

New National Pharmacy First Service – starting 31 January 2024

Through the Primary Care Access Recovery Plan [NHS England » Delivery plan for recovering access to primary care](#), the Government indicated its intention to continue to invest in the journey started in 2019: to embed community pharmacy into the NHS, become the first port of call for minor illness, and play an increased role in health promotion and in optimising the use of medicines. The Primary Care Access Recovery Plan recognises the increasing role community pharmacy has in delivering clinical services to increase access to healthcare services within the heart of communities.

The new Pharmacy First Service will enable community Pharmacists to complete episodes of care for patients without the need for the patient to visit their general practice. This, alongside expansions to the pharmacy blood pressure checking and contraception services, could save up to 10 million general practice team appointments a year and help patients access quicker and more convenient care.

Pharmacy First **will include seven new clinical pathways, as well as incorporating the existing Community Pharmacist Consultation Service** (urgent repeat medicine supply and referrals for minor illness). Going forward, all registered community pharmacies for Pharmacy First will be expected to provide ALL elements of the service as part of the service specification. Patients will be able to access the new service via referrals, such as from NHS 111, General Practice and Emergency Departments or by walking into the pharmacy directly, or where appropriate, by contacting them by video consultation.

The 7 new clinical pathways are as below and if clinically appropriate, the service will enable the provision of treatment through a PGD:

Clinical Pathway	Age range	Medicines List
Uncomplicated UTI	Women 16-64 years	Nitrofurantoin
Shingles	18 years and over	Aciclovir Valaciclovir
Impetigo	1 year and over	Hydrogen peroxide Cream Fusidic acid cream Flucloxacillin Clarithromycin Erythromycin
Infected Insect Bites	1 year and over	Flucloxacillin Clarithromycin Erythromycin
Sinusitis	12 years and over	Mometasone nasal spray Fluticasone nasal spray Phenoxymethylpenicillin Clarithromycin Erythromycin Doxycycline
Sore Throat	5 years and over	Phenoxymethylpenicillin Clarithromycin Erythromycin
Acute Otitis Media	1 to 17 years	Phenazone and lidocaine ear drops Amoxicillin Clarithromycin Erythromycin

The service specification, clinical pathways and patient group directions/clinical protocol for this service are all available on the dedicated NHS England website [NHS England » Community Pharmacy advanced service specification: NHS Pharmacy First Service](#)

Making Referrals into Pharmacy First: The existing referral routes for CPCS will still apply. Therefore, *general practice teams are advised to continue to electronically refer low acuity minor illnesses and to start referring into the 7 new clinical conditions* through the current method of sending GP CPCS referrals (NHS Mail/ PharmRefer (System1 practices)/Local Services (EMIS practices)).

Post Event Notifications to General Practice: To streamline and improve workflow, the way that pharmacy consultation outcomes can be captured in the patient record has been redesigned. This will roll out throughout February 2024 and will mean that practice staff can review consultation information and add the data to the patient record with one click of a button. Until this functionality is rolled out, *practices will continue to receive information through NHSMail* in line with existing processes.

Pharmacy First Training Pack for Receptionists and Care Navigators: this PowerPoint presentation provides information on the following:

- Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Pharmacy First (minor illnesses and clinical conditions)
- Importance of referring patients into Pharmacy First electronically
- How to refer into Pharmacy First
- What the patient journey looks like
- Practice notifications post consultation
- How to manage 'bouncebacks' into general practice

An additional document '[Pharmacy First Supporting Information](#)' provides links to the Pharmacy First service specification, clinical pathways, PGDs and other helpful information.

Pharmacy First Marketing Campaign: An NHSE national marketing campaign will be launched from mid-February 2024, which will encourage the public to access advice and treatment from community pharmacy services for common conditions and run for six weeks.

If you have any questions relating to this update, please do contact your Community Pharmacy Clinical Lead:

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