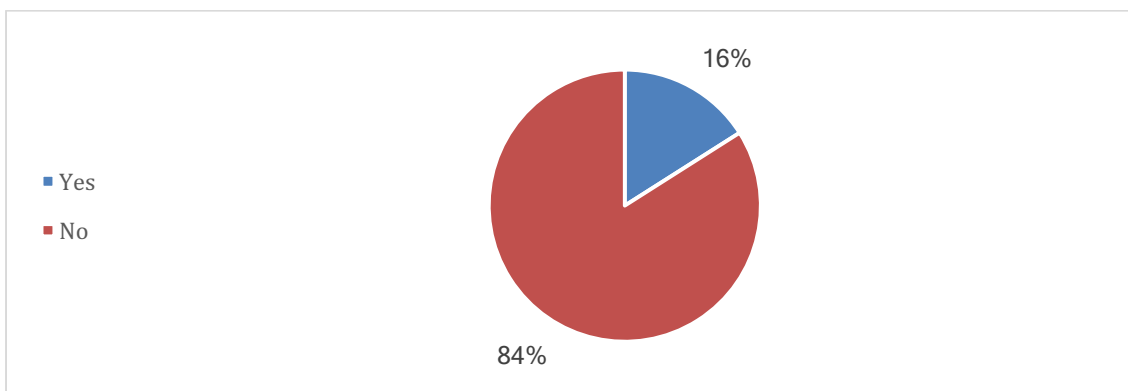
"I have to go to the doctors for my chest so it doesn't make any difference."

"I try to treat myself. I keep active and do yoga."

"I wouldn't come here over my GP, no way."

"I would Google it."

8. We asked: 'Do you think the pharmacy could improve its services to you?'



(316 people answered)

153 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 63% said they were happy with the service being provided already.
- 10% said there should be more staff/reduced waiting times.
- 7% said they think the pharmacy does enough already.
- 6% were unsure.
- 3% said they think there should be more advertising of the services available in the pharmacy.
- 3% said they think there should be more seating.
- 2% said they think the staff should be more helpful/friendly.
- 2% said they think the pharmacy should stock more medication/specialist medication.
- 1% said they would like to be able to dispose of ‘sharps’ at the pharmacy.
- 1% said it depends where you go.
- 1% said the pharmacy could improve everything.
- 1% said they would like ‘robot dispensers’.

Examples of comments:

“More staff are needed, they seem to be very busy.”

“They do enough already, it’s not meant to be a walk-in centre.”

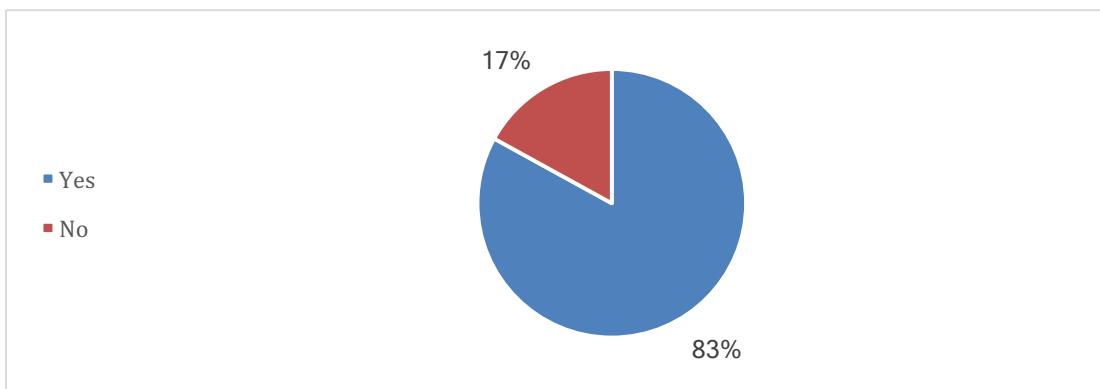
“Not this pharmacy, but others in the area need to improve their service. They are sometimes rude at other pharmacies and that’s why I always come to this pharmacy.”

“There should be more awareness available about what services pharmacy can offer to stop people going to A&E when they don’t need to be there.”

“It would be good if it was bigger and had more chairs. It can get really busy here.”

“It is great, I would not change anything.”

9. We asked: ‘Are you aware of the different health services available at this pharmacy?’



(315 people answered)

57 people chose to comment further. Of those comments:

- 28% said they were aware of all of the services available at the pharmacy.
- 13% said they were aware of the flu jab service.
- 11% said they were aware of the available services but do not use them.

- 11% said they were aware of the medication review service.
- 9% said they were unsure of the available services.
- 7% said they were aware of the Minor Ailment Service.
- 7% said they were aware of the blood pressure check service.
- 4% said they were aware of the smoking cessation service.
- 4% said they were aware of over the counter medications.
- 6% made other comments.

Examples of comments:

“I am aware of health care advice and the Minor Ailments Service.”

“I use a range and I’m always encouraged by the friendly and helpful service that I get.”

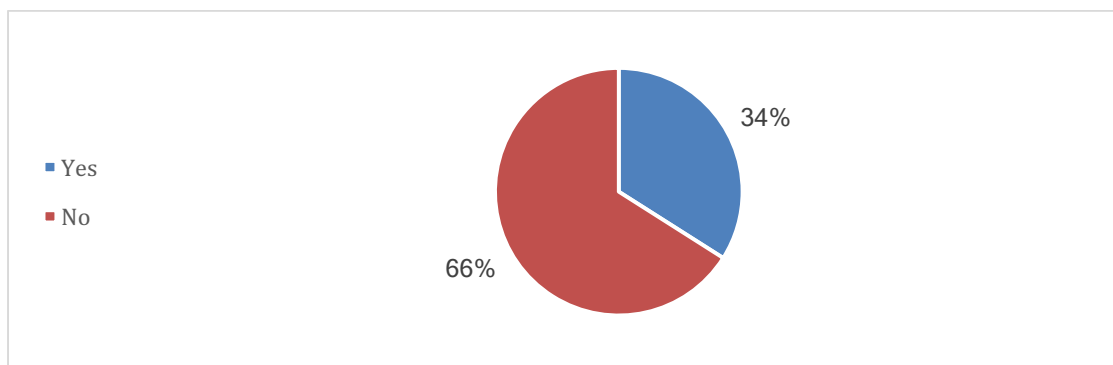
“I know about consultations with pharmacists about repeat medication but nothing else.”

“I have no knowledge of any - I only tend to come here for prescriptions.”

“I didn't know a pharmacy offered all those services until you pointed out the information displayed.”

“I know of some services. I have heard of the Minor Ailment Service but I did not know the extent of it.”

10. **We asked: ‘Have you ever used the Minor Ailment Service? (if provided at this pharmacy)’**



(267 people answered. Please note, this service is not provided in Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire North CCG area. In Blackpool, the service is provided to children only. The Fylde and Wyre CCG area have a service where the emphasis is on giving advice and messages about self-care, but also provide selected medicines free of charge to people who do not pay for their prescriptions)

11. **We asked: ‘If yes, how was it? If not, would you use it?’**

159 people answered this question. Of the comments received:

- 25% of people said they think the service is good.
- 25% of people said they do not need or want the service.
- 14% of people said they had used the service for a child.
- 8% of people said they would use the service in future.
- 7% of people said the service is helpful.

- 7% of people were unaware of the service.
- 7% of people said they did not think they were eligible/can't use the service.
- 4% of people said the service is easy to use.
- 1% of people said the service is not good.
- 2% made other comments.

Examples of comments:

"I have never thought about it. I didn't know it existed."

"I don't know what it is. I would probably use it."

"I used it for my grandchildren who had lice. It was an excellent service."

"It was okay but they have now stopped many medications which were allowed on the service."

"I've heard about it but I'm not sure how it really works."

"It is brilliant. I found it really useful for my daughter. It saves time going to the GP and you don't need to make an appointment you can just turn up and get help."

"It works well for me. I use it for my children if I can't get them an appointment at the doctors."

"I wouldn't use it, I'd just ask for advice and buy the medication. I think the NHS is stretched enough."

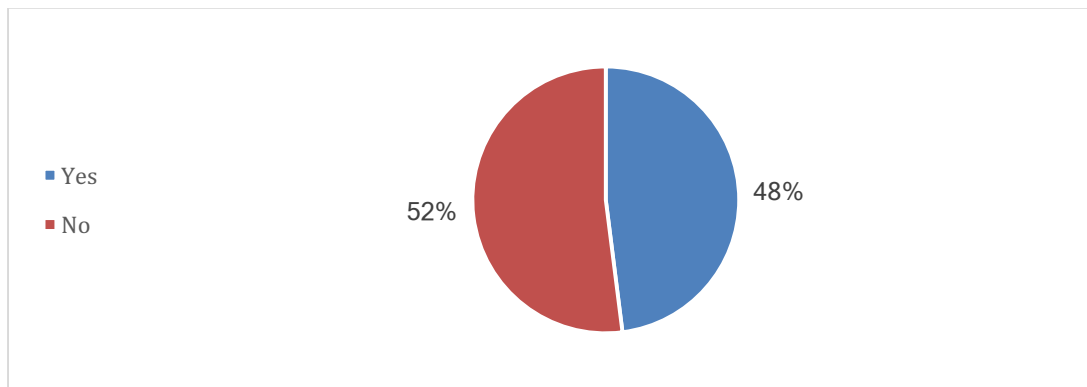
"It's not good - the information is patchy and you can only have specific meds."

"No I wouldn't, you can self-medicate without using this service."

"I don't really get minor health problems so I haven't needed to use it."

"I have used it for several day to day issues. It is a clear and easy service."

12. We asked: 'Have you ever had a consultation with the pharmacist here?'



(318 people answered)

13. We asked: 'If not, why? If yes, how was it?'

222 people answered this question. Of the comments received:

- 47% said they had had a consultation and thought the service was good.
- 23% said they had not needed this service.
- 13% said they had used this service for a medication review.
- 6% said they had used the service for some advice on a medical issue.

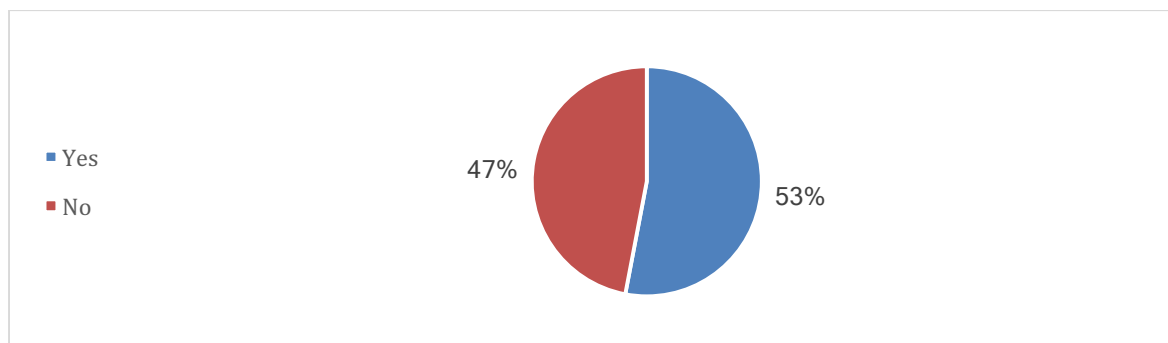
- 5% said they would rather see their GP.
- 2% were not aware of the service.
- 1% said they had used the service and it wasn't good.
- 2% made other comments.

Please note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore do not add up to 100%.

Examples of comments:

- "I had a medication review. It's helpful and friendly. I was offered suggestion to stop using sweeteners."*
- "It was private and useful."*
- "I had a medication review. It was a waste of time. They asked me two questions which were irrelevant, one was about side effects to medication - if I had any side effects, I would have gone to GP."*
- "I have used it for myself and my child. I always find it very helpful and useful. The staff are excellent."*
- "I am not aware of that service."*
- "No, because I have never needed it."*
- "I don't know how to get one."*
- "It was good and very helpful, and I didn't have to go to the GP."*
- "Yes, it was alright. It was helpful and confidential, and took place in a small room."*
- "Very helpful and the pharmacist was very obliging. They gave me some over the counter medication to help my condition at the time and it really helped."*
- "I had the flu jab. Everything was good and they were very helpful. It's like coming home being here."*
- "I wasn't aware of it but now that I've seen it would be good to have a blood pressure test."*
- "The consultation was fine and the pharmacist was helpful. I felt he was confident in what he was doing."*
- "I have had several consultations here and good advice is always given."*
- "I've never thought about it. I've only just noticed the sign now you have pointed it out to me."*

14. We asked: 'Do you use the Electronic Prescription Service?'



(319 people answered)

15. We asked those that had used the service: 'How have you found it?'

198 people answered this question. Of the comments received:

- 40% of people said the Electronic Prescription Service was good.
- 23% of people said the Electronic Prescription Service was convenient.
- 17% of people said they did not want to use/would not benefit from using Electronic Prescription Service.
- 12% of people said the Electronic Prescription Service was okay or fine.
- 7% said the Electronic Prescription Service was not good.
- 1% said they had never thought about using Electronic Prescription Service.

Examples of comments:

"It has been okay, I think staff could do with more I.T. training."

"It's been completely revolutionary. I do everything online. The best thing they have done. It is so fast and quick and is ready next day."

"I use it for repeat prescriptions and online appointments. It's good, it works well."

"I have tried using it but it didn't work properly."

"It's convenient, easy to use and usually ready when I come in."

"I don't use the EPS because I'm a 'techno-phobe' and there may be privacy issues."

"I have used it a few times, but the receptionist messed up my prescriptions so I stopped using it."

"My prescriptions for my 'sharps' (needles) can't be sent electronically. Therefore, I have to go to GP to pick up that prescription but then the other items I need are sent electronically so it doesn't really benefit or work better for me."

"I wasn't aware of it but I prefer to visit the pharmacy."

"Good but the GP surgery needs to give all correct and updated information to the pharmacy for it to work, otherwise prescriptions delayed."

"It is super and I get reminders which is good."

"I prefer to come in and do it face to face. It gets me out."

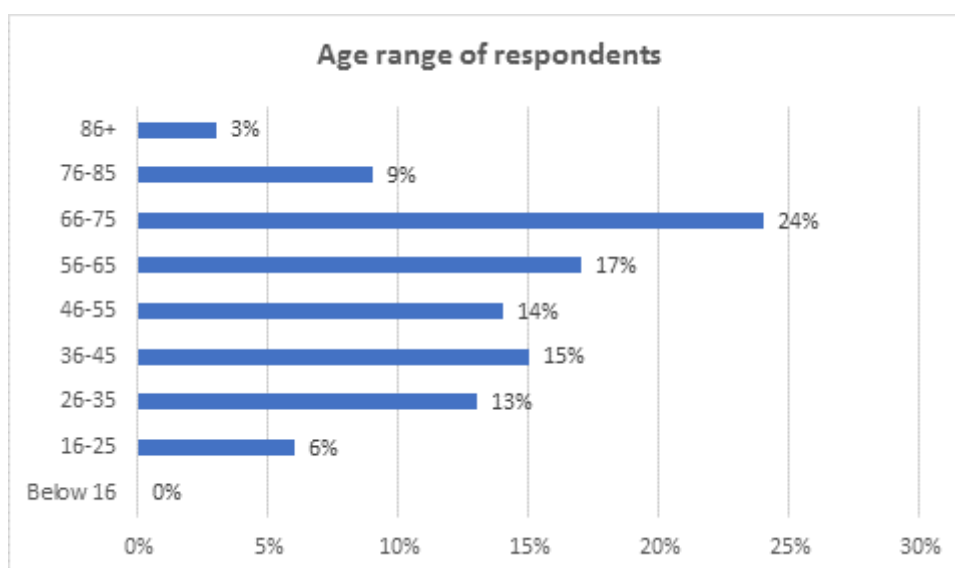
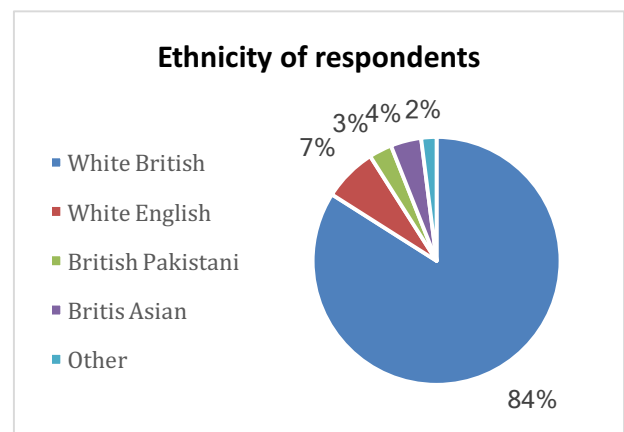
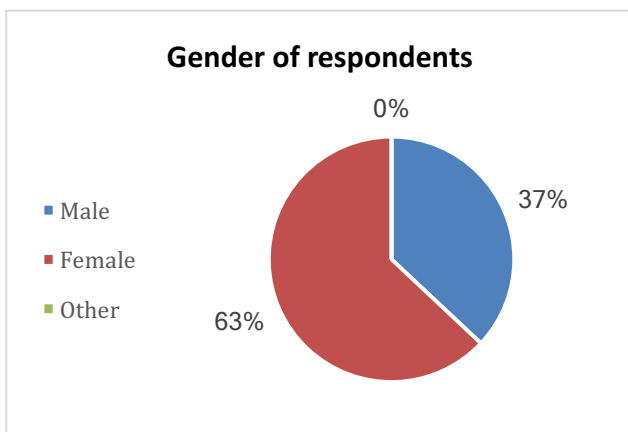
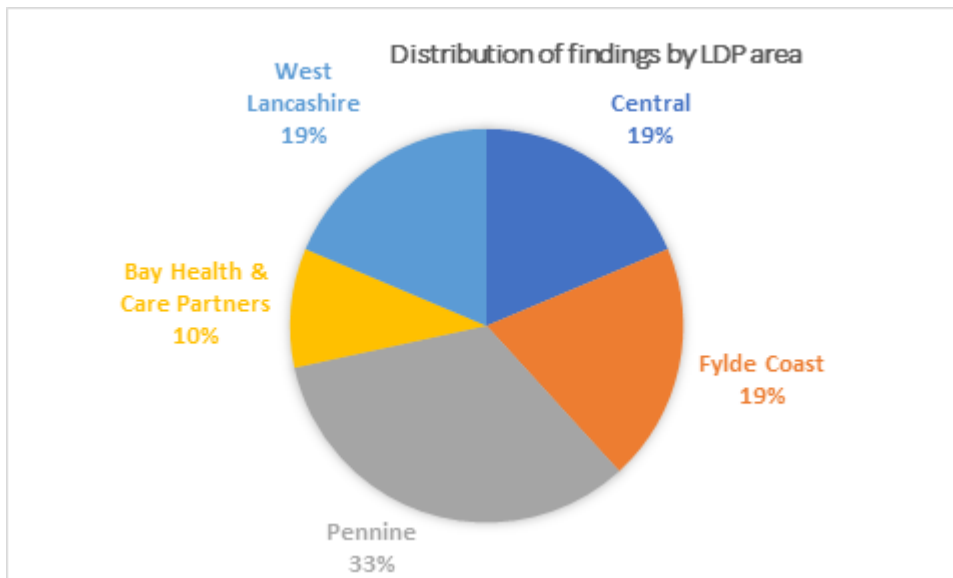
"I do not have a computer. I order from the GP receptionist and the prescriptions are electronically sent to the pharmacy."

How we will use this report

- The experiences and views shared by people in this report will be shared with and used within the Primary Care Strategy and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment as a tool to influence decisions on these services.
- This report will also be shared with:
 - local Clinical Commissioning Groups
 - NHS England
 - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in Lancashire
 - Healthwatch England to help generate a picture of public views on pharmacy services across England

Who we spoke to during this project

Below shows some demographic characteristics of people we spoke to and where they were across Lancashire:



Please note, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore do not add up to 100%.

Responses from stakeholders

Community Pharmacy Lancashire would like to thank the teams at Healthwatch Lancashire, Healthwatch Blackpool and Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen for their support with this project. We are very grateful for the clear and informed picture they have given us from the people who access our services, and we will be using the findings to identify what we can do differently to better meet their needs.

We would especially like to thank the teams of volunteers who have gone into pharmacies across the area to talk to people about pharmacy services, and of course the 326 people who took the time to share their views with the volunteers.

There are a number of key findings that we would like to briefly comment on:

Service Satisfaction

We are very proud that the vast majority of people said they were happy with the service they received and delighted to read the many positive comments that were shared about the pharmacists and staff, including that they were excellent, friendly and helpful. We were also pleased to note the levels of satisfaction with pharmacy medicines reviews, as this service supports long term conditions management and community pharmacy is well placed to provide this and similar supportive services.

Convenience and Good Service

We were not surprised to find that the majority of people chose their pharmacy due to convenience, using the same pharmacy each time they needed a service. Community pharmacists are the most easily accessible healthcare professionals, and we are pleased that local people value this access.

Service range

Just over half of people surveyed were visiting their pharmacy to collect their prescriptions; it was encouraging to note that included in the other half were those accessing health care advice and getting “over the counter” medication. Although most people said they were aware of the different services available at the pharmacy, many only mentioned a few of them. This highlights the need for improved information and communication to make people aware of services, including additional benefits that pharmacists can offer to patients as part of the NHS. We will certainly consider how we can do more to raise awareness of this both locally and nationally.

Pharmacy workload

There was some feedback around how we could improve, e.g. waiting times, not having adequate seating and not having items in stock. Pharmacies continue to work very hard to offer services to all those people who visit us; despite recent funding cuts and ongoing national issues with obtaining some medicines. We will continue to try to minimise the impact of this on all those who use our services to ensure we meet their expectations and make a positive difference to their health.

Irfan Tariq

Chair, Community Pharmacy Lancashire