



# Northumberland

## County Council

### HEALTH AND WELL BEING BOARD

11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023

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#### **Update to Pharmacy Needs Assessment: Cramlington**

Report of: Councillor Wendy Pattison - Adult Health and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Gill O'Neill - Executive Director of Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities

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#### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board about developments since the publication of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment in September 2022.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board note the new developments and the action being taken to mitigate against the risks to Northumberland residents.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

*Health and Well Being* – our aim is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lead healthy, independent lives for as long as possible and to safeguard our most vulnerable residents in a way that maintains their dignity and confidence.

#### **Key issues**

1. Lloyds Pharmacy, operating from Sainsbury's supermarket, Manor Walks, Cramlington has informed NHS England of its plan to close the pharmacy on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. As it is currently a 100-hour pharmacy the regulations require a six month notice period of intended closure.
2. This 100- hour pharmacy is one of 5 pharmacies across the county which form the network of out of hours provision of pharmacy services. The conclusion of the PNA states

*"The Council considers that the network of extended hour pharmacies are essential to meet patients' needs by widening access to pharmaceutical services outside core hours"*

*when other pharmacies are closed. Any loss of 100 hour pharmacies or reduction in supplementary hours may lead to gaps in pharmacy services”.*

3. There are 3 other pharmacies in Cramlington.

- Well Ltd operate a pharmacy in the Manor Walks shopping centre which is open until 6.30pm weekdays and 1pm on Saturdays. It does not open on Sundays.
- Boots operates a pharmacy in Manor Walks shopping centre which is open until 6pm weekdays, 5.30pm on Saturdays and between 10am and 4pm on Sundays.
- Lloyds operate another pharmacy at the Brockwell Centre which is 1.9miles from Manor Walks centre. This pharmacy is open Monday to Friday until 6pm. It does not open at weekends. This pharmacy is currently being sold to a new owner who will continue to provide pharmacy services.

Consideration must be given as to the ability of these pharmacies to pick up the workload of Lloyds operating from Sainsburys, and in particular the services being operated outside of normal hours on weekday evenings.

### **Background**

The Pharmacy Needs Assessment was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2022.

Cramlington currently has 4 pharmacies to serve its population of around 30,000 residents. It is also a hub for a wider geographical region for shopping and medical services outside “normal” hours of 9am to 6pm. Consideration was given in the PNA to the current pharmacy provision in Cramlington because of the application to open a new pharmacy on the Cramlington hospital site. The application by the developers was to provide a one stop service for patients at the relocated Brockwell medical centre (due for completion in Autumn 2023) along with other community-based health services. This application went to appeal after it was turned down by NHS England in autumn 2022. The result of the appeal was published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and was positive for a new 40 hour pharmacy at the Brockwell development, at the site adjacent to the Urgent Care Hospital. The developers have 2 years to open the new pharmacy.

GPs offer extended hours services from the hub at The Village medical centre in Cramlington for practices in Ponteland and Cramlington during weekday evenings, and additionally for practices from further afield at the weekends and bank holidays. Patients expect to be able to access a pharmacy after a medical consultation if new medicines are prescribed.

The pharmacy contract has caused extreme financial difficulties for community pharmacy. The 2019 settlement saw a reduction in funding, and this situation has been worsened by the COVID crisis, and the spike in inflation. The Lloyds group posted a £66million loss in their official financial return for 2022/23. Lloyds group will stop providing pharmacy services in all 237 branches located in Sainsbury stores by the end of 2023. It has said

that the future of each store will be decided individually but any future owner would need to negotiate a new lease for each pharmacy with Sainsbury.

100-hour pharmacies are very expensive to run and also need three whole time equivalent pharmacists to maintain a professional presence over the 100 hours opening time. There is a shortage of pharmacists nationally, and therefore finding staff has proved an issue, and the Cramlington branch operated reduced hours while COVID regulations permitted this.

Concerns have been raised by Healthwatch Northumberland about how this change (and indeed other changes) are communicated to patients and that the impact is understood. Specifically:

1. What direct communication will be made to patients at the point the prescription is made (eg at the GP surgery) as to where an electronic prescription is being sent
2. What direct communications will be made to patients and carers who have repeat prescriptions at this pharmacy. When will this be done and what information will be included
3. When will an Equalities Impact Assessment be done by NHSE and/or NENC ICB (depending on timing) to determine the effect on patients with Protected Characteristics. Specific focus required in relation to mental capacity, sensory loss and ability to travel to different locations. Consideration should be given to how patients, for whom English is an additional language, including those whose first language is BSL, are made aware of the change.

Healthwatch Northumberland Board has approved an “Enter and View” engagement exercise to ascertain further information about the patients who use the 100 hour pharmacy, when other pharmacies are closed. This will help determine the full extent of the gap in pharmacy services when this 100 hour pharmacy closes.

The need to support the extended hours which GP services are required to cover means that the loss of out of hours pharmacy services may impact those patients who do not have access to private transport to go to the next nearest pharmacy which is open for extended hours (Blyth, Ashington or Kingston Park).

When the Lloyds branch in Cramlington closes we will review the remaining access to determine whether there is a gap in pharmacy services. The Pharmacy regulations mean that a gap in pharmacy services cannot be declared until the pharmacy has closed, because they can change their minds or sell the contract up to the date of closure.

The granting of a 40hour pharmacy contract to the site adjacent to the emergency care hospital will make it difficult to attract a fifth pharmacy into a town centre location, where rates are likely to be high. It may be, that there is sufficient capacity to service the pharmacy needs of residents of Cramlington during “normal working hours”, once the new pharmacy at the new Brockwell primary care site is open. However, this will not address the needs of those patients who attend evening appointments at the GP out of hours hub.

We propose that we bring back to the August Health and Wellbeing Board a second paper describing the situation at that time, when the Health and Wellbeing Board can decide

whether there is a gap in pharmacy services. This would be done by producing a correction to the Pharmacy Needs Assessment 2022, by issuing a supplementary statement. As a response to that supplementary statement, normally an application to open a new pharmacy would be sent to NHS England to cover for the gap in hours identified or an existing contractor would agree to extend its hours. Failing that the gap in hours could be covered by a pharmacy rota.

### **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	Consideration must be given to how this closure will impact the residents of Cramlington and South East Northumberland
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	There are no direct financial implications for the council.
<b>Legal</b>	The council has a duty to inform NHS England if any changes to pharmacy arrangements will create a gap in pharmacy services. The duties and responsibilities of a Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions of the Executive
<b>Procurement</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources</b>	There are no specific implications for human resources,
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Closure of a centrally located pharmacy which is open for extended hours may impact the ability of disadvantaged members of the community to access pharmacy services.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The council is obligated to update the PNA on a regular basis and when there are significant changes to pharmacy services.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	Commissioned services for opiate substitution provided by community pharmacies reduce the crime associated with illegal substance misuse
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	The fundamental aim is to ensure that pharmacy services are available to Northumberland residents.

<b>Carbon reduction</b>	N/A
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	The fundamental aim is to ensure that pharmacy services are available to Northumberland residents.
<b>Wards</b>	All

### **Background papers:**

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments; Information Pack for local authority Health and Wellbeing Boards. Department of Health May 2013

Pharmaceutical journal: closure of Lloyds pharmacies. <https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/feature/supermarket-pharmacy-closures-a-watershed-moment>

### **Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:***

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