



October 2017

## **PSNC Briefing 081/17: The #pharmacywinter Action Day – Key Messages & Media Resources**

This briefing sets out some key messages and a press release which LPCs and community pharmacy teams may like to consider if they are taking part in the #pharmacywinter action day. It also includes a draft invitation and adapted version of the press release for use if local politicians are being invited to visit a pharmacy on the day.

The information could easily be adapted for LPCs or pharmacy teams wishing to promote the role of community pharmacies in winter more generally, either before or after the action day.

### **About the #pharmacywinter action day**

On November 21st 2017 the national pharmacy organisations are holding an action day. The aims will be to promote:

- the roles that community pharmacy teams already play in helping people to stay healthy through winter and reducing pressure on other NHS services;
- the risks if any of these services are lost; and
- the many additional roles that community pharmacies could play in helping people and the NHS through the winter period.

On the day, a number of activities will be taking place, including a Parliamentary reception, social media coverage, a Twitterchat and possible local media coverage and local councillor visits to pharmacies. You can find more information and resources to help you to take part in the action day at: [psnc.org.uk/wintercampaign](http://psnc.org.uk/wintercampaign)

We would be grateful for any support that LPCs can provide, such as:

- Sending a local representative if your MPs are attending the Parliamentary event.
- Inviting MPs and councillors to visit pharmacies in their constituencies and wards.
- Creating a press release on NHS winter pressures and community pharmacy.

Guidance on carrying out these activities, as well as information on the key messages which underpin the winter campaign action, is outlined below.

### **Key Message: the roles that pharmacies play**

We will be promoting pharmacy's roles in:

- Helping people to get the most benefit from their medicines;
- Helping people to stay healthy;
- Helping people with minor conditions;
- Offering flu vaccinations; and
- Ensuring people have the medicines they need, when they need them.

Further information and statistics to help with this are included below.

## **Pharmacy services**

In 2016/17:

- Community pharmacies provided the New Medicine Service 870,358 times.
- Community pharmacies carried out more than three million Medicines Use Reviews.
- 11,000 community pharmacies took part in a new Quality Payments Scheme. The scheme requires pharmacies to meet a range of standards including becoming Healthy Living Pharmacies.

## **Evidence for the value of community pharmacy services**

In 2016 PSNC commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) to quantify the economic contribution of community pharmacy in England. PwC analysed the value (net benefits) to the NHS, public sector, patients and wider society of 12 specific services provided by community pharmacies in England in 2015. Services analysed included supervised consumption, emergency hormonal contraception provision, minor ailments and delivering prescriptions. The full PwC report can be downloaded from: [psnc.org.uk/valueofpharmacy](http://psnc.org.uk/valueofpharmacy)

Key findings were:

- Community pharmacies contributed a net value of £3 billion to the NHS, public sector, patients and wider society in England in 2015 through just 12 services, with a further £1.9 billion expected to accrue over the next 20 years.
- This means that community pharmacies deliver substantially more in benefits than they receive in compensation, providing excellent value to the Department of Health.

Community pharmacies already provide services at the heart of their communities which people rely on all over the country and PwC's research shows that those services more than pay their own way. Evidence from the PwC report makes the case for continued investment in community pharmacies, developing these services even further to bring additional benefits to the NHS and wider society.

## **Flu vaccinations**

Pharmacies are demonstrating their willingness to do more to help the NHS by providing NHS flu vaccinations. Last year, pharmacies provided 950,765 NHS flu vaccinations, and the sector is on course to outstrip that record despite the current pressures – already more than one million vaccinations have been administered in community pharmacies this year.

We also know how highly patients value the community pharmacy flu vaccination service. The collated results of the patient questionnaire\* for the Flu Vaccination Service in 2016/17, showed that:

- 98% of patients were very satisfied with the service;
- 99% would be willing to have a flu vaccination at a pharmacy again;
- 99% would recommend the service to family and friends;
- 15% said they might not have had a flu vaccination if the service had not been available in the pharmacy;
- 10% did not have a flu vaccination in the previous year; and
- 64% previously had a flu vaccination in another setting and swapped to pharmacy.

*\*The patient questionnaire is optional for patients to complete, and not all respondents answered all questions. The minimum number of responses to a question included in the percentages provided above and on the [infographic](#), was 99,931 and the maximum number of responses to a question was 110,981.*

## **Key Message: the risks if services are lost**

Key messages are:

- Faced with congestion in A&E departments, busy GP surgeries and rising demand for social care, it is more important than ever that we make best use of the network of community pharmacies on our high streets.
- Community pharmacy services are valuable (see PwC report and statistics as above) and must be protected.

## NHS Pressure Statistics

Below are some key recent comments and statistics showing the pressures on the NHS:

- The future quality of health and social care is ‘precarious’, with all parts of the system now ‘at full stretch’, according to the Care Quality Commission. (State of Care Report, October 2017)
- The National Health Service is in a state of “permanent winter” as it deals all year round with capacity strains that used to be only seasonal. (Financial Times research, February 2016)
- The NHS this winter could face “much more pressure on GP services and hospitals” if seasonal flu patterns being seen internationally are replicated in the UK. (Simon Stevens speech, September 2017)
- By 2020/21: Patients will be unable to get an appointment with their GP at all on 52 million occasions, and patients will wait a week or more to get a GP appointment on 100 million occasions (RCGP Research, published July 2017)
- Between November 2016 and March 2017, almost 20% of patients waited over four hours to be seen at major A&E departments (Kings Fund Quarterly Monitoring Report, June 2017)
- Patients are currently waiting an average of around 13 days to see their doctor. (Pulse magazine survey, July 2017)

## Key Message: the additional roles that pharmacies could play

The key messages on this are:

- There is much more that community pharmacies could do to help keep people healthy and out of hospitals, in particular by helping patients to manage long term conditions, and supporting people in leading health lifestyles.
- We have a vision for future community pharmacy services which we want to achieve to make the most of the valuable network of community pharmacies.

## Pharmacy's vision

The Government has said that it would like a more clinical community pharmacy service. The sector came together last year to publish a vision for this – the Community Pharmacy Forward View. This describes how pharmacies could become:

- The facilitators of personalised care for people with long-term conditions;
- The trusted, convenient first port of call for episodic healthcare advice and treatment; and
- Neighbourhood health and wellbeing hubs.

Further information on the Community Pharmacy Forward View is available from: [psnc.org.uk/forwardview](http://psnc.org.uk/forwardview)

## Template Press Release for #pharmacywinter activities

LPCs may like to consider issuing the below press release on or just before the November action day. If it has not already been used, the [template press release on the flu vaccination service](#) could also be considered.

[insert date]

[insert location] PHARMACIES ARE READY FOR WINTER

Community pharmacies in [insert location] are taking part in a national action day to highlight the important role that they play in helping local communities to stay healthy through winter.

Through the #pharmacywinter campaign, pharmacy teams will be sharing stories about all they are doing to help local communities to stay healthy in the winter months. You can join in by tweeting your experiences with [insert location] pharmacies all day on Tuesday November 21st 2017, using the hashtag #pharmacywinter.

This winter, local community pharmacies are helping to get residents vaccinated against flu as well as offering advice and support when people have coughs, colds or other symptoms. This is particularly important as we gear up for a winter that is expected to be difficult, with GP practices and hospitals braced for huge pressure.

[insert pharmacist name] told us today about how community pharmacies are aiming for a record year for flu vaccinations, with [insert local figure] jabs given by pharmacies in the area [already/last year].

In particular, [insert pharmacist name] told us how [his/her] pharmacy is [insert relevant text e.g. preparing for the winter months/ trying to support local GP practices/ providing record numbers of flu vaccinations/ other]. They also explained the impact that pharmacy services can have on the NHS, helping to reduce pressure on local GPs and hospitals.

[Insert pharmacist name] comments: "This winter community pharmacies are going to be needed more than ever. We are the first port of call for many local people on healthcare matters and our regular patients and the wider community really rely on us. This is particularly the case over the winter months with coughs, colds and flu all becoming more common, and GP practices and hospitals already working flat out."

As well as making sure everyone has the medicines they need this winter we'll be helping people to understand and make the most of those medicines, and offering them advice on common ailments. We can also vaccinate people against flu, if they are eligible for a free NHS flu jab. And all of this without the need to wait for an appointment."

[Insert LPC representative name] said: "As many patients in [insert location] will know, our local community pharmacies are doing far more than just dispensing medicines this winter. They are offering a whole range of services and can be particularly helpful as we move into the winter season and GPs and hospitals become busier."

We're really proud of how our local pharmacies have been doing with the NHS flu vaccination service, helping to make sure that everyone who needs the vaccine, gets it. But we believe the Government should be making even better use of pharmacies; we would love to offer even more services to help local people to stay healthy, and reduce pressure on other local healthcare services."

### **About community pharmacy**

Your local pharmacy is more than just a place to get medicines. It provides a range of NHS services and ensures people can get face-to-face, healthcare professional advice without an appointment.

There are around 14,000 community pharmacies across the UK, so for most of us, there's one very close by. In fact, 96% of people can get to a pharmacy within 20 minutes by walking or using public transport. Community pharmacists provide rapid access, without appointment, to a healthcare professional and offer a range of clinical and public health services. Most pharmacies now have consultation rooms, where you can talk with your pharmacist without being overheard.

You might be surprised at what pharmacies now offer: personalised medicines advice, help to quit smoking and to maintain good sexual health, treatment for common ailments, advice on preventing disease. And more. It's a package of care...not just packets of pills!

What's more, pharmacies are part of the fabric of local communities. They provide local employment and are a health and social care asset close to where people live, work and shop.

-ends-

[insert contact email and telephone number]

## Organising local councillor visits to pharmacies

The action day presents an opportunity to invite local councillors, to visit a community pharmacy. In cases where MPs are unable to attend the Parliamentary reception, an MP visit to a pharmacy may also be an option.

**Please note:** We are working on new guidance on hosting pharmacy visits for MPs in light of the current situation and challenges for community pharmacies, but previous guidance, which still contains relevant points on selecting a pharmacy and the need to engage with different politicians, is available in this briefing:

[PSNC Briefing 048/17: Hosting a pharmacy visit for your local MP \(July 2017\)](#)

If LPCs would like to arrange a visit for a local councillor focusing on the winter action day, the key messages set out above should provide a good basis for the discussions at the visit. You may then like to focus on a particular service the pharmacy is providing, such as the NHS Community Pharmacy Flu Vaccination Service. We have set out below some template documentation for such visits.

### Template email invitation for #pharmacywinter visits

Dear [local councillor]

[LPC] represents community pharmacies in your [constituency/area] and we would like to invite you to visit one of them as part of a national pharmacy campaigning day in November. The visit will allow you to see first-hand all the work local pharmacy teams do for the local communities you represent, as well as to better understand the challenges they face.

As we head into the winter months there are growing concerns about how the NHS will manage the likely increases in demand for services. We are keen to show you the services that community pharmacies can already offer to help with this, and to talk to you about what more we would like to do to help local people in [insert location].

We had in mind [xx pharmacy] at [address]. The pharmacy is providing a range of services which are highly valued by those who use it, and we would like in particular to discuss their success in offering NHS flu vaccinations.

[Possible sentence for councillors with whom there is an existing relationship: We have very much appreciated your support for community pharmacy in the past, and we think this would be a valuable opportunity to update you on the latest developments and how pharmacies in [area] are managing.]

We would be very happy to take photographs and promote the visit on social media, as part of a national #pharmacywinter action day, and we would also like to invite the local press to showcase your support for community pharmacies.

Please contact me on the details below so we can begin organising a pharmacy visit or, if you cannot spare the time, we would be happy to brief you on local pharmacy issues. I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

[LPC]

### Template press release for #pharmacywinter visits

[insert date]

LOCAL [MP/COUNCILLOR] [insert name] LEARNS HOW PHARMACIES ARE HELPING RESIDENTS THIS WINTER

[Add photograph if possible. Provide caption with names of those included]

[Insert MP/councillor name] has visited [insert pharmacy name] to hear about the work the team are doing to help residents in [location] this winter. [Insert name] heard how local pharmacies are helping to get residents vaccinated against flu, and about the advice and support they can give people when they have coughs, colds or other symptoms.

During the visit [insert name] [insert activity as it took place e.g. discussed various services with the pharmacy team/ spoke to patients/ received a flu vaccination.] They also heard about how community pharmacies are aiming for a record year for flu vaccinations, with [insert local figure] jabs given by pharmacies in the area [already/last year].

In particular, pharmacist [insert name] was keen to tell them about how the pharmacy is [insert local text e.g. preparing for the winter months/ trying to support local GP practices/ providing record numbers of flu vaccinations/ other]. They also discussed the impact that pharmacy services can have on the NHS, helping to reduce pressure on local GPs and hospitals.

[Insert pharmacist name] comments: "This winter community pharmacies are going to be needed more than ever. We are the first port of call for many local people on healthcare matters and our regular patients and the wider community really rely on us. This is particularly the case over the winter months with coughs, colds and flu all becoming more common, and GP practices and hospitals already working flat out."

As well as making sure everyone has the medicines they need this winter we'll be helping people to understand and make the most of those medicines, and offering them advice on common ailments. We can also vaccinate people against flu, if they are eligible for a free NHS flu jab. And all of this without the need to wait for an appointment."

[Insert LPC representative name] said: "As many patients in [insert location] will know, our local community pharmacies are doing far more than just dispensing medicines this winter. They are offering a whole range of services and can be particularly helpful as we move into the winter season and GPs and hospitals become busier."

We're really proud of how our local pharmacies have been doing with the NHS flu vaccination service, helping to make sure that everyone who needs the vaccine, gets it. But we believe the Government should be making even better use of pharmacies; we would love to offer even more services to help local people to stay healthy, and reduce pressure on other local healthcare services."

[request quote from local Councillor – **do not use a quote unless permission granted.** Some will prefer a draft quote for them to sign off. If so suggested wording follows.]

[Local councillor] commented: "As we approach the winter months, all NHS services are working harder than ever to manage the increasing demand for healthcare. I have learnt today about how community pharmacies are playing their part in these efforts, helping people when they are feeling unwell or need healthcare advice. I also heard about all the incredible work they are doing to provide flu vaccinations that can help people avoid getting ill in the first place. I am keen to ensure the council does all that it can to develop community pharmacy services that meet the needs of both local patients and health and care services."

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[insert contact email and telephone number]

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Zoe Long, Head of Communications and Public Affairs.](#)