

**Young Person's Pharmacy
Services
October 2019**



Healthwatch County Durham

Healthwatch County Durham is the county's consumer champion for health and social care, representing the voices of current and future users to decision makers



We listen

We listen to patients of health services and users of social care services, along with their family members or carers, to find out what they think of the services they receive.



We advise

We advise people how to get the best health and social care for themselves and their family. We provide help and information about all aspects of health and social care provided in County Durham.



We speak up

We make sure that consumers views are heard by those who provide health and social care. Wherever possible we try to work in partnership with providers to influence how they make improvements.

Background

Healthwatch County Durham was approached by the Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC), and asked to carry out some research into under 25's use of pharmacy services.

Accident and Emergency (A&E) Departments have seen an increase in the number of young people using the department for ailments that could be treated by either a GP, Advanced Nurse Practitioner or a Pharmacist.



ONS - Office for National Statistics

Our aims were to:

- Understand which pharmacy services people under the age of 25 are aware of
- Identify which services (if any) young people have accessed previously and would in the future
- Highlight what barriers exist to service access
- Ascertain where young people look for information about services

The Research

Initially we approached youth groups and schools in the local area, in a bid to identify suitable groups of young people that we could visit and talk to about pharmacy services.

We developed a survey, with input from the LPC, to ask a short series of questions relating to accessing pharmacy services (see appendix 1).

During initial conversations with young people, it became apparent that a large number did not know what a pharmacist or pharmacy team was, they were more familiar of the term 'chemist.' The survey was subsequently amended to ensure that both words were used.

It was then shared amongst relevant contacts and on our social media platforms and while the reach was high, the return rate was low. The level of interest from schools and youth groups was low so we developed a new engagement strategy.

We approached Durham County Council's Department for Education and Skills and asked if they could invite all local secondary schools in the area to take part in the research we were conducting. They shared our work on the education portal and invited all secondary schools to take part.

As an incentive, we offered the first three schools or youth groups to commit to a visit from our team, and gather a minimum of 100 completed surveys, a £100 Amazon voucher to spend on educational resources. In addition to this, we also had a prize draw of a £50 Amazon voucher for any young person completing a survey. This revised engagement strategy worked extremely well.

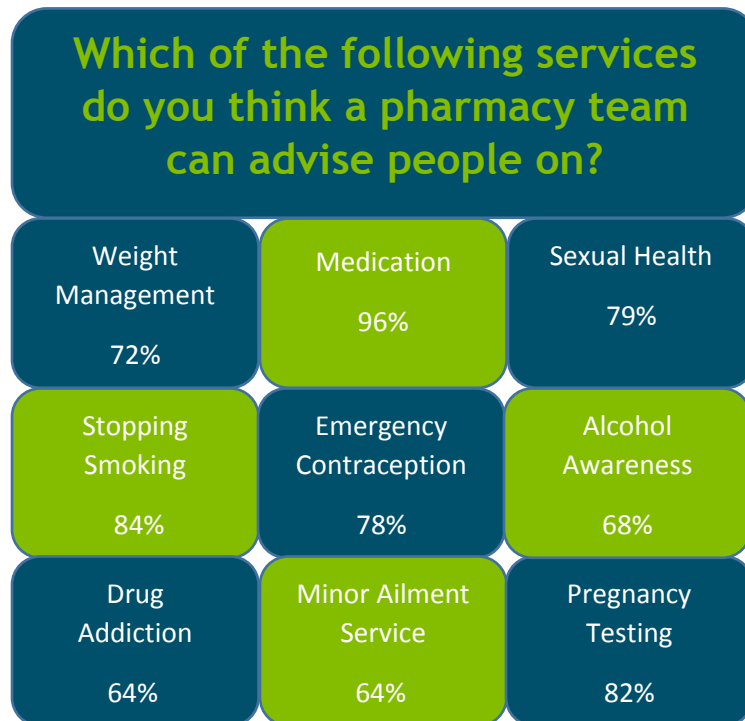


439

Completed Surveys!

Feedback

Healthwatch County Durham visited two schools and a youth group between June and October 2019, as well as promoting the survey in the monthly E-bulletin and through social media platforms. Overall, responses were received from 439 young people across the County.



There was a good overall awareness of the services offered, although when talking to young people, many asked what the minor ailment service was, when we explained, many of them were unaware that this service was available for under 16s, or under 19 if in full-time education.

Barriers to service access:
 48% concerned about confidentiality
 60% would rather see a GP or nurse

87% of young people have used a pharmacy for medication

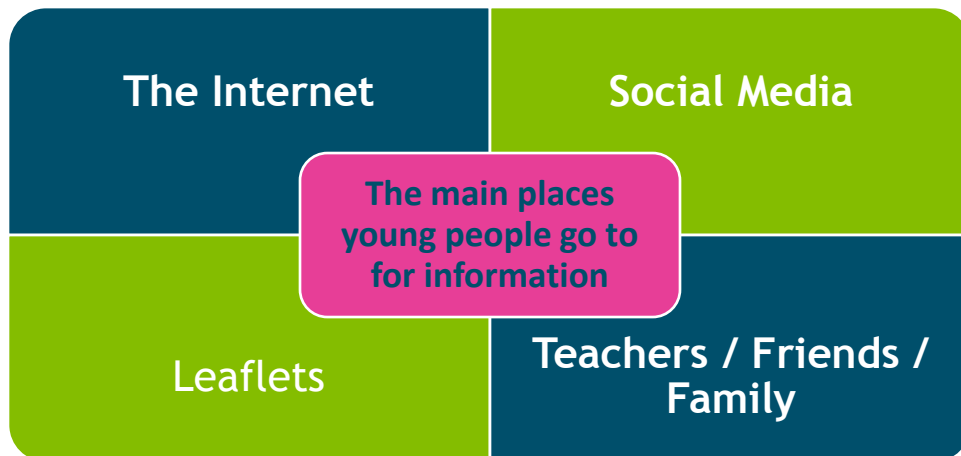
Services young people most likely to access

Medication
Sexual Health
Emergency Contraception
Pregnancy Testing
Minor Ailment Service

Services young people least likely to access

Stopping Smoking
Alcohol Awareness
Drug Addiction

Young people told us they would be more inclined to use pharmacy services if there were private rooms available to speak to a pharmacist (where they could not be overheard), and if they had more knowledge on the services offered.



Young people are less likely to use a noticeboard or posters for information.

Observations and Recommendations

From the information in our surveys and our conversations with young people across County Durham we have made the following observations and we would like the LPC to consider the following:

Hold an information roadshow for local schools, colleges and Durham University. Talking to groups of students about the training a pharmacist has to undertake and how this is comparable to GPs and Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) will go some way to increasing that levels of confidence that young people have in a pharmacist

Look at producing a briefing for parents, teachers, youth workers and those who have direct contact with young people (school staff, youth workers etc) to inform them of the services that are offered and how they can be accessed

Review the language used to describe services for example, the minor ailment scheme

Develop an online advertising campaign, with easy to understand information about the different local pharmacy services with 'real time' information on how and where they can be accessed

Consider an online 'chat' facility where young people can ask a pharmacist direct questions about their health and can be signposted to local services accordingly

Young people do have a good understanding of the types of services offered by a pharmacy, however, not all young people feel confident in accessing them. The main reasons for this, is that many would prefer to see a GP or nurse as there is an assumption that pharmacists are not as qualified to give medical advice and guidance.

Other issues raised include the privacy element of having to ask, at a busy, confined counter to speak to a pharmacist in private, the lack of private rooms available and whether they were overheard.

The services most likely to be accessed by young people included medication, sexual health, emergency contraception, pregnancy testing and the minor ailment services. The least likely to be accessed are stopping smoking, alcohol awareness and drug addiction.

Overall, despite there being a general awareness of the services on offer, many young people we spoke to were unaware of how, when and where they could be accessed.

Thank You

Healthwatch County Durham would like to thank the schools, youth groups and young people who took part in the pharmacy services consultation.

