



Alison Ellis,
LPC Admin Secretary
100 Widcombe Lane, Clifton,
Nottingham, NG11 9GY

Tel: 07882289083
Fax: 0115 9142965

Community Pharmacy paper to Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board

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Introduction

Over the next few years, there will be significant reforms in the way public health and social care services are delivered in England. They will be contracted nationally but delivered locally, according to local need. In light of these changes, this paper aims to provide some background to support local commissioning of pharmaceutical services through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) by demonstrating how primary healthcare professionals in the community have both the expertise and the capability to deliver the change needed to support local populations.

Rotherham Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) seek early partnership working to ensure that the JSNA and PNA support robust joint health and wellbeing strategies and commissioning plans.

The Changing NHS architecture

Dental, optical, pharmacy and general medicine services in primary care are largely provided by independent practitioners (contractors) who contract their services to the NHS, with contracts currently held by PCTs. Changes to the NHS architecture and the abolition of PCTs mean that dental, optical, pharmacy and general medicine contracts will be held centrally by the NHS Commissioning Board from April 2013.

The value of local representative committees

Local representative committees (LRCs) already exist and have existed since the inception of the NHS. They exist to support clinical professionals to do their jobs, advocating on behalf of professionals and, increasingly, working with the NHS to coordinate local service provision. Committees are formed for each of the four primary care contractor professions:

- Local dental committees (LDCs)
- Local optical committees (LOCs)
- Local pharmaceutical committees (LPCs)
- Local medical committees (LMCs)



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LRCs have three core functions relevant to local authorities:

1. Accessing the clinicians:

Rotherham LPC's area is coterminous with that of the Council meaning that the LPC can provide a ready-made access point to facilitate making contact with the primary care contractor professions in the area.

2. Understanding context:

The LPC is a hub of clinical expertise and knowledge of the local NHS which can be drawn on by the Council and others in the planning and delivery of local healthcare services.

3. Legitimacy:

The LPC members are elected or nominated by their fellow professionals. Their democratic selection and accountability provide them with the legitimacy necessary to represent their contractor profession and the professionals who provide that service.

Community Pharmacy in Rotherham

There are 63 community pharmacies in Rotherham. National research shows 99% of the population, even those living in the most deprived areas, can get to a pharmacy within 20 minutes by car and 96% by walking or using public transport. In Rotherham we believe the proportion of people having access to community pharmacy to be even higher now with the increase in pharmacies opening in the last few years.

Nationally, 84% of adults visit a pharmacy at least once a year, with an average adult visiting a pharmacy 14 times in that year.

An estimated 9,000 visits take place daily to Rotherham pharmacies, of which three-quarters are for health-related reasons. Around one in 10 of these pharmacy visitors get health advice. That's 900 people in Rotherham being given health advice every day. The estate value of this network of community pharmacies would cost the NHS £35M if it had to purchase it.

These pharmacies are located in the very heart of the communities they serve. Uniquely, community pharmacies see people who have no apparent current health need as well as those with existing conditions. These interactions provide opportunities for health interventions that do not exist elsewhere in the NHS. If genuine public health improvements are to be made in Rotherham and elsewhere, engaging with community pharmacy professionals through the LPC network will be of paramount importance.

Local healthcare professionals are best placed to describe the local issues affecting the delivery of services. Frequently the pharmacy team will be recruited from the communities they serve. Only when the problems are fully understood can appropriate solutions be adopted.



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Rotherham Community Pharmacies already provide specific accredited advice to local residents on stopping smoking, substance misuse and sexual health. They also provide general lifestyle advice and support local public health campaigns.

However, with so many health experts in the community, the Rotherham health economy could benefit even further by commissioning this resource to provide other public health related initiatives such as alcohol brief interventions, NHS Health Checks, weight management advice, early diagnosis referral and many more through local initiatives or the national Healthy Living Pharmacy scheme.

Rotherham LPC can also provide RMBC with advance notice of the concerns of community pharmacists and the impact that these may have on the provision of services. The LPC can bring practical expertise and experience to the development of any local health messaging that RMBC wants to engage in.

Rotherham LPC appreciates there may not be space for a pharmacy seat round the Health and Wellbeing Board table, but suggests engagement through stakeholder workshops and workstream meetings can provide RMBC with the access to the experience and expertise of the LPC and community pharmacy in Rotherham.

Summary

Rotherham LPC seeks further engagement with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to support the development of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment and maximising efficient use of the community pharmacy network in the Borough.

Nick Hunter, MRPharmS
Chief Officer
Rotherham LPC

LPC Chair
Julie Oliver, MRPharmS
E-mail: joliver@weldricks.co.uk



LPC Chief Officer
Nick Hunter, MRPharmS
Email: nickhunter@o2.co.uk
Phone: 07595 069178