



Healthy Living Pharmacy

Information for Local Authorities

Pharmacies, being an integral part of the community, are well placed to offer services that improve the public's health and there is increasing evidence of the value of these interventions.

What is a Healthy Living Pharmacy?

Healthy Living Pharmacies (HLP), initially developed in Portsmouth are now being rolled out across the country. There are currently over 1000 HLPs in England with an ambition from Public Health England that will increase substantially.

HLPs have the public's health at the heart of what they do and have a proven track record of commissioned service delivery in optimising the use of medicines and areas such as health checks, smoking, obesity, sexual health, alcohol and harm reduction. By offering a range of high quality services, HLPs can contribute towards reducing health inequalities by improving health and wellbeing outcomes in their communities.

What are the requirements of a Healthy Living Pharmacy?

Before being awarded the HLP 'quality mark' a pharmacy must have at least one qualified Health Champion and demonstrated that they meet a set of quality criteria which are set around workforce development, premises and engagement. The pharmacy also has to demonstrate consistent delivery of commissioned services to a high level, e.g. medicines support services (Medicines Use Reviews and New Medicine Service) and health improvement services including stop smoking.

A pharmacy must demonstrate a healthy living ethos and proactive approach to health before being issued their HLP status.

What can the public expect from a Healthy Living Pharmacy?

The public will feel the difference when entering an HLP; the Health Champion and other staff may proactively approach them about health and wellbeing issues and will know about local services for referral or signposting. If a health trainer service exists locally then Health Champions can extend their reach. There will be a health promotion zone and there should be a health promotion campaign running linked into local priorities and health needs.

How will the public know about Healthy Living Pharmacies?

Areas implementing the HLP programme are likely to have implemented a local public awareness campaign and Health Champions will often work in the community to raise awareness of health and wellbeing issues by visiting Sure Start centres, schools, colleges, leisure centres and places of worship. Ideally, HLP team members will work with their local GP practices and local authority public facilities to raise awareness and some may display posters and/or HLP video loops on their information screens.

What difference do HLPs make?

Evaluations of HLPs to date have demonstrated an increase in successful smoking quits, extensive delivery of alcohol brief interventions and advice, emergency contraception, targeted seasonal flu vaccinations, common ailments, NHS Health Checks, healthy diet, physical activity and healthy weight services.

An example of medicines optimisation on people with asthma or COPD who had a medicines use review with their pharmacist. This identified a need for improved inhaler technique and the majority of those who were smokers accepted help to stop smoking.

Results from across England indicate that the HLP model is working in areas with different demography and geography.

What are the benefits to the public health system?

70% of people who visit pharmacies do not regularly access other health and wellbeing services so HLPs can provide pro-active support to people in your community. Improved choice and access to early interventions on issues such as obesity, alcohol and smoking could improve outcomes in the longer term and therefore impact cost of care in the future. Closer working with your local pharmacy may identify areas of joint activity that will benefit population health and support independent living.

How you can help?

Public health commissioners and practitioners should work closely with their local pharmacy teams to involve them in health promotion campaigns and health improvement training opportunities. They should also establish effective communication channels and two-way referral protocols with other wellbeing providers. Local Authorities should consider commissioning pharmacy services to improve access and address unmet needs. This will ensure that people are accessing the right service at the right time and in the right place.