



Community Pharmacy

Survey results 2023
Published February 2024

healthwatch
York

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Acknowledgements:

Thanks to everyone at Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire (CPNY) and our local pharmacy colleagues for supporting us with this work. Particular thanks to Tracey at Copmanthorpe for sharing a day in her life, and talking us through the journey of a prescription, and to Ian at CPNY for making time to meet with us to finalise this report and sharing a wealth of information about the challenges facing pharmacies.

Cover photo by Mariano Baraldi via unsplash

Background

Pharmacies are one of our easiest health services to access, providing free information and advice to millions every year. In North Yorkshire alone, they dispense around 1.25M items every month¹. Pharmacies are one of the four pillars of primary care services alongside GPs, dentistry and eye care. There are over 11,500 pharmacies in the UK².

Pharmacies provide a number of essential services³ through their NHS contracts. These are:

- Dispensing Medicines, and keeping records of all medicines they dispense
- Repeat Dispensing / eRD (electronic Repeat Dispensing)
- Dispensing Appliances
- Discharge Medicines Service – hospitals can make a referral to pharmacies when someone leaves hospital. Community pharmacies will then check the person’s current prescriptions and any changes made whilst they were in hospital, contact the patient to make sure they understand the changes that have been made, and make sure the patient then has the right prescriptions in place
- Healthy Living Pharmacy, promoting public health information and holding public health events
- Self-care support – through advice and the sale of medicines
- Signposting
- Disposal of unwanted medicines

¹ [UK community pharmacy data | PharmData.co.uk](https://www.pharmdata.co.uk/)

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/418071/community-pharmacies-in-england/>

³ [Essential Services – Community Pharmacy England \(cpe.org.uk\)](https://www.cpe.org.uk/)

In some areas, pharmacies are also funded to provide additional 'advanced' services, such as:

- Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS) – now replaced by Pharmacy First referral schemes
- Walk in Consultation Service (WICS)
- Flu vaccination Service
- Smoking Cessation Service
- Hypertension Case-Finding
- Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) Service
- New Medicine Service
- Pharmacy Contraception Service
- Appliance Use Reviews
- Stoma Appliance Customisation

There can also be National Enhanced Services and Local Enhanced Services, covering things like:

- Covid-19 Vaccination Service

During the Covid-19 pandemic pharmacies also received funding through an NHS England scheme to help cover the costs of delivering medicines to those unable to collect it⁴. This funding has now ended.

⁴ [C1198_Home-delivery-during-the-COVID19-outbreak-Service-Spec-and-guidanceV7.pdf \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

Recent years have been tough for pharmacies. In January 2022, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) released a briefing⁵. In it they outline the cut to pharmacy funding from £2.8bn in 2015/16 to £2.592bn in 2017/18 and that funding has remained stagnant since. Earlier this year the Company Chemists' Association reported a 'truly broken' funding model that equated to a £67,000 shortfall for each community pharmacy⁶.

In April 2022, a PSNC report raised concerns about medicines supply chain problems fuelling a rise in abuse towards pharmacy staff⁷. The report highlighted the increased stress and workload for pharmacy staff alongside frustrations and inconvenience for pharmacy users. In response to these growing frustrations, Community Pharmacy England released a factsheet for patients to explain medicines supply issues⁸.

In December 2022, leaders of a number of pharmacy representative bodies wrote to the Secretary of State⁹. They raised their concerns that many pharmacies were struggling to survive. They highlighted that due to the way prescriptions are paid out, many pharmacies are now dispensing at a loss and facing critical cashflow problems. Without addressing the "30% real terms funding cuts" over the past 7 years, they state that the Government risks more pharmacy closures and medicine supply problems. They highlighted the need for further investment to make sure pharmacies can expand the role they play in supporting the health and wellbeing of their communities.

⁵ [PSNC-Briefing-003.22-Pharmacy-Funding-and-Capacity.pdf \(cpe.org.uk\)](#) January 2022

⁶ [Funding model 'truly broken' as each pharmacy facing £67k yearly shortfall, warns CCA | Chemist+Druggist :: C+D \(chemistanddruggist.co.uk\)](#) 09 January 2023

⁷ [Medicine supply chain issues fuelling rise in abuse towards pharmacists in England, report finds | ITV News](#) 25 April 2022

⁸ [PSNC-Medicines-Supply-Information-Leaflet-July-2022.pdf \(cpe.org.uk\)](#)

⁹ [Pharmacy leaders join forces to write to the Secretary of State - NPA » NPA](#) 23 December 2022

In April 2023, Channel 4 News¹⁰ reported on a survey completed by PSNC. This annual survey highlighted the ongoing concerns about pharmacy viability. To understand just how bleak a picture this painted, these are the key findings of the survey¹¹:

- 96% of pharmacy companies reported significantly higher costs. Most pharmacy owners (96%) blamed unreimbursed medicine costs, as well as increases in wages (91%), rising utility costs (78%) and increased time to source medicines (76%) for these rising costs.
- 73% of pharmacy owners reported that they didn't know how much longer the threats to their businesses could be managed. 16% don't think that they will survive another year; only 7% of respondents considered their pharmacy business to be profitable.
- 97% of pharmacy owners reported being unable to source some medicines for patients. 81% said they were unable to spend as much time with patients, and over three-quarters (76%) said they were unable to respond to patients' calls and emails as quickly as usual. 73% reported longer dispensing times for prescriptions. 65% reported patients waiting longer in the pharmacy for advice.
- Around half (52%) of pharmacy staff said that the pharmacies they work in were unable to provide advanced services for patients and 44% reported being unable to provide locally commissioned services to patients. Nearly three-quarters (70%) of pharmacy team members reported patients waiting longer in the pharmacy for advice from staff.
- According to pharmacy team members, 92% of pharmacies are dealing with medicine supply issues every day; a significant increase from 67% the previous year.

¹⁰ [Pharmacies on 'brink of collapse' in England – Channel 4 News](#) 12 April 2023

¹¹ [PSNC-Briefing-009.23-Summary-of-the-results-of-PSNCs-2023-Pharmacy-Pressures-Survey.pdf \(cpe.org.uk\)](#)

- 97% of pharmacy owners also reported significant increases in wholesaler and medicine supply issues. 71% reported significant increases in delays in prescriptions being issued. Similarly, 93% of pharmacy owners said that their staff were spending longer than ever before on medicines procurement, with the average extra staff time needed to procure medicines being 11 hours per week; up from 5.3 hours last year.
- 87% of pharmacy teams members said that patient health is being put at risk due to medicines supply issues.
- 78% of pharmacy team members said that their work is having a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing. 31% of pharmacy staff said they were barely coping. 88% of pharmacy owners said that they were concerned or extremely concerned about the wellbeing of their pharmacy team(s)
- 45% of pharmacy teams cited patient abuse as one of the reasons why they are not coping at work. Other factors included increased workload (81%), problems sourcing medicines for patients (71%), increases in patient requests for support (81%) and staff unavailability (34%).

As a result of these pressures, there have been a number of pharmacy closures. In January 2023 Lloyds Pharmacies announced the closure of 237 stores in Sainsbury's supermarkets, putting 2,000 jobs at risk¹². Lloyds cited "changing market conditions" as the driver for these closures. In June, Boots also announced the closure of 300 stores but confirmed they expect to redeploy all workers across their remaining 1,900 stores¹³.

In April 2023, the Government laid out new regulations enabling 100 hour pharmacies to reduce their core hours to no less than 72 hours per week. They must maintain 5–9pm hours Monday to Saturday and 11am–4pm on Sunday. The impact of closures and changes to the total number of pharmacy hours in York and North Yorkshire can be seen in Appendix 3.

In May 2023 NHS England published the delivery plan for recovering access to primary care. This provided an update on support to practices

and Primary Care Networks, alongside checklists of actions. The key elements of this recovery plan are:

- Emphasis on digital technology at GP practices
- Offering appropriate care through an increase in non-GP roles at GP practices
- People will be encouraged to manage their own health at home
- More services offered through community pharmacy

In more detail, this means the plan asks community pharmacy to increase the services they offer. First, they must increase the number of blood pressure checks they do under the NHS Hypertension Case-Finding service by a further 2.5 M in a year.

Next, Pharmacy First launched in February 2024. This scheme allows pharmacists to treat 7 common ailments. These are:

- sore throat (5 years +)
- earache (1-17 years only)
- sinusitis (12 years +)
- impetigo (1 year +)
- shingles (18 years +)
- infected insect bites (1 year +)
- uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (16-64 years)

The scheme means that they can supply prescription-only medication including antibiotics and antivirals under something known as a 'patient group direction'. A patient group direction (**PGD**) is a written instruction that allows named, authorised and registered healthcare professionals to sell, supply or administer named medicines in an identified clinical

¹² [Lloyds Pharmacy to close all 237 Sainsbury's outlets | Pharmaceuticals industry | The Guardian](#) 19 January 2023

¹³ [How many Boots stores are closing? Why the closures are happening and which branches are expected to shut \(inews.co.uk\)](#) 28 June 2023

situation legally, without needing a written, patient-specific prescription from an approved prescriber.

There is also a greater role for pharmacies in the Pharmacy Contraception Service. This allows pharmacists to manage, and in time start people on oral contraception. This will be further extended to include long acting reversible contraception (LARCs), but not intrauterine devices or systems.

Understandably, there is significant concern about the ability of pharmacies to fulfil the increased role identified for them. The funding offered for these schemes doesn't begin to address the total shortfall in pharmacy funding. At the same time, the increase in non-GP roles in GP practices may increase the recruitment challenges pharmacies are experiencing. (For more information about what a typical day for a pharmacist looks like please see Appendix 5)

Healthwatch York and Healthwatch North Yorkshire were contacted by Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire to seek feedback about people's experiences of local pharmacies across York and North Yorkshire. The aim is to establish a baseline regarding public perception of pharmacy services across North Yorkshire and York, with a view to repeating the survey in future years to see what impact new initiatives and services have on people's views.

What we did to find out more

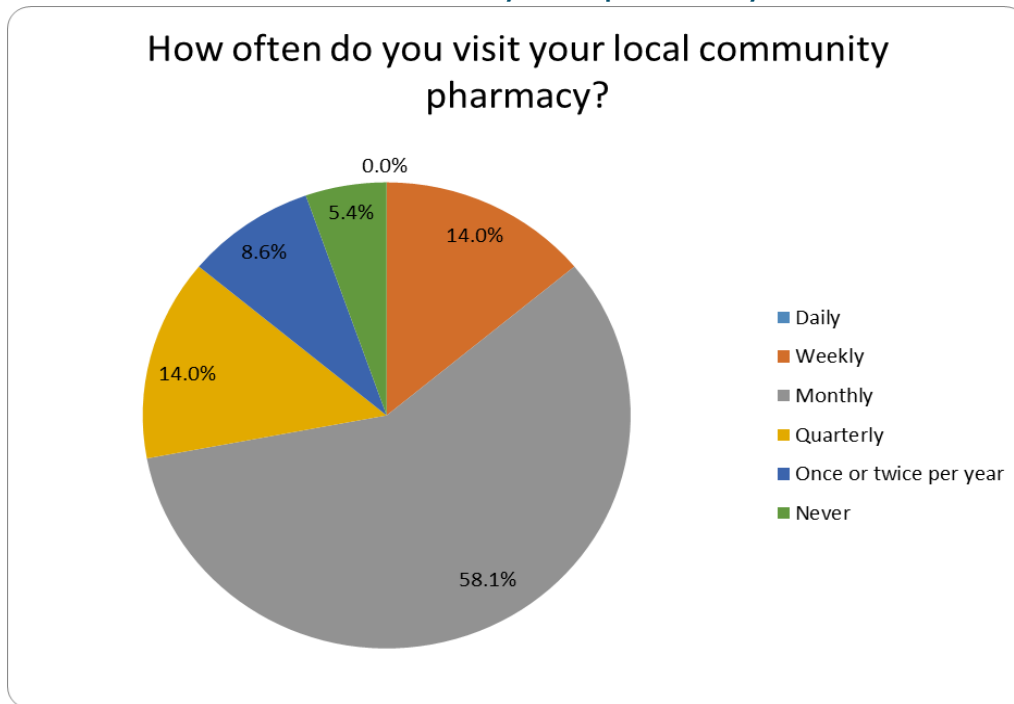
Healthwatch York, Healthwatch North Yorkshire and Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire worked together to develop a survey. This was available online and in paper form. The survey was promoted through the Healthwatch social media and newsletters. Paper copies were taken to events and activities where we encouraged people to respond. Pharmacies were asked to help share the survey instore.

The survey ran from Monday 22 May to 17 July 2023. Ninety-four people responded from across York and North Yorkshire.

Survey findings

How often do people visit their local pharmacy

The majority of respondents (58.1%) visited their local pharmacy monthly. No-one visited the pharmacy daily and a similar number (14%) visited either weekly or quarterly.



Which pharmacy do people visit?

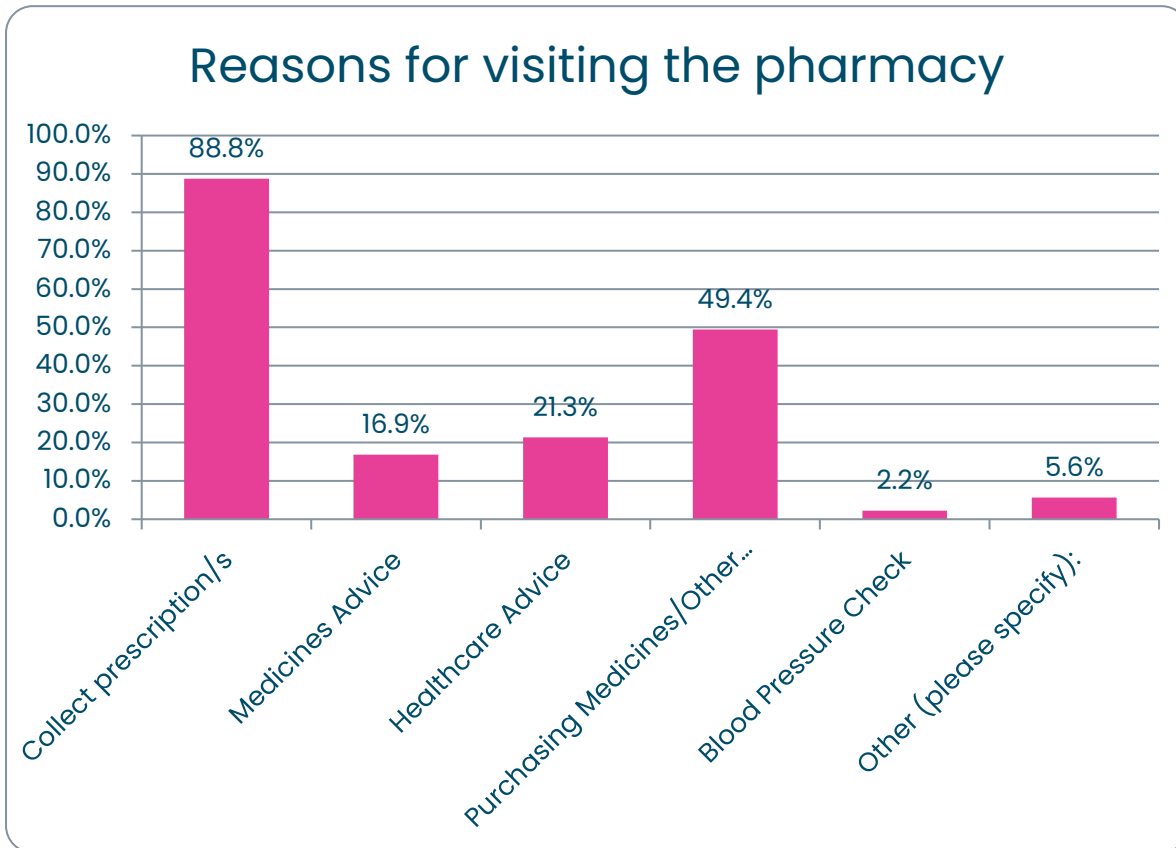
We asked people to name their local pharmacy. As this survey covered York and North Yorkshire, there was a wide variety of pharmacies mentioned including chains like Boots and Lloyd's, independent pharmacies, pharmacies in supermarkets and those at GP surgeries.

Why do people go to their local pharmacy?

People were able to select more than one option, so the number of respondents to this question was more than those responding to the survey. The majority of respondents (88.8%) go to the pharmacy to collect prescriptions. The next most popular reason is to purchase

medicines or other goods (49.4%). Nearly a quarter of respondents (21.3%) went for healthcare advice.

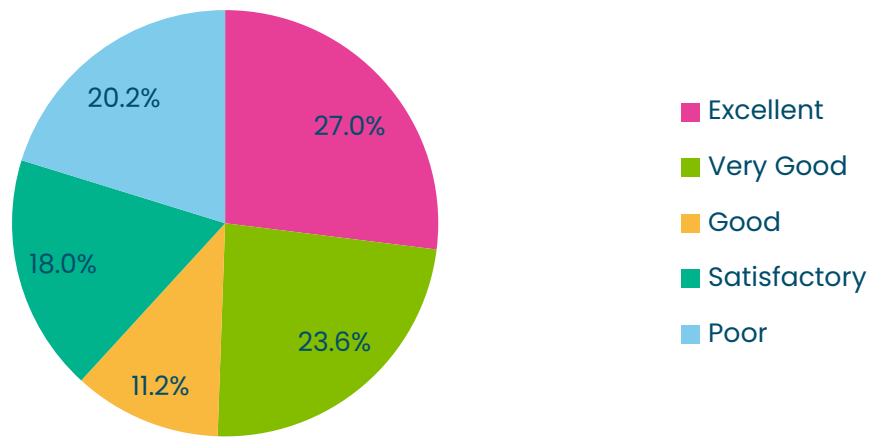
Respondents also added that they had been to the pharmacy for their flu or Covid vaccinations.



Rating your local pharmacy

We asked people to rate the service they get from their local pharmacy, giving options of excellent, very good, good, satisfactory and poor. Just over half of respondents (50.6%) rated their local pharmacy as either excellent or very good, 11.2% thought they got a good service with 18% finding the service satisfactory. Just over a fifth (20.2%) rated the service received as poor.

How would you rate the level of service you currently receive from your local pharmacy?



There was no significant difference in the ratings between York and North Yorkshire: 59% of York respondents rated their local pharmacy excellent, very good or good; 64% of North Yorkshire respondents rated their local pharmacy excellent, very good or good.

People were able to leave comments to explain their rating. The comments were mixed, in line with the above ratings. Many of the more negative comments focused on the time taken for people to get prescriptions once they had been ordered, unfriendly staff and pharmacies often not having the medication required or not being able to fulfil the full prescription. The positive comments were about excellent and helpful staff and a good service. Comments included:

Positive

“This pharmacy is a big part of our community, a safe place to go for advice or help with any ‘not to bother the doctor’ enquiries.”

“Pharmacist is always available to explain medicines and their use. Give advice on any minor problems and where to go for treatment.”

“Always pleasant and friendly. Good stock of things other than medicines.”

“All staff are extremely helpful and knowledgeable.”

“Extremely helpful. Will deliver when I can't collect. And make up daily medication pods for my neighbour when other pharmacies refused.”

“Helpful staff, closely linked to doctors next door. Text when prescription meds are ready to collect. Pharmacist available to offer advice.”

“Very prompt service, polite and efficient staff. Tried to use for a covid jab but they had no supplies in, however they referred me to (Name of another) pharmacy who obliged. They were also very good.”

Mixed

“Generally speaking it is ok. Staff are not the friendliest but they do the job efficiently. It's a small shop though so they often don't have stock of items needed. ... We had two items not available in two days recently, one an urgent care item and one a repeat that had been ordered well in advance. Considering it is a regular item and we always get ours from this pharmacy it feels like the demand is predictable but I don't know if the IT systems can support with producing repeat orders or not.”

“I have regular monthly prescriptions to collect and after trying a number of other pharmacies (who regularly didn't have the meds, could be brusque and sometimes rude, and I often had to visit a number of times each month before they had the right prescription), I discovered (name of pharmacy) who have been brilliant. Their service is excellent, they are always very helpful, they will communicate when there are problems with my meds and do their

best to resolve them, and they will order meds or track them down when they don't have them in stock.”

“Issues with supply at times – although appreciate this isn't the fault of the pharmacy. Also issues with GP communicating effectively with the pharmacy in a timely manner. I took my son to have a wound looked at – they were fantastic. Had a look there and then and gave advice, avoiding a trip to A&E.”

“We used to collect our prescriptions from (name of pharmacy) and waited in a queue, always to be told to go back in any length of time, sometimes half an hour and then the prescriptions were still not ready, or they didn't have sufficient tablets etc etc and go back the next day. I changed to (online pharmacy) who deliver a couple of days later and that is wonderful.”

“While staff are very helpful and pleasant, the online-request-to-pharmacy-pickup system is flawed. I have received out-of-date and very short-dated meds a couple of times. On two occasions the full amount has not been available, meaning another eight mile round trip to collect the remaining balance.”

Negative

“Since they were taken over.... (my pharmacy) has become really poor in terms of customer service. This escalated yesterday when I went in to give them my PPC number and they ended up talking over me and shouting at me, so much that I left in tears.”

“The queues in (name of pharmacy) in Scarborough went halfway down the shop. There was often only one person at the desk and my drugs were often out of stock/low in stock.”

“They often get my prescriptions wrong – due to mistakes made with automatic dispensing.”

Additional services

We asked people if there are any other services that they'd like their pharmacy to offer. Just over two thirds of respondents (67%) either didn't respond or said they didn't feel their pharmacy could offer more services. Some of those responses said that the pharmacy needed to focus on doing what it was already doing and do it better or that the size of the premises and number of staff restricted their ability to do more.

Some of the suggestions for additional services reflect the fact that not all pharmacies are contracted to provide the same services, so some people asked for flu or Covid vaccinations, others for health advice or blood pressure checks when these services are already offered by other pharmacies.

A few people were pleased to hear about the plans for pharmacies to be able to prescribe some medications and think this is a positive move.

Other suggestions included:

"Medication reviews, blood pressure and blood tests. Offer medicines for what are thought minor issues."

"Taking blood and vaccinations would be great. Prescribing low level things like inhalers etc."

"Free home delivery."

"To reinstate the Saturday morning opening times."

"Ear syringing."

"Hearing test and eye test."

“Blood pressure checks and others necessary for dispensing the contraceptive pill.”

“Menopause support.”

One comment demonstrated the need to continue to raise awareness about services available at pharmacies. This is echoed by findings in the recent Healthwatch York and Healthwatch North Yorkshire urgent care report which found only 3% of people spoken to at Urgent Care Centres (UTCs) in York, Selby, Scarborough and Malton had contacted their pharmacy before going to the UTC.

“Although I read things that are happening on a national basis, I have never received any specific information re what my local pharmacy can offer.”

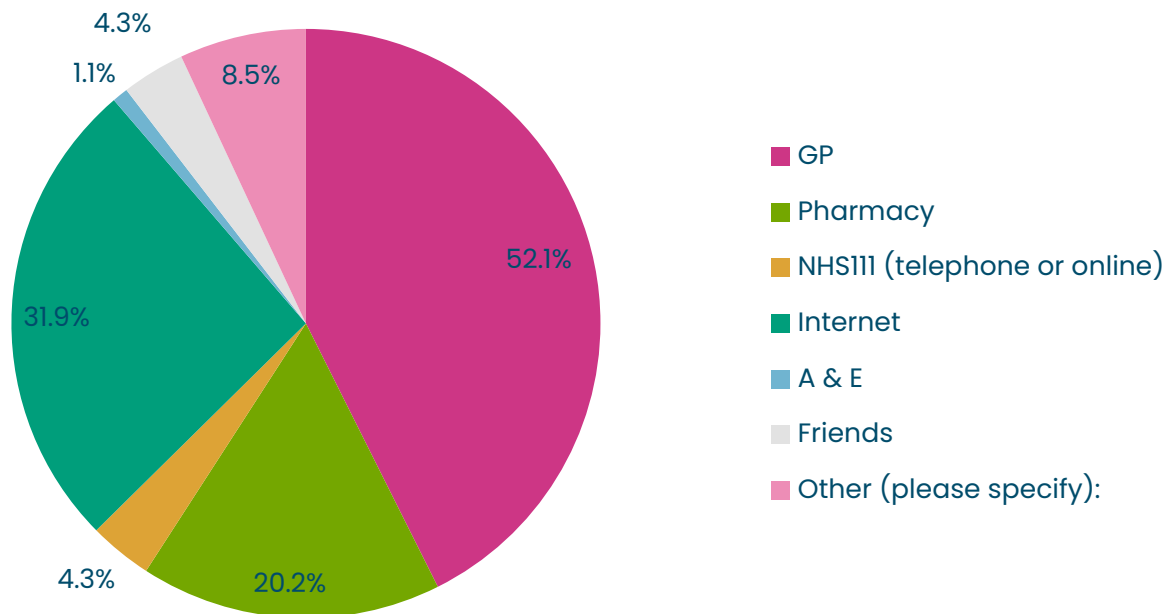
First port of call for healthcare advice

We asked people where they would first turn for healthcare advice. In the text responses many people said their choice depends on the nature and that they would go to different sources depending on what they were seeking advice on.

For those who responded to the question, the majority (52.1%) go to their GP for advice, just under a third look on the internet (31.9%) and just over a fifth, 20.2%, go to their pharmacy.

In the other category, people mentioned having healthcare or pharmacy professionals in their family who they would ask first.

What is usually your first port of call for healthcare advice?

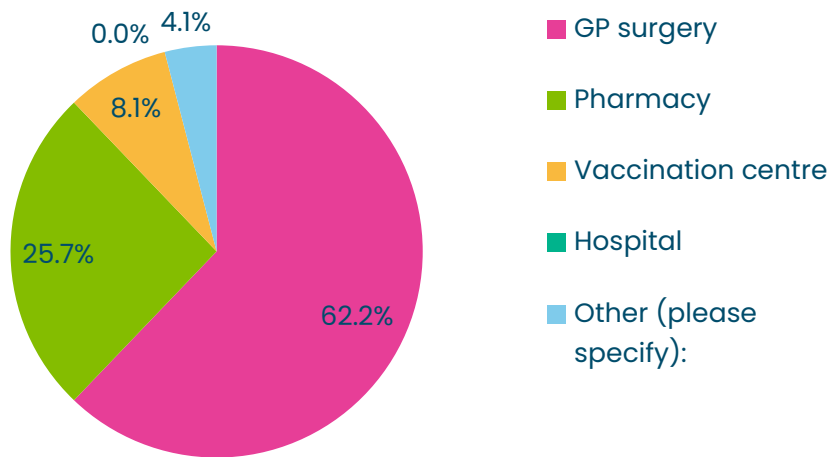


Flu vaccinations

We asked people if they had taken up a flu vaccination between September 2022 and March 2023. More than three quarters of respondents (78.7%) had. Those people were then asked where they had received the vaccination.

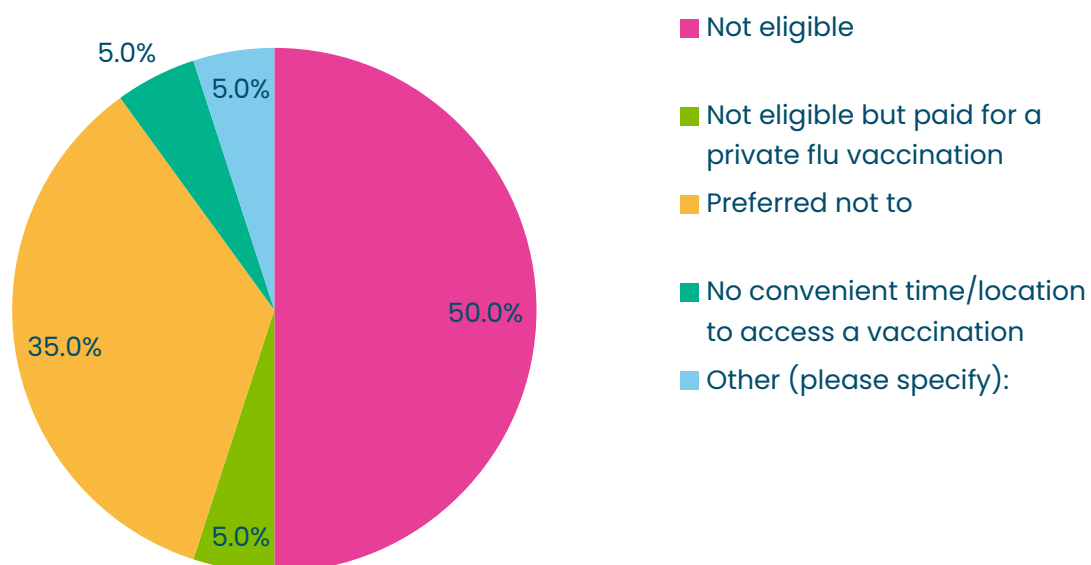
Nearly two thirds (62.2%) had had the vaccination at a GP surgery, a quarter (25.7%) had been to their local pharmacy and 8.1% had been to a vaccination centre. All those who selected other had also been to a pharmacy, but not their local pharmacy.

Where did you receive your flu vaccination?



We asked those who hadn't had a flu vaccination why not. Twenty people responded and most (50%) were not eligible, others chose not to (35%) and one person each said they weren't eligible but paid for a private vaccination, couldn't get a convenient time or location or gave another option, which was that they hadn't thought about it.

Please tell us why you didn't have a free NHS flu vaccination



Conclusion

Feedback from people about their local pharmacies was mixed. Where people had a good experience, they rated their pharmacies highly and used and benefited from all the services they offered. These pharmacies were seen as a key part of the local community and were valued.

However, other people struggled with their local pharmacies and found the service less than ideal. In these instances some people still went to those pharmacies as they were local and convenient and put up with the poor service. In other cases they found other pharmacies who they felt provided a service that better met their needs.

It was clear from the responses that there is a lack of awareness of which services pharmacies provide under their NHS contract. There is also a lack of awareness and understanding regarding the realities of their work, and the wider challenges facing community pharmacy. For example, it is clear many people expect prescriptions to be available to collect within 24 hours of sending a repeat prescription request. See Appendix 4 – Journey of a Prescription for more information on why this is not the case.

With people increasingly being encouraged to seek healthcare advice at their local pharmacy, including some medication prescribing from February 2024, it is vital that pharmacies are supported, and invested in, to be able to provide the full range of services and support pharmacies can deliver.

Local pharmacies have been clearly identified as a significant part of the solution to the challenges the NHS is experiencing. However, in order to continue to deliver current services alongside new healthcare support, they need to be properly funded and seen as an integral part of the health and care system as a whole. In addition, to support the desired change in our population's use of pharmacies, NHS England and partners need to consider their public communications strategy to promote a Pharmacy First agenda.

Initial response from Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire

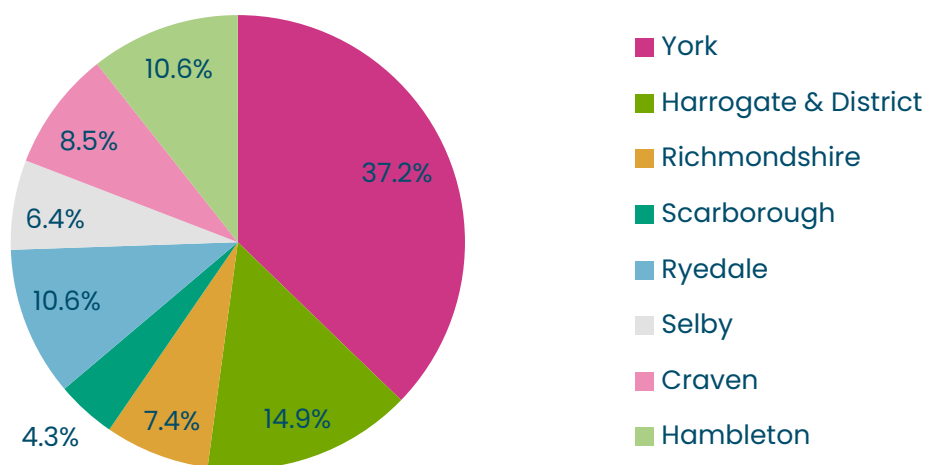
Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire are grateful to everyone who responded to this survey. Whilst acknowledging this is only a small sample size, it clearly outlines the value for many in easy access to healthcare advice and services close to home. It also acknowledges the impact on the people and communities we serve of the current issues affecting local pharmacy.

We welcome the recent announcement about Pharmacy First. We are excited about the opportunities this presents for pharmacy to take up its rightful place in easing the current pressures on other NHS services. But this must be properly funded, to make sure anyone walking into a pharmacy can get the services we are able to offer.

Appendix 1 – Demographic information

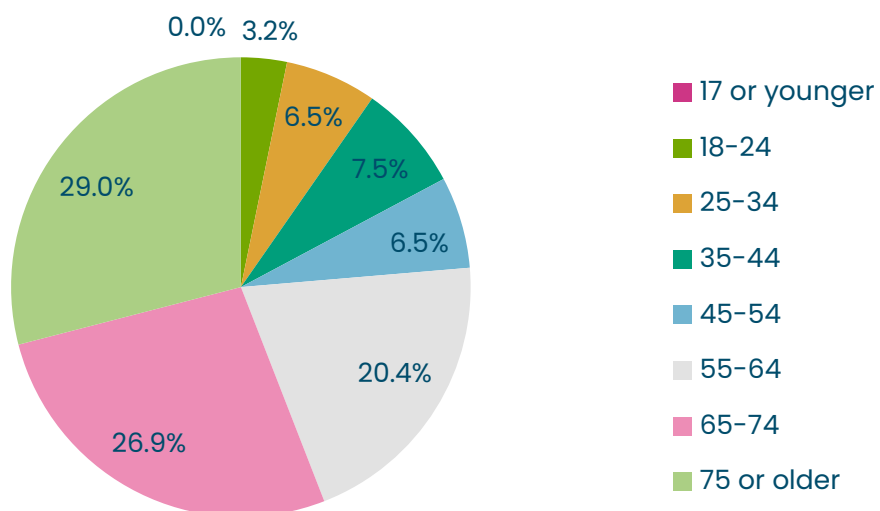
Where people lived

Please tell us which area of York and North Yorkshire you live in

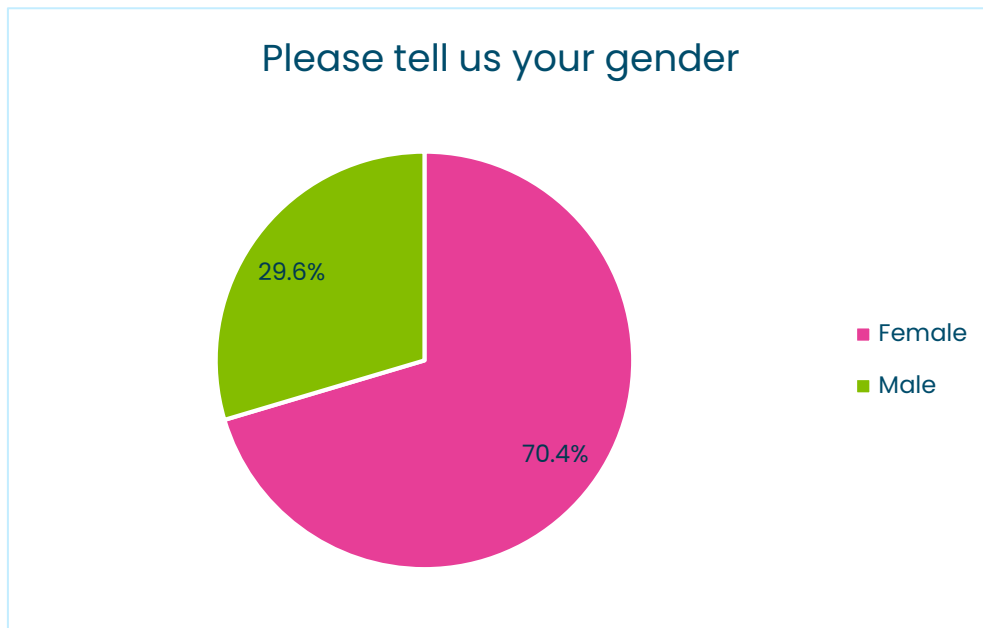


Age of respondents

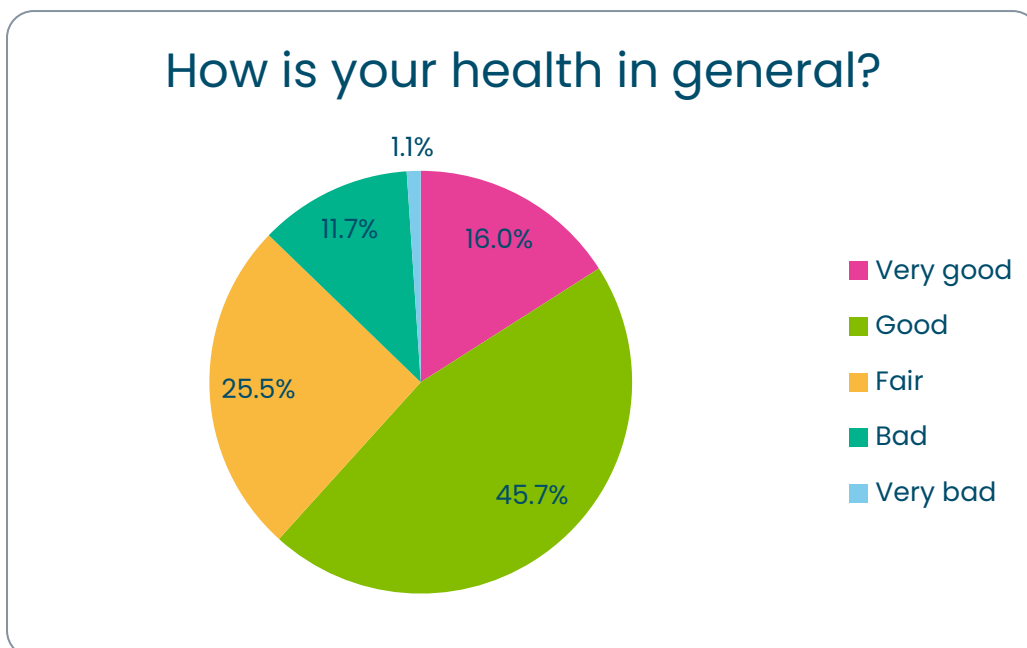
Please tell us your age



Gender of respondents

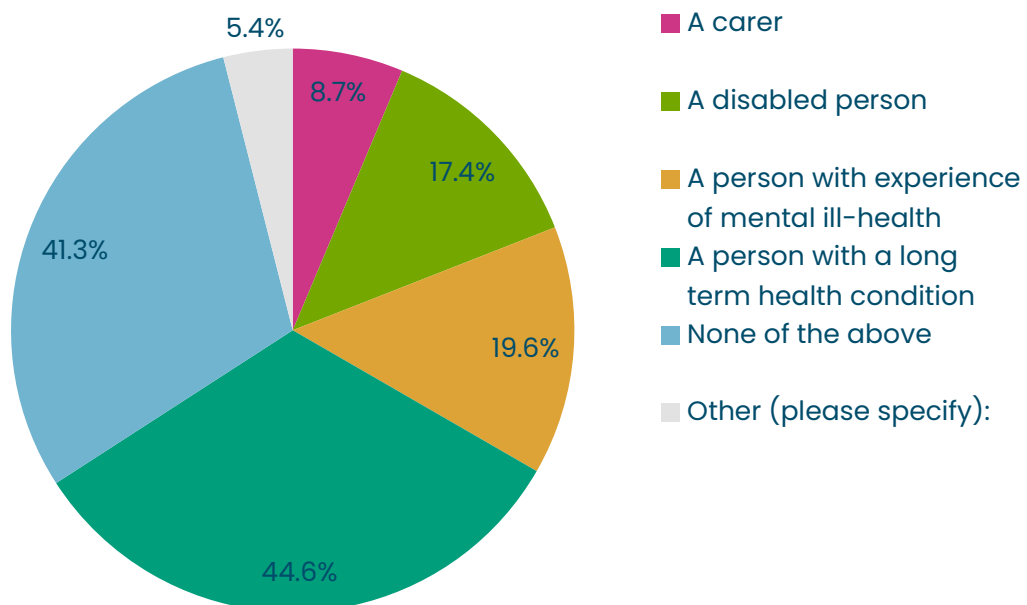


Respondents' health



Respondents' health and other considerations

Do you consider yourself to be



Appendix 2 – Price concessions

September 2023

When community pharmacies cannot source a drug at or below the reimbursement price as set out in the Drug Tariff, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) can introduce a price concession at the request of Community Pharmacy England. For any drugs granted price concessions, contractors are automatically reimbursed at the new prices for that month.

As an indicator of the scale of challenges Community Pharmacy are experiencing in sourcing medication, this is the list of medications on price concessions at the end of September 2023.

Drug	Pack size	Price concession
Acamprosate 333mg gastro-resistant tablets	168	£23.67
Aciclovir 800mg tablets	35	£3.81
Amiloride 5mg tablets	28	£14.24
Amisulpride 100mg tablets	60	£18.11
Amisulpride 200mg tablets	60	£32.15
Atomoxetine 10mg capsules	28	£44.45
Atomoxetine 18mg capsules	28	£42.95
Atomoxetine 25mg capsules	28	£43.21
Atomoxetine 40mg capsules	28	£48.84

Atomoxetine 60mg capsules	28	£48.48
Atorvastatin 10mg tablets	28	£1.39
Atorvastatin 20mg tablets	28	£1.95
Atorvastatin 40mg tablets	28	£2.25
Atorvastatin 80mg tablets	28	£5.32
Beclometasone 50micrograms/dose nasal spray	200	£2.63
Benzoyl peroxide 5% / Clindamycin 1% gel	30	£11.95
Benzoyl peroxide 5% / Clindamycin 1% gel	60	£22.21
Betahistine 16mg tablets	84	£8.85
Betahistine 8mg tablets	84	£4.09
Betamethasone valerate 0.1% cream	30	£2.28
Bicalutamide 150mg tablets	28	£3.63
Bimatoprost 100micrograms/ml eye drops	3	£3.97
Bisacodyl 5mg gastro-resistant tablets	60	£4.59
Brimonidine 0.2% eye drops	5	£3.20
Brinzolamide 10mg/ml / Timolol 5mg/ml eye drops	5	£9.20
Brinzolamide 10mg/ml eye drops	5	£4.99
Bumetanide 1mg tablets	28	£2.80
Buprenorphine 8mg sublingual tablets sugar free	7	£4.21

Calamine lotion	200	£1.92
Calcipotriol 0.005% / Betamethasone dipropionate 0.05% ointment	30	£9.14
Carbocisteine 250mg/5ml oral solution	300	£7.49
Carvedilol 6.25mg tablets	28	£1.30
Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment	4	£4.99
Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution sugar free	150	£7.63
Cinacalcet 30mg tablets	28	£7.25
Clarithromycin 125mg/5ml oral suspension	70	£4.10
Clarithromycin 250mg tablets	14	£3.25
Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension	70	£5.18
Clarithromycin 500mg tablets	14	£8.10
Clotrimazole 1% cream	20	£1.94
Clotrimazole 1% cream	50	£3.99
Clotrimazole 500mg pessaries	1	£9.45
Co-amoxiclav 500mg/125mg tablets	21	£4.50
Co-beneldopa 12.5mg/50mg capsules	100	£4.82
Co-careldopa 25mg/100mg tablets	100	£6.62
Co-codamol 30mg/500mg capsules	100	£3.96

Codeine 30mg tablets	28	£1.08
Codeine 30mg tablets	100	£3.86
Cyclizine 50mg tablets	100	£4.39
Cyclizine 50mg/1ml solution for injection ampoules	5	£8.25
Docusate 50mg/5ml oral solution sugar free	300	£17.77
Dorzolamide 20mg/ml / Timolol 5mg/ml eye drops	5	£1.99
Dorzolamide 20mg/ml / Timolol 5mg/ml eye drops 0.2ml unit dose preservative free	60	£19.56
Doxycycline 100mg capsules	8	£0.90
Enalapril 2.5mg tablets	28	£8.48
Eplerenone 25mg tablets	28	£11.15
Eplerenone 50mg tablets	28	£5.89
Etoricoxib 60mg tablets	28	£2.50
Flecainide 100mg tablets	60	£3.47
Flucloxacillin 250mg/5ml oral solution	100	£3.38
Flucloxacillin 250mg/5ml oral solution sugar free	100	£3.62
Glycopyrronium bromide 200micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules	10	£9.93
Hydrocortisone 1% cream	15	£1.98
Hydrocortisone 1% cream	30	£3.45

Hydrocortisone 1% cream	50	£3.30
Hydroxychloroquine 200mg tablets	60	£3.45
Isotretinoin 20mg capsules	30	£11.49
Itraconazole 100mg capsules	15	£6.96
Ivabradine 2.5mg tablets	56	£44.19
Lactulose 3.1-3.7g/5ml oral solution	500	£2.97
Lamotrigine 100mg tablets	56	£2.15
Lamotrigine 50mg tablets	56	£1.94
Lansoprazole 15mg orodispersible tablets	28	£2.90
Lansoprazole 30mg orodispersible tablets	28	£5.21
Latanoprost 50micrograms/ml eye drops	2.5	£1.88
Letrozole 2.5mg tablets	14	£4.22
Levetiracetam 100mg/ml oral solution sugar free	300	£10.36
Lofepamine 70mg tablets	56	£14.50
Mebeverine 200mg modified-release capsules	60	£5.44
Mebeverine 50mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free	300	£214.96
Mercaptopurine 50mg tablets	25	£9.42
Methylphenidate 10mg tablets	30	£3.08
Metoprolol 50mg tablets	28	£2.25

Midazolam 10mg/2ml solution for injection ampoules	10	£6.29
Mometasone 0.1% cream	30	£4.14
Mometasone 0.1% ointment	30	£4.20
Montelukast 10mg tablets	28	£1.44
Moxonidine 200microgram tablets	28	£5.29
Mycophenolate mofetil 500mg tablets	50	£7.15
Naftidrofuryl 100mg capsules	84	£10.24
Ondansetron 4mg tablets	10	£7.10
Orlistat 120mg capsules	84	£24.19
Oxycodone 5mg/5ml oral solution sugar free	250	£9.60
Pantoprazole 20mg gastro-resistant tablets	28	£3.85
Pantoprazole 40mg gastro-resistant tablets	28	£4.37
Perindopril erbumine 4mg tablets	30	£1.50
Perindopril erbumine 8mg tablets	30	£1.87
Phenoxymethylpenicillin 125mg/5ml oral solution	100	£7.63
Pizotifen 1.5mg tablets	28	£1.81
Pramipexole 180microgram tablets	30	£9.00
Pregabalin 225mg capsules	56	£2.57

Pregabalin 300mg capsules	56	£3.12
Pregabalin 75mg capsules	56	£2.10
Prochlorperazine 3mg buccal tablets	50	£8.09
Prochlorperazine 5mg tablets	28	£1.96
Quetiapine 25mg tablets	60	£1.48
Quinine sulfate 200mg tablets	28	£8.45
Rasagiline 1mg tablets	28	£16.04
Risperidone 1mg/ml oral solution sugar free	100	£3.13
Risperidone 500microgram tablets	20	£3.19
Rizatriptan 10mg orodispersible tablets sugar free	3	£5.49
Ropinirole 250microgram tablets	12	£6.15
Ropinirole 2mg tablets	28	£18.40
Ropinirole 500 micrograms tablets	28	£12.73
Rosuvastatin 10mg tablets	28	£1.15
Rosuvastatin 20mg tablets	28	£3.74
Rosuvastatin 40mg tablets	28	£1.70
Rosuvastatin 5mg tablets	28	£1.00
Simvastatin 80mg tablets	28	£1.51

Sodium chloride 0.9% nebuliser liquid 2.5ml unit dose ampoules	20	£9.50
Spironolactone 100mg tablets	28	£4.56
Spironolactone 25mg tablets	28	£1.84
Spironolactone 50mg tablets	28	£3.98
Sulpiride 200mg/5ml oral solution sugar free	150	£101.58
Tacrolimus 0.1% ointment	60	£39.41
Tacrolimus 0.1% ointment	30	£21.78
Tamsulosin 400microgram modified-release capsules	30	£1.44
Terbinafine 1% cream	15	£3.07
Terbinafine 1% cream	30	£6.15
Topiramate 100mg tablets	60	£12.28
Travoprost 40micrograms/ml / timolol 5mg/ml eye drops	2.5	£5.17
Valaciclovir 500mg tablets	10	£14.39
Warfarin 1mg tablets	28	£0.84
Warfarin 5mg tablets	28	£1.34
Zolmitriptan 2.5mg orodispersible tablets sugar free	6	£20.69
Zolmitriptan 2.5mg tablets	6	£16.50

Zolmitriptan 2.5mg tablets	12	£33.00
Zopiclone 3.75mg tablets	28	£1.78
Zopiclone 7.5mg tablets	28	£1.53

Appendix 3a – Changes to local pharmacy hours York

Pharmacy Trading Name	Contract type	Future	Hours Currently Provided	Hours to be Provided	Total hours lost
Citywide Health - Haxby Pharmacy 6 Wyre Court Wigginton YO32 2ZB	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday to Saturday 07:30 - 22:30 Sunday 09:00 - 19:00	Monday to Saturday 09:00 - 21:00 Sunday 09:00 - 19:00 82hrs from 5/07/23	18
Citywide Health - Huntington Pharmacy 1-3 North Lane Huntington YO32 9RU	100 hour	Closing 27/05/2023	Monday to Friday 07:00 - 23:00 Saturday 07:00 - 19:00 Sunday 09:00 - 17:00	N / A	95
Monkbar Pharmacy 3 Goodramgate YO1 7LJ	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday to Saturday 07:30 - 22:30 Sunday 08:30 - 18:30	Monday 09:30 - 14:30, 15:00 - 21:00 Tuesday to Friday 09:15-14:30, 15:00-21:00 Saturday 15:30 - 21:00 Sunday 08:30-14:30, 15:00-19:00 72 core hrs from 31/07/23	28
Tesco Pharmacy Askham Bar Tadcaster Road YO24 1LW	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday 08:00 - 22:30 Tuesday to Friday 06:30 - 22:30 Saturday 06:30 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	Monday to Saturday 09:00 - 21:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00 72hrs from 29/8/23	22.5
The Priory Pharmacy Cornlands Road Acomb YO24 3WX	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday to Saturday 08:00 - 23:00 Sunday 10:00 - 20:00	Monday to Friday 08:00 - 21:00 Saturday 10:00 - 21:00 Sunday 09:00 - 19:00 74hrs from 31st July 23	26

Lloyds Pharmacy Ltd Sainsbury's Store Monks Cross YO32 9LG	standard	Closing 23/04/2023	Monday to Saturday 08:00 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	N / A	90
Boots UK Limited 1 Kings Square YO1 8BH	standard	Closing 28/10/2023	Monday to Friday 09:00 - 17:30 Saturday & Sunday closed		42.5
Reduction in hours					94.5
Lost hours due to closures					227.5
TOTAL					322

Appendix 3b – Changes to local pharmacy hours North Yorkshire

Pharmacy Trading Name	Contract type	Future	Hours Currently Provided	Hours to be Provided	Total hours lost
Tesco Pharmacy Station Road Thirsk YO7 1PZ	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday 08:00 - 22:30 Tuesday to Friday 06:30 - 22:30 Saturday 06:30 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	Monday to Saturday 09:00 - 21:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00 72hrs from 29/08/23	22.5
Tesco Pharmacy Gough Road Catterick Garrison DL9 3EN	100 hour	Reducing to 78hrs from 27/07/2023 Permanently closing on 20/08/2023	Monday to Friday 06:30 - 22:30 Saturday 06:30 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	N / A	101.5
Tesco Pharmacy East Road Northallerton DL6 1NP	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday 08:00 - 22:30 Tuesday to Friday 06:30 - 22:30 Saturday 06:30 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	Monday to Saturday 09:00 - 21:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00 72hrs from 29/08/23	22.5
WELL Pharmacy Kingswood Medical Centre 14 Wetherby Road Harrogate HG2 7SA	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday to Friday 06:30 - 22:00 Saturday 08:00 - 22:00 Sunday 09:30 - 18:00	Monday to Friday 09:00 - 21:00 Saturday 09:00 - 21:00 Sunday 09:30 - 18:00 80.5hrs from 9/07/23	19.5
Your Local Boots Pharmacy Unit 4a St James Retail Park Knaresborough HG5 8PZ	100 hour	Hours reduction notification received	Monday to Friday 08:00 - 24:00 Saturday 09:00 - 23:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	Monday to Friday 08:30 - 13:00, 14:00 - 21:00 Saturday 09:00 - 13:00, 14:00 - 21:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00 Monday to Saturday Supplementary hours 13:00 - 14:00 74.5hrs from 14/9/23	25.5
Lloyds Pharmacy Ltd Wetherby Road Harrogate HG2 8QZ	standard	Closing 14/05/2023	Monday to Saturday 08:00 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	N / A	78

Lloyds Pharmacy Ltd Sainsbury's Store Falsgrave Road Scarborough YO12 5EA	standard	Closing 25/07/2023. All Lloyds in Sainsbury's closed on 13/06/2023	Monday to Friday 07:00 - 23:00 Saturday 07:00 - 22:00 Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	N / A	101
reduction in hours					90
total loss of hours					280.5
TOTAL Lost					370.5

Appendix 4 – Journey of a prescription

What happens when you put in a repeat prescription?

Day 1: You realise you need more medication. On this day you request a repeat prescription. This could be via an app or online system or by dropping a slip in to the GP. Your GP surgery receives your request. If you dropped the slip off late or sent the electronic request later in the day, it is likely to now be....

Day 2: Your GP surgery sorts their post and accesses their emails. Your prescription request is in with all the other correspondence. They check the request. If you do not need a review, they issue the prescription pending counter signing.

Some GP surgery apps will send an email here saying your prescription has been released. At this point, a GP still needs to sign the prescription off (counter signing). People over 50 have a named GP. Their prescriptions will be sent to this named GP even if they are not currently at work.

Most medications need to be reviewed from time to time. Some apps will tell you if you need a review when you make a request. GPs may provide one month's supply to keep you going until you can get a review. If you order several medicines, the GP will only hold back the ones needing to be reviewed. You might only find out you need a review when you collect most of your medicines.

So, assuming you don't need a review, and your GP countersigns the prescription – they then send it to something called the NHS central 'Spine'. The 'Spine' is the digital central point for key NHS online

services and allowing the exchange of information across local and national NHS systems. Your demographic information is stored on the NHS Spine. This includes your nominated pharmacy.

Hopefully, by now it is the end of **day 2**. But it could be **day 3**. In which case...

Day 4: Pharmacy staff arrive at work. They log on to the pharmacy computer system. They pull down prescriptions from the Spine. This might be anything from 40 to 1,000 prescriptions depending on the pharmacy and the population it serves. **Some may be clearly marked as urgent, but most won't be.**

A member of the pharmacy team will start to go through them one by one. They first check that the prescription is valid, and the prescriber is allowed to prescribe the medicine selected. They then check for stock. If they have stock, they bag it, attach the label, and the item is ready for collection.

Where items are not in stock, the pharmacy places an order for them. Delivery from the supplier may take another 2 days.

Where this happens, this means the prescription has taken around **7 days** to supply from first being requested.

Is that the end of the journey of a prescription for pharmacies?

No. Pharmacy staff then fill in online forms to claim the fees associated with supplying the medication, and other services they provide. They must always complete at least 1 form. In most cases, they complete forms on 2 online systems. Occasionally they are required to fill in 3.

Why are we seeing more stock shortages?

At any given moment, there can be 100– 150 different medicines that are hard for pharmacies to get. For example, recently there was a nationwide shortage of clarithromycin. Community pharmacies have to compete for limited drug stocks with private pharmacies. As they can charge more for filling a prescription, suppliers are likely to prioritise their orders.

Do pharmacies get the full cost of the medicines they supply?

Community pharmacies will be able to reclaim the NHS drug tariff. Basically, the Government assumes pharmacies can get a discount on the medicines they buy, so they claw back 10%. But some wholesalers only give, say, a 3% discount, so pharmacies can only fill that prescription at a loss.

A recent example of this is ivabradine, prescribed for heart failure. It is a lifesaving drug. However, in the past few months, the wholesale price rose to £40.17 per pack. Until 30 March, the NHS drug tariff priced it at £19.86. So, for a patient prescribed 4 packs of the drug, the pharmacist makes **a net loss of £81.24** when they fulfil the prescription. Thankfully now the NHS price for this particular drug has been increased to £40.17.

What can I do if my pharmacy can't get the medication I need?

As different pharmacies use different suppliers, it is worth phoning round to check. You can ask your usual pharmacy to print out your prescription so any pharmacy with stock can fill it.

Why don't pharmacies carry more stock?

Even small pharmacies have stock on their shelves worth £30–50,000. Few have the funds or the space to keep more products in stock.

What if I don't collect my medicines?

Pharmacies only get **3 working days** to return most medicines. They cannot send back any that are kept in the fridge, or controlled drugs. Any commonly used medicines can be issued to another patient if you let the pharmacy know you do not intend to collect your prescription.

How can we help our community pharmacies?

- Order repeat prescriptions in good time, but only order medicines you still use.
- Be patient, especially if you turn up first thing in the morning.
- Set yourself reminders for medication reviews as needed – your GP should tell you how often each of your medications need to be reviewed.

Appendix 5 – A day in the life

From Healthwatch York Winter Magazine 2023

Tracey, Pharmacist at Copmanthorpe Pharmacy. Tracey gives us an insight into a day at Copmanthorpe Pharmacy.

Copmanthorpe Pharmacy is a small independent pharmacy offering a range of services including NHS prescriptions, seasonal vaccinations, blood pressure checks, emergency contraception and a stop smoking service.

Can you tell us about a normal day?

The Pharmacy is open from 9am to 6pm every day, with a one-hour break for lunch, but I arrive at 8am as there are so many things to do before the pharmacy actually opens. This includes reading and responding to emails, the eternal admin, catching up on any work left over from the day before, and cleaning.

We never know what the day will bring. At the beginning of the week, it is always busier as people have time to make prescription requests over the weekend. We don't know who will walk through the door with an urgent medication request or asking for advice and needing to be seen immediately, so we have to be ready for anything!

Electronic prescription requests arrive on the pharmacy computer system, known as the 'Spine'. They are downloaded and then prepared by the team. At Copmanthorpe Pharmacy I work with two pharmacy technicians who have specialist training in preparing prescriptions and provide information on medication, and two dispensers.

In order to fulfil the prescriptions, I have to order and pay for stock in advance. The NHS pays us in arrears for these costs in a process that takes about three months, and we do not know in advance how much we

will receive for certain medications or whether it will cover the cost to us. Sometimes the amount we are paid will be reduced by 20% based on an assumption that we have received a bulk purchase discount, whether or not we have received such a discount.

Currently stock shortages are a big problem, and we regularly order medication that appears to be in stock and then it just isn't delivered, which is hugely frustrating. Explaining to a patient that their medicine hasn't been delivered and we don't know when it might arrive can be very upsetting and worrying for the patient.

Once a prescription has been dispensed, we need to claim the cost back. This involves scanning every item that goes out daily. We also have to make sure that exemptions are applied properly, because if someone doesn't pay and doesn't have an exemption, then the pharmacy will lose money.

My day at the pharmacy ends with cashing up the tills and banking the money, then completing the paperwork and reports that need to be submitted. I try to leave at 6 o'clock each evening, but I will have further paperwork and emails to deal with when I get home.

What additional services do you offer at the Pharmacy?

We run a number of additional services. At this time of the year, we are very busy with flu vaccinations. We also offer a hypertension case-finding service, where blood pressure checks are offered to people over 40 to identify undiagnosed cardiovascular disease; a new medicine service, supporting people who are prescribed medication for the first time; and a discharge medicine service – making sure that a person has the medication they need at home when they are discharged from hospital. The minor ailments service is a new service which was announced recently. This will extend the pharmacist's options to treat illnesses such as earaches, sore throats, sinusitis, impetigo, shingles, infected insect bites

and urinary tract infections. We know this is coming but we are still waiting to see a contract for these services. (This service has now launched.)

What are the frustrations of your work?

The increasing amount of red tape, form filling and rising costs. These make everything more difficult and reduce the time I have to do my core work. Even though all costs have risen recently, the payment per prescription hasn't changed in 6 years. So there are huge financial challenges as well as service expectations.

What is the best part of your job?

In a day I cover many roles: being the responsible pharmacist, overseeing colleagues, counselling patients, managing the staff and the shop, administrator, accountant, educator and information service, but the best part is doing the job I was trained to do: helping patients to get the best outcomes.



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