

# Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot

## Enter and View Report



**March 2024**

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## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to thank all the people we spoke to and heard from, including patients/customers and staff of the Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot for their support and contribution to the Enter and View visit.

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## 1. Visit details

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### 1.1 Details of Visit

<b>Service Address</b>	Day Lewis Pharmacy Didcot, 108 Greenwood Way Harwell, Didcot, OX11 6GD
<b>Service Provider</b>	Day Lewis Group
<b>Date and Time</b>	December 6 <sup>th</sup> 2023, 10am to 1pm
<b>Authorised Representatives</b>	Amier Alagab, Katharine Howell
<b>Visit Status</b>	Announced
<b>Contact details</b>	01865 520520 Healthwatch Oxfordshire

### 1.2 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

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## 2. What is Enter and View?

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The Health and Social Care Act 2012 legislation allows Enter and View activity to be undertaken on premises where health and social care is publicly funded such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. We visit:

- To gather the views of health and social care service users, families, and carers.
- To report what we see and hear to improve the quality of health and care services.

### 2.1 Purpose of the visit

- To observe how the facility operates and provides its services.
- To collect views from patients, volunteers, and staff on services.
- To identify 'Best Practice' and highlight any areas of concern.

### 2.2 Strategic drivers

- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Enter and View visit to the Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot is part of a number of visits to a range of services within Oxfordshire. We wanted to hear what is working well as well as where things could be improved.
- These visits were planned and implemented in 2023 – 2024.

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### 3. Summary of findings

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During our visit to the Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot, we heard from 11 patients/customers and seven staff members.

Please note these findings represent a portrayal of what we observed and heard about the experiences of the service users and staff on the day that we visited:

- There were seven members of staff working during our visit, which is not usual according to staff and customers. A pharmacist, a dispenser, one trainee pharmacy dispenser, a pharmacy student, a relief dispenser, one regional pharmacy manager and a professional services pharmacist were present.
- The Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot is operated by a dedicated staff team that aims to deliver excellent care through collaborative efforts. The dedicated team at the pharmacy is committed to providing outstanding care and support, reflecting a broader trend in healthcare towards integrated practice units and multidisciplinary teams that work together to deliver comprehensive care cycles for patients' conditions.
- Comments from customers/patients about the environment, efficiency of the services, and the attitudes of staff at the pharmacy were very positive and are indicative of a patient-centred approach and a commitment to delivering quality healthcare services.
- The staff at the pharmacy were all clearly busy, and the fact that the pharmacy appears well-organised and under control reflects a positive and efficient work environment.
- The welcoming nature of the team members further emphasises a culture of hospitality and approachability within the pharmacy. This is indicative of a cohesive and supportive team that provides a high standard of care and service to patients and visitors.
- The Day Lewis Pharmacy is clean, well-organised, and staffed by confident and professional individuals. There is a consultation room for patients who desire private discussions, which seemed to be frequently used on the day.
- Information on display was clear and comprehensive, and included the responsible pharmacist notice, privacy notice, chaperone policy, prescription charge notice, information about vitamin D, oral health, drug helpline, giving feedback, antibiotic amnesty, deliveries and posters about

pharmacy services (advice, flu jabs). One poster about giving feedback was hard to read with small print.

- Day Lewis Pharmacy provides convenient and free spaces for vehicles in front of the pharmacy. This allows customers to easily park their vehicles while visiting the pharmacy.
- We observed social distancing marks on the floor. Additionally, the pharmacy provided three chairs in the waiting area for those who need them.
- The premises was wheelchair accessible and had an electronic door.
- The pharmacy opening times were displayed clearly at the main entrance.
- A collection point (medicines dispensed machine) which serves around 200 customers is available at the pharmacy outside opening hours for medication self-collection.
- The pharmacy does not have a hearing loop in place. This could be a barrier for customers with hearing impairments who may struggle to hear and understand important information at the pharmacy.
- There was not clear information displayed on how to give comments and feedback, and no feedback or suggestion box available for customers.
- There are no translated information, leaflets, or information about interpreting service on display at the pharmacy waiting area, only some leaflets on display in the consultation room only.
- It was all tidy and well managed. However, we were concerned to see that spare packaging and some other boxes were being stored in the toilet.
- The absence of instructive labels (Alphabet) on the shelves to indicate how easily staff could dispense items may present challenges in ensuring efficient and accurate dispensing processes.

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## 4. Recommendations

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Following our visit, we would like to make these recommendations:

- Storing items related to medications packaging in the toilet is not recommended due to potential contamination.
- The absence of instructive labels (Alphabet) on the shelves to indicate how easily staff could locate the items may present challenges in ensuring efficient and accurate dispensing processes. Clear and informative labelling is essential in pharmacy settings to facilitate accurate medication dispensing and to support staff in their duties.
- To improve customer satisfaction and provide an avenue for customers to give feedback, it would be beneficial for the pharmacy to display a suggestion box in the waiting area. This suggestion box can serve as a means for customers and patients to share their thoughts, suggestions, and concerns about their experience at the pharmacy.
- The presence of a hearing loop in the pharmacy, making it easier for people with hearing loss to communicate and engage in conversations.
- Displaying translated information leaflets in the waiting area of the pharmacy can greatly enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of the services provided. Translated leaflets can help customers who may have limited proficiency in the primary language used at the pharmacy to better understand important information about medications, health conditions, and other relevant topics.

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## 5. Service response to recommendations

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Response received by an email dated 23.02.24.

Dear Amier,

We have read your report and discussed it with the Didcot pharmacy team and support office management team.

Regarding your recommendations, our actions are as follows:

- We have removed items stored in the toilet and relocated them to another more appropriate storage area.
- As suggested, alphabet labels have been attached to dispensary shelves to aid the location of individual medicines.
- An enlarged version of the complaints/comment's poster entitled 'We need you to help us' will be displayed in the pharmacy and a suggestions box is now available.
- There is a hearing loop in this pharmacy and a hearing loop sign is now in place to alert members of the public who wish to use it.
- The pharmacy is using translated leaflets from UK charities which can be accessed from <https://www.nhs.uk/about-us/health-information-in-other-languages/>
- The current display uses leaflets in English, Polish and Urdu from Diabetes UK and Macmillan cancer support charities websites.

Please let me know if further actions are required and once again, apologies for the delay in replying.

Best Regards

Caroline



**Dr Caroline Parkhurst | Professional Services Pharmacist | Available Tuesday and Wednesday**

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## 6. Report: Visit to the Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

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### Methodology

We follow Healthwatch England guidelines for Enter and View visits. The steps below summarise the process:

- **Plan:**
  - Appoint an Enter and View lead for the visit.
- **Communicate:**
  - Inform the provider of the visit, and relevant details including the purpose, date, time, estimation of how long it will take, how many people will be carrying out the visit, and the name of the lead person.
  - Prepare visit posters including the purpose of the visit, time and date, and dispatch these to the provider for display, so that people using the service are clear why the visit is taking place.
  - Include information about how members of the public can contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire if they are not able to when the visit is taking place.
- **Prepare:**
  - Prepare resources such as surveys and questionnaires.
  - Identify any requirements for special support necessary to facilitate the visit such as access or security. This must be done before the visit, as you may be refused entry.
  - Meet with the service provider before the visit.
- **Report:**
  - On completion of the visit a draft report is shared with the service provider requesting comments on factual accuracy and responses to any recommendations within 20 working days.
- **Follow up:**

The final report is published on Healthwatch Oxfordshire website and shared with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and service provider.

The visit to the day Lewis pharmacy took place from 10am to 1pm on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, with two trained Enter and View representatives, including the lead member.

During the visit, the team were able to spend time observing the daily work of the pharmacy, noting the general environment such as cleanliness, comfort, and information displays, and to speak to both patients/customers and staff.

Additional question sheets, with FREEPOST envelopes for return, were left with staff and patients for comment and feedback.

### **Service background**

Day Lewis Pharmacy is one of the largest independent pharmacy chains in the UK and Europe. It plays a crucial role in providing essential healthcare services to communities across UK. The company was founded in 1975 by the late Kirit Patel MBE and his brother JC Patel, with the purchase of their first pharmacy in Southborough.

Since its inception, the Day Lewis Group has experienced significant growth and now operates over 260 pharmacies in the UK. One of the pharmacies in their chain is in Didcot.

The Day Lewis Group remains a family-owned entity and is currently managed by the second generation, including Kirit Patel Jnr (Jay), Rupa Patel, and Jayanti Patel.

The Day Lewis Group operates six warehouses located in Surrey, with a total area of over 16,000 square meters. These warehouses are used to store medicines and products that are distributed to over 640 pharmacies across the country. On average, the Day Lewis Group dispatches over 64 million packs per year.

The Day Lewis Pharmacy in Didcot offers a range of services and enhanced services including blood pressure checks and flu jabs.

More details can be found at the link below:

<https://www.daylewis.co.uk/>

### **Access and signage to the Day Lewis Pharmacy at Didcot**

External signage was very clear, free car parking and disabled access space was available in front of the pharmacy shop, and it was easy to find.



The entrance

The pharmacy opening hours were displayed and clearly visible for customers.



Opening hours

## The environment

The Day Lewis Pharmacy was clean, bright, and has an open layout, with lots of space for queuing. This design allows for a comfortable and efficient experience for patients. Additionally, the pharmacy incorporates a transparent screen that enables patients to see the pharmacists and dispensers working in the back space. This feature allows for direct communication between patients requiring methadone prescriptions and the pharmacist through the screen, eliminating the need for them to go to the desk.

The atmosphere of the pharmacy was calm and quiet. Staff were welcoming and staff-patient interactions were friendly.

We noted that some packaging items were being stored in the toilet. Storing empty pill boxes in the toilet is not recommended due to various reasons, including potential contamination of the medication and environmental concerns.



Items stored in the toilet

### Information on display

The Day Lewis Pharmacy displays various public facing notices and posters to provide important information and promote their services. Some of the displayed notices and posters include:

1. Giving Feedback: The poster about giving feedback encourages patients to provide their feedback and suggestions to help improve the pharmacy's services. However, it is noted that the small print on this poster made it difficult to read and there was no feedback box available in the pharmacy.
2. Responsible Pharmacist Notice: This notice indicates the name of the responsible pharmacist who is overseeing the pharmacy's operations at a given time. It ensures accountability and compliance with legal requirements.
3. Privacy Notice: This informs patients about the availability of consultation room.
4. Chaperone Policy: This policy outlines the pharmacy's commitment to ensuring patient comfort and safety during sensitive consultations or examinations.
5. Prescription Charge Notice: This notice provides information about prescription charges and any exemptions or reductions that may apply.
6. Information about Vitamin D and Oral Health: These posters provide educational information about the benefits of vitamin D and oral health, promoting awareness and encouraging good oral hygiene practices.
7. Drug Helpline: This poster provides contact information for a helpline or support service for individuals seeking assistance or information related to drug use or addiction.
8. Antibiotic Amnesty: This poster promotes an antibiotic amnesty programme, which encourages patients to return unused or expired antibiotics to the pharmacy for proper disposal, reducing the risk of antibiotic misuse or environmental contamination.
9. Deliveries: The pharmacy has displayed information about their delivery services, highlighting the convenience of having medications and healthcare products delivered to patients' homes.
10. Posters about pharmacy services: These posters provide information about various pharmacy services offered, such as advice on health-related topics and flu vaccinations.





Consultation room



Leaflets in the consultation room

### **Patient and customer feedback**

Overall, the patients/customers were hugely appreciative of the support and care they received at the Day Lewis pharmacy. They praised and thanked the staff team.

During our visit to the Day Lewis Pharmacy, we had the opportunity to interact with 11 customers/patients. Of these, six were men and five were women. The age range of the customers/patients we encountered was between 25 and 80 years old. Additionally, nine of them identified as white British, one had a white background, and one mentioned their ethnicity as unknown.

The patients/customers who spoke to us felt that the information and advice they received about their medication and care was good.

**When we asked customers about other services available at the pharmacy,** most were aware of the different services available. Comments included:

*'I knew about flu jabs and blood pressure checks but didn't need them (my GP does flu jabs). I haven't had a medication review for four years but I'm keeping quiet as I feel OK at the moment.'*

*'Didn't know about vaccinations and blood pressure checks, did know about getting advice from the pharmacist before you see your GP.'*

**Are your prescriptions sent directly from your GP practice?**

We heard that this process worked smoothly.

One told us:

*'Yes, or I order repeat prescriptions online, I get a text to say they are ready or I just pop by as it's near my daughter's school.'*

**When we asked for any other comments,** we heard:

*'Good but this is the quietest I've ever seen the pharmacy! In the middle of the year, they seemed to be struggling with staff but it's settling down now. I haven't had any supply issues.'*

*'They were really busy during covid and overworked, but it seems to have settled down nicely in the last few months, I'm happy with the services. But they need to plan for the new housing estates and young families moving in.'*

*'It's usually quite busy, but this is a good pharmacy – easy to get to. All the chemists are in the same boat, plus they shut one or two in Didcot.'*

*'It's excellent, it has got better recently. I get prompt, friendly service. The staff make me feel welcome. I asked about bandages and wound dressings and got the information I needed. It's hard to get through on the phone but it's fine in person. Friendly staff, satisfactory service.'*

The patients/customers were very happy about the care and services received and told us the staff are well qualified and offer a high quality of care, always supporting them and providing information related to their need.

**When we asked the customers about how to give feedback or complaint,** most noted they would do this verbally but were not sure about any other methods to give feedback.

### **Staff feedback**

We received feedback and comments from seven members of staff on the day, representing a cross-section of roles including pharmacist, regional pharmacy manager, relief dispenser, professional services pharmacist, pharmacy dispenser and pharmacy student.

Staff we spoke to were positive about their work in the Day Lewis Pharmacy, and especially valued the patient/customer interactions.

We heard from staff that Day Lewis Pharmacy maintains a 'near miss' register for internal use. This register is not displayed but is entered into the computer system to produce a report. This allows the pharmacy to track and analyse near miss incidents, which are events that could have resulted in harm but were prevented.

Although structured meetings are not currently in place, staff mentioned that they intend to implement them in the future. Structured meetings can provide a platform for regular communication, sharing of information, and addressing any concerns or improvements within the pharmacy.

When an incident occurs (dispensing error), we heard that the pharmacy engages in ad-hoc communication. This involves discussions among staff members; it allows for immediate communication and resolution of the issue.

Staff told us that the management are open to suggestions and feedback. Staff commented that they felt listened to and able to make suggestions on the pharmacy. They felt that their concerns would be taken seriously.

We heard from all the staff that they had the essential and required training.

### **What is the best thing staff said about the job?**

Staff told us being part of the community, serving the community, interacting with patients are the best thing in their job. They also mentioned:

- Being able to make a difference to people's lives. And the team they work with.
- Flexibility in covering a range of branches and satisfaction in making a difference for their team.

### **What are the challenges staff raised?**

We asked staff to tell us about any frustrations or challenges with their work.

Comments included the challenges of staff recruitment and staff shortages.



Staff said that there is a growing population and demand for pharmacy services. However, delivering an effective service and paying attention to patient/customer expectations, staff shortage and drug shortages are the main challenges.

Staff told us a new IT system is currently being implemented which may be challenging at the beginning.

**What are the most frustrating aspects for staff?**

Workload is hard to manage at the present number of the team - workload in pharmacy generally is hard. There is a new member of staff starting tomorrow and a vacancy being advertised. Staff told us that they need more permanent members of staff. *'In terms of what we need, we need more staff. Several of those here today are not permanent or usually here.'*

**What suggestions did staff make?**

Staff suggestions included:

- Day Lewis Pharmacy Didcot could be improved with stock control, extra staff.



**Healthwatch Oxfordshire** – our friendly staff are here for you to help answer questions or give you information on health and care services in Oxfordshire. If you need more information or advice, call us on **01865 520520** from 9am–4pm Monday to Friday.

To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire please see **[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)**

If you would like a paper copy of this report or would like it in a different format or language, please get in touch with us:



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