

Title: Draft Somerset Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2022-25.

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| Summary: | <p>All Health and Wellbeing Boards have a statutory duty to report on the accessibility of pharmacies and pharmacy services from rural, dispensing GP practices in their localities. A report normally needs to be produced every three years, although the timetable has been disrupted by Covid-19, meaning that it is now four years since the last report, whose validity has been extended by government.</p> <p>This report is sent to NHS England, who use the information contained within to assess applications by pharmacies to open or change their services.</p> <p>There are no <i>major</i> gaps in provision, but, the steering group has noted that many pharmacies are reducing their hours, which has knock on effects on accessibility and quality of service.</p> <p>There is a statutory 60-day consultation period (27th April-25th June 2022) on the draft. Views are particularly welcome on two questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although not previously identified as a gap, should Sunday pharmacy opening be commissioned in Chard, especially given the growth in the town?• Would the health of the population be improved if Hepatitis C Antibody testing were to be extended from Taunton, Bridgwater and Wedmore? |
| Recommendations: | <p>That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Endorses the attached draft2. Comments, if appropriate, on provision in Chard, or Hepatitis C Antibody testing, or both, as described above. |

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| | <p>3. Delegates endorsement of the final draft of the report to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, assuming only minor changes from the consultation draft.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Reasons for recommendations:</p> | <p>The draft attached has been drawn up by a steering group delegated by the Health and Wellbeing Board to do so. It brings together evidence from NHS England, Office for National Statistics, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, local pharmacies and GPs as well as member bodies of the HWB (CCG, SCC, Healthwatch) and public consultation. The steering group is confident that it represents a fair and realistic picture of pharmaceutical need in Somerset.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Links to The Improving Lives Strategy</p> | <p>Please tick the Improving Lives priorities influenced by the delivery of this work</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fairer life chances and opportunity for all</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>1 Community pharmacies are also commercial enterprises. 2 Community pharmacies contribute to the vibrancy of high streets. 3 Pharmacies provide access to health advice, often in town centres and at times when face-to-face advice is not available elsewhere. 4 Advice in pharmacies promotes better health and independence.</i></p> | A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services | ✓ | Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment | ✓ | Fairer life chances and opportunity for all | ✓ | Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer | ✓ |
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| Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Financial, Legal, HR, Social value and partnership Implications:</p> | <p>There are no direct implications of these types for members of the HWB. Extended Hepatitis C Antibody testing may lead to support provided by Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service being better informed. The PNA is produced in partnership, and promotes joint working in its preparation. There may be financial implications for NHSE in their response to evidence of pharmaceutical need presented in the final draft.</p> | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>Equalities Implications:</p> | <p>The report includes a full Equalities Impact Assessment. In most cases, pharmacies provide an opportunity to increase access for excluded groups, including particularly those with protected characteristics of age and disability. For some people there may be difficulty of access as a result of inability to speak English; we found that the knowledge of 'Language Line' in pharmacies (which includes interpretation of British Sign Language) was not universal. In particular, the report highlights problems of access for people in rural areas, especially at weekends, and for people affected by digital exclusion; these problems apply to access to pharmaceutical services as much as for other services.</p> |
| <p>Risk Assessment:</p> | <p>Failure to produce a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment by October 2022 would constitute maladministration by the Board. Whilst the impact could be serious, the likelihood is negligible. Failure to identify fully-argued patterns of pharmaceutical need in a published PNA may be challenged in law, notably by providers seeking to benefit commercially from a lack of clarity.</p> |

1. Background Information

- 1.1** The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment is a report *from* the Somerset Health and Well-being Board on the effectiveness of provision of pharmacy services to the county. It includes community pharmacies and GP practices that dispense medicines in many rural areas. It considers whether pharmacy provision will remain adequate until the next assessment in 2025. It is written to inform NHS England, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and Somerset County Council in their commissioning, and whether new pharmacies should be encouraged or permitted to open.
- 1.2** We cannot expect everyone in Somerset to have very local access to every pharmaceutical service, but initial findings from the steering group are that distribution and opening times are generally appropriate, and services are commissioned in ways that largely cover the county.
- 1.2** The steering group has been aware during the preparation of this draft that opening hours of pharmacies are changing frequently, and these changes have often meant reduction of access in the mornings and evenings. This reduction is in contrast to the pressure on GPs to extend opening hours to improve access. We are concerned that reduced hours can also have knock on effects, such as in reducing the promptness with which patients receive prescribed medicine and increasing the distances that patients have to travel, with all the implications that has for accessibility, sustainability and cost.

- 1.3** We have identified two improvements that could be made in provision, and are particularly interested in any views or information about the following:
- There is no Sunday opening in the Chard, Langport and Ilminster Primary Care Network area, and our evidence suggests that access would be improved if a pharmacy in Chard were to be commissioned to open on Sundays.
 - Only four pharmacies, in Taunton, Bridgwater and Wedmore, are commissioned to provide the Hepatitis C antibody testing service; this disease is often associated with intravenous drug users. On the basis of the patterns of needle exchange, evidence suggest that an improvement would be made if this service were also commissioned in Yeovil, Frome, West Mendip, West Somerset and Chard/Langport/Ilminster Primary Care Network areas.

2. Improving Lives Priorities and Outcomes

2.1 A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services

Community pharmacies are part-funded by the NHS, but are also commercial enterprises and an important part of most high streets. The report discusses the issues of environmental sustainability of access to pharmacies, particularly the necessity of using cars for most people outside normal working hours.

2.2 Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment

Community pharmacies contribute to the vibrancy of high streets, and are generally located closer to more deprived communities than other parts of the health system. The location of pharmacies in towns mean that they are tend to be closer to more deprived communities than GP surgeries or hospitals which generally require more space than is readily or affordably available in such locations.

3.3 Fairer life chances and opportunity for all

Pharmacies provide access to health advice, often in town centres and at times when face-to-face advice is not available elsewhere. This level of health support, particularly when located close to poorer communities, as described above, Pharmacies may be less off-putting than GP surgeries for some patients.

3.4 Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer

In addition to the simple supply of prescribed medicines or appliances, provision of services and advice in pharmacies promotes better health and independence.

3. Consultations Undertaken

- 3.1** In the period before writing the consultation draft of the report, a public consultation was undertaken through Somerset CCG Engagement and Advisory Group (SEAG) and distributed by Healthwatch Somerset and Patient Participation Groups. This yielded 55 responses, described in the draft, that were consistent with the access criteria applied. Pharmacies were also contacted through the Local Pharmaceutical Group to check opening hours and services against NHS England data, and to ask about potential additional commissioned services. The corrections are included in the report.
- 3.2** The statutory 60 day consultation period runs from 27th April to 25th June. There is a [questionnaire for stakeholders](#), on the factual content and assertions of the report, and the [public questionnaire on access](#) is also being held open for this period.
- 3.3** Representative groups, such as Compass Disability and the Community Council for Somerset, are being contact specifically for comments during the statutory consultation period.

4. Request of the Board and Board Members

- 4.1** This is a report drawn up by the PNA steering group as delegated by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and so the consultation is *by*, rather than *with*, the HWB. The steering group would, though, welcome views of Board members on the findings,.
- 4.2** Members are invited to comment on the draft at the meeting, by email (pztucker@somerset.gov.uk) or using the [on-line form for stakeholders](#). Members are also invited to respond to the [public survey on pharmacy use and access](#).

5. Background Papers

- 5.1** The consultation draft of the PNA, along with 12 separate locality assessments is published at <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/pna.html>

6. Report Sign-Off

| | Seen by: | Name | Date |
|------------------------|---|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Report Sign off | Relevant Senior Manager / Lead Officer (Director Level) | | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| | Cabinet Member / Portfolio Holder (if applicable) | Clare Paul | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| | Monitoring Officer (Somerset County Council) | Scott Wooldridge | Click or tap to enter a date. |