

COMMUNITY PHARMACY STRATEGIC PLAN 2030



Department of
Health
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Foreword

In the evolving landscape of the integrated health and social care system in Northern Ireland, community pharmacies have a pivotal role, connecting individuals with essential care through medicines, professional advice, and services for health and wellbeing.

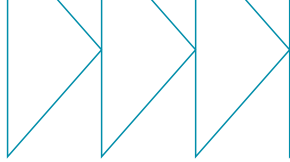


This Community Pharmacy Strategy describes the vision and strategic priorities for community pharmacy up to 2030. Its publication delivers a recommendation from the Health and Wellbeing 2026 Delivering Together Strategy to develop a framework to fully realise the potential of community pharmacy services to support better health outcomes from medicines and prevent illness.

Community pharmacists are experts in the use of medicines and this vision expands the trusted role that community pharmacies have in supplying medicines, to offer more clinical services that utilise the skills of community pharmacy teams and offer safe, convenient, and faster access to care.

The strategy outlines how the vision will be delivered through six strategic priorities and four major reform programmes for services, workforce, legislation, and digital systems that together will transform community pharmacy's role within the HSC.

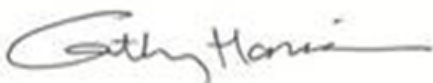
It describes a sector undergoing major change with imminent expansion in workforce capacity and skills as pharmacist prescribing becomes embedded into practice and registered pharmacy technicians take on more responsibilities. It presents the opportunity to provide quicker access to care for acute and long-term conditions in community pharmacies making use of advances in medicines, diagnostics, digital and medical technologies.



This strategy is a testament to the commitment to proactively adapt, innovate, and enhance the accessibility and quality of community pharmacy services across Northern Ireland.

By fostering collaboration, engaging with local communities, utilizing new skills and leveraging emerging technologies, this strategy aims to empower community pharmacies to further support and manage patients so that they live longer and healthier lives at home and contribute to a healthier society.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland to the development of this strategic plan.



Professor Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Northern Ireland



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Introduction

Community pharmacy in Northern Ireland

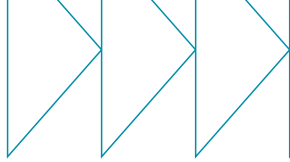
The Health and Wellbeing 2026 Delivering Together Strategy recognises community pharmacy's significant role in primary care in supporting improved public health and engaging with the public to ensure medicines are being used appropriately. The Strategy includes a recommendation to develop a new framework to fully realise the potential of community pharmacy services to support better health outcomes from medicines and to prevent illness.¹

Community pharmacy is one of the four pillars of primary care in Northern Ireland and community pharmacies across the region provide vital services for local communities, including the dispensing of over 44 million prescription medicine items each year.²

Community pharmacies are often the first point of contact within the healthcare system with an estimated 123,000 patients and members of the public visiting community pharmacies every day in Northern Ireland to access medicines and seek advice from skilled pharmacists and pharmacy staff who are highly trusted by the public.

Community pharmacies are highly accessible and convenient for many people, with over 99% of the population living within 5 miles of a community pharmacy. In some rural areas community pharmacies can often be the only readily accessible source of primary health care. Community pharmacies are an essential part of the integrated care system, working with primary and secondary care partners, community and voluntary groups and organisations, and other service providers to address local population health issues and inequalities.

During the last ten years the strategic development of community pharmacy has been driven by the implementation of two key strategies: The Medicines Optimisation Quality Framework 2016³ and Making it Better through Pharmacy in the Community 2014.⁴ These informed the role of community pharmacy in the HSC sector today and the services that they provide which are set out in the Community Pharmacy Commissioning Plan. The current plan covers the three-year period 2022–2025 and was agreed by the Minister of Health. It includes commitments relating to the introduction of new services and service developments.⁵



The community pharmacy sector is undergoing major change, with developments underway to reform workforce, services, digital sector and legislation. These will expand the range of services that community pharmacies provide and help the Health and Social Care (HSC) service deal with increasing demand and to deliver faster, reliable care for large numbers of people.

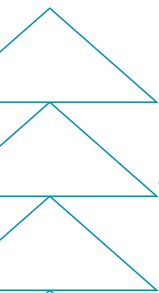
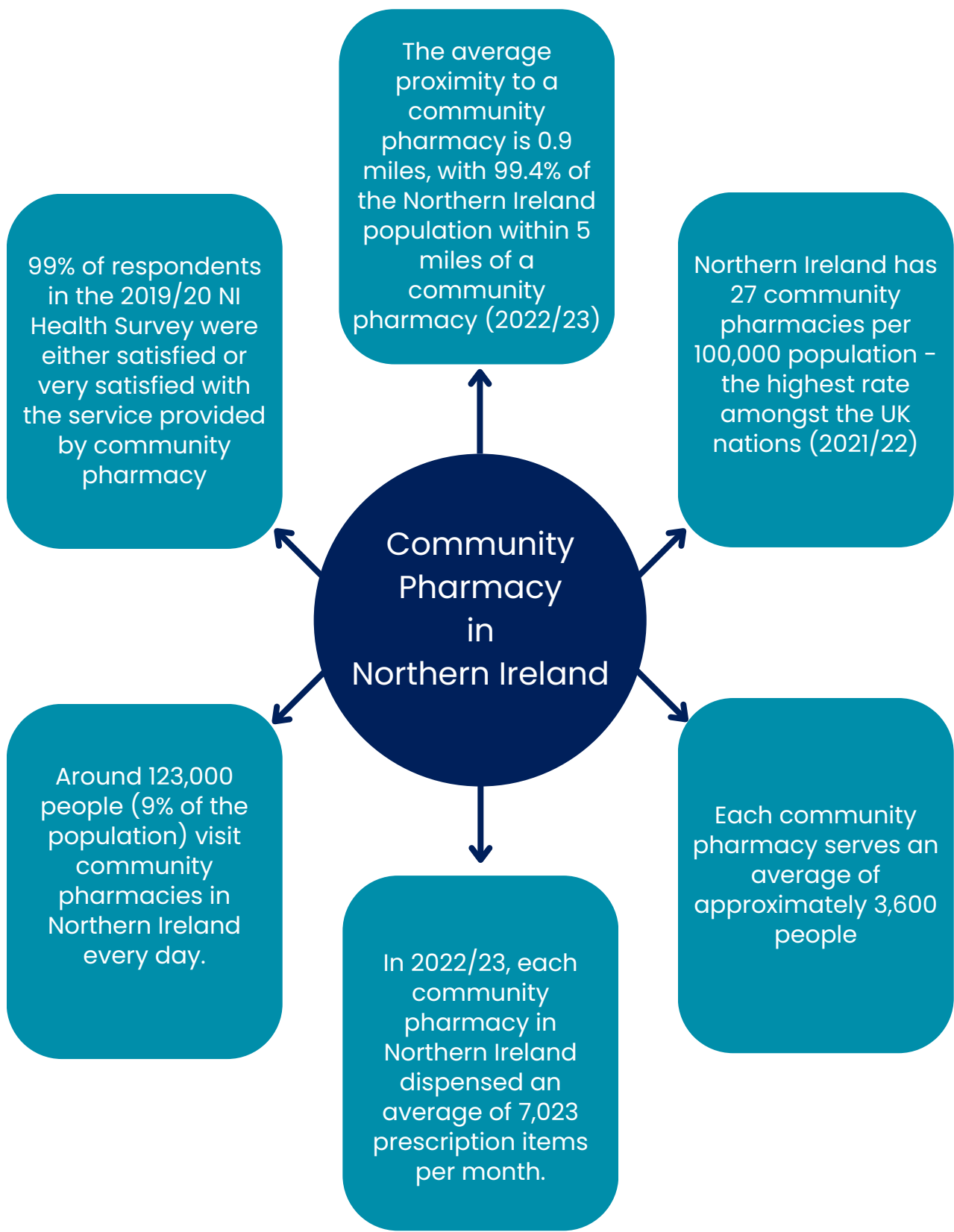
By 2030 it is anticipated that there will be over one thousand additional independent pharmacist prescribers in Northern Ireland. Legislative reforms will introduce a new regulated pharmacy technician profession which will support improved skills mix within pharmacy teams and contribute to delivery of clinical care using Patient Group Directions (PGDs). Increased workforce capacity and skills plus advances in diagnostics, digital and medical technologies will enhance service design and delivery. This will allow community pharmacies to provide quicker access to care for acute and long-term conditions and have a greater role within patient care pathways.

The inclusion of community pharmacy representation in Area Integrated Partnership Boards will further help to optimise the contribution of their services to meeting the needs of local populations and embed community pharmacy further in the transformation of Health Service models.⁶

Purpose

This strategic plan describes the vision and strategic priorities for community pharmacy up to 2030. It shows how the implementation of reform programmes for services, workforce, legislation and digital systems will support the expansion of community pharmacy's role within Health and Social Care. The vision builds on the foundations laid by the 2022–25 commissioning plan and aims to develop more patient centered community pharmacy services, incorporating independent prescribing and advanced practice, to support the goals of the health and social care service and meet population health needs.

The full delivery of the strategic plan is subject to funding, contractual arrangements and legislative changes. This means that implementation will be phased, up to 2030.





Vision, Strategic Priorities and Work Programmes

Vision

Community pharmacies across Northern Ireland will provide access to safe and reliable supplies of medicines, professional advice, and an increased range of clinical services to prevent and treat illness. The skills of community pharmacists and pharmacy teams will be fully utilised to increase capacity within health and social care, to manage demand and support people to maintain their wellbeing and lead healthy, active lives.

Strategic priorities to 2030

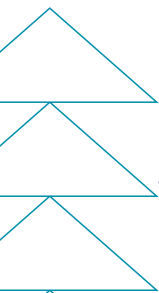
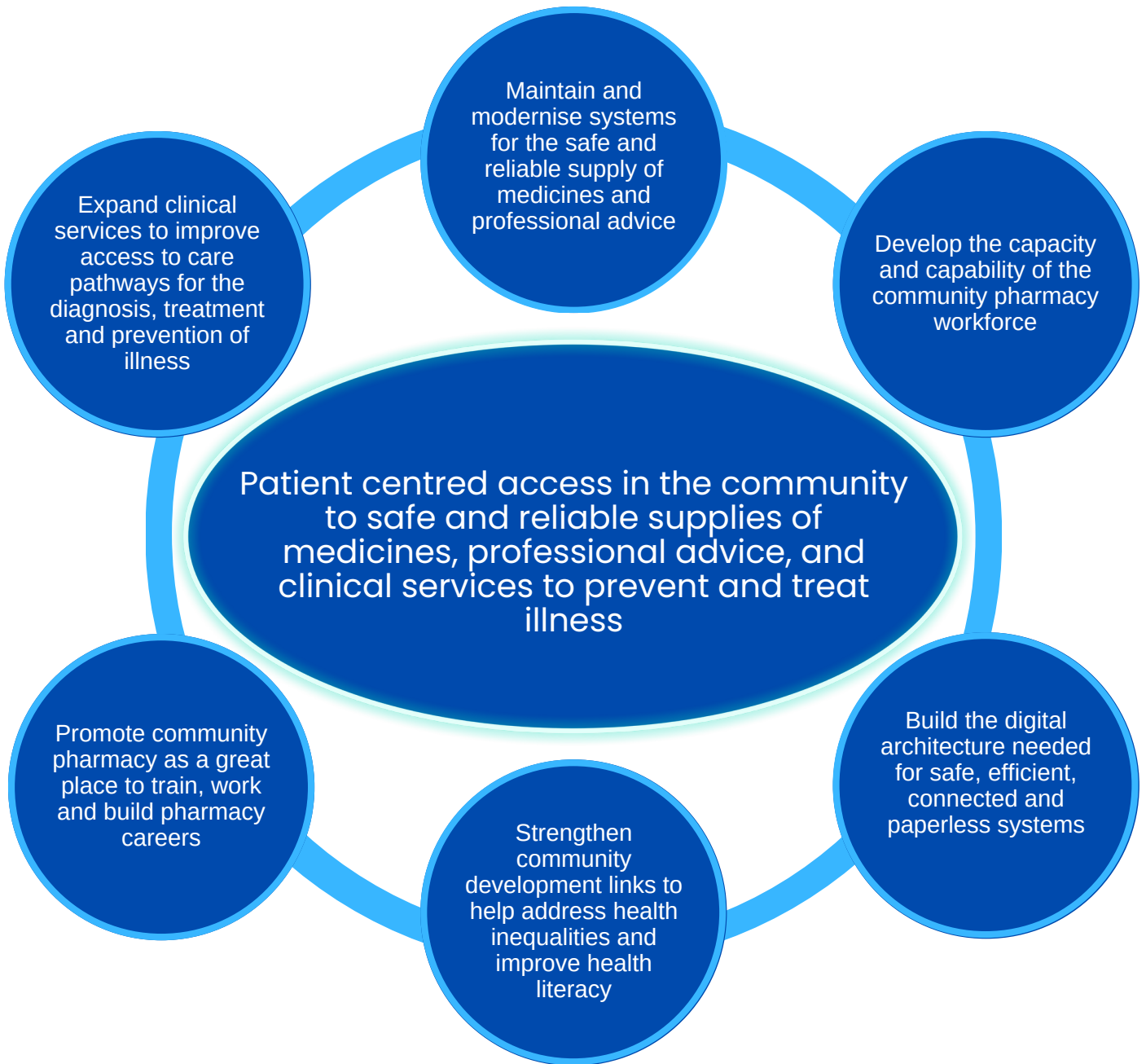
Six strategic priorities will support the delivery of the vision.

1. Expand the range of clinical services available through community pharmacies to improve access to patient care pathways for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of illness.
2. Maintain and modernise systems for the safe and reliable supply of medicines and professional advice from community pharmacies.
3. Develop the capacity and capability of the community pharmacy workforce.
4. Build the digital architecture needed for safe, efficient, connected and paperless systems and services.
5. Strengthen community development links to help address health inequalities and improve health literacy.
6. Promote community pharmacy as a great place to train, work and build pharmacy careers.

Work Programmes

Four inter-related work programmes will support the delivery of the strategic priorities.

1. Service Development Programme
2. Legislative Reform Programme
3. Pharmacy Workforce Review Programme
4. ePharmacy Programme





Strategic Priority 1

Expand the range of clinical services available through community pharmacies to improve access to patient care pathways for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of illness

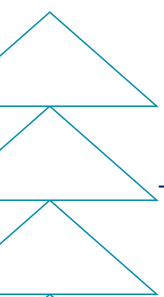
In the period leading up to 2030 the range of patient centered services available from community pharmacies will expand. This will offer better access to care that meets the needs of the public and increase capacity within the health and care service to meet the demands of a growing and ageing population.

These services will be centered on the interaction between pharmacists and their patients. Pharmacies will offer advice and treatments for acute illnesses, contraception, vaccinations, management of long-term conditions, and public health services that promote wellbeing and prevent disease.

These services will make use of the developing clinical skills of community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. This will increasingly see independent prescribing and/or use of patient group directions, diagnostics, and digital enablers embedded into service design and delivery.

Large numbers of people will access convenient, reliable, standardised services in pharmacies that are promoted with clear public messaging. This approach has already benefited vaccination uptake rates for COVID-19 and seasonal influenza vaccination, and greater use of pharmacies has the potential to deliver a step change in health outcomes at population level.

An expanded range of services will help to save time for patients, reduce unnecessary duplication of work in the Health and Social Care sector, streamline processes and make them more efficient. Service evaluation will be routinely completed to build the evidence base for further improvement.



New research will inform the development of new advanced pharmacist practitioner roles that will deliver clinically advanced services in community pharmacies. The emergence of advanced practice services in community pharmacy will herald a new era with great potential for the Health and Social Care sector to deliver accessible holistic care and improve access to more complex patient pathways. As these roles develop, community pharmacists will work with clinicians in both general practice and secondary care to incorporate diagnosis, treatment and management of disease within pharmacy services, and support advances in personalised medicine and uptake of innovative treatments.

Deliver the change - The Service Development Programme



The Community Pharmacy Service Development Programme works to support delivery of the pharmacy commissioning plan. It involves representatives from the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) at the Department of Health and Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI) who consider evidence from NI, UK, and international delivery models to inform the most up to date practice. The Programme also considers provisions for clinical governance, rotas, palliative care, and upgrades to infrastructure including physical and cyber security components.

The programme uses a unique, systematic approach to service development, in collaboration with the Medicines Optimisation Innovation Centre (MOIC), whereby services are developed, piloted, evaluated and then rolled out to pharmacies in Northern Ireland.⁷

Community Pharmacy Service Development Programme



Current Services

Community pharmacies are commissioned to provide three categories of services: core, additional and local. They also provide adherence support to patients in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requirements.

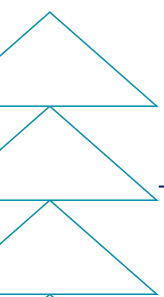
Core services are delivered by all pharmacies to ensure the safe, reliable supply of over 44 million prescription medicine items per year. These include dispensing prescriptions (ordinary, installment and repeat) and emergency supply of medicines when a patient is unable to access their prescription before their medication runs out.

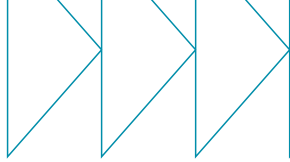
Additional services are offered by most pharmacies to meet regional health priorities such as management of common illnesses through the Pharmacy First services, which offer advice and treatment from a pharmacist without the need to visit a GP. Pharmacy First originally provided advice and treatment for 13 common conditions, but the service has been expanded by the recent addition of urinary tract infections, emergency hormonal contraception and bridging contraception, with others planned.



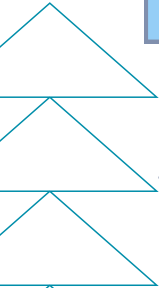
Community pharmacies also deliver services which address important public health needs, including seasonal influenza and COVID vaccination, smoking cessation, and the 'Living Well' health promotion service. Community pharmacies also support the safe and effective management of medicines in care homes through delivery of the 'Care Home Support Service'.

Local services are offered by fewer pharmacies and are commissioned to meet specific needs of local populations. They include a palliative care service offered by a network of community pharmacies across the region to ensure access to medications as well as supervised administration of opiate substitution and needle exchange services.





Community Pharmacy Services delivered in 2022/23

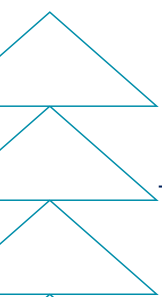




New Services

The pharmacy commissioning plan commits to introducing the following new services and service developments in the period up to 2030, subject to securing the necessary funding.

- The pharmacy first services will expand the range of conditions that can be managed within the pharmacy setting and will increasingly embed diagnostics, independent prescribing, and/or the use of Patient Group Directions into the delivery model to maximise the potential for community pharmacy teams to provide clinical patient-centered care. New conditions will include treatment of sore throat, shingles, impetigo, sinusitis, earache and infected insect bite.
- A new hypertension detection service will be introduced to identify people most at risk of cardiovascular events and ensure that appropriate treatment is commenced to reduce this risk.
- A new hospital discharge medicines service will be implemented to support patients at greatest risk of medicines-related harm with using their medicines safely as they are discharged from hospital.
- The Care Home service will be further developed to establish clinical patient centered roles for community pharmacists that help to optimise the benefits of medicines for residents.
- Changes to locally required services will include pilots to inform the redesign of needle exchange and opiate substitution services (OST) and to enhance access to Hepatitis C and HIV treatments and naloxone.
- Other pilots will include an acute cough assessment service, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) packs and provision of long-term contraception.





Advanced Practice

New research will be undertaken by the Department of Health, sponsored by the United Kingdom Research Institute Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), to inform the development of future policy and commissioning of advanced practice roles and services in community pharmacy.

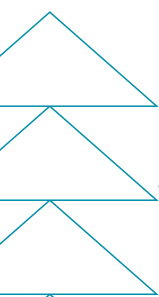
This project will explore the benefits on population health of advanced pharmacist practitioners in community pharmacies who are independent prescribers delivering complex clinical care in integrated patient pathways, making use of developments such as point of care diagnostics, digital and medical technologies, and pharmacogenomics.

Strategic priority 2

Maintain and modernise systems for the safe and reliable supply of medicines and professional advice from community pharmacies

In the period leading up to 2030 and beyond, people will continue to receive their prescription medicines from community pharmacies across Northern Ireland. Community pharmacists play an essential role in providing advice to patients to ensure the safe and effective use of both prescribed and purchased medicines, so people will continue to have the opportunity to consult with a pharmacist when medicines are supplied.

Changes to legislation will help community pharmacies to streamline how they manage dispensing workload and release capacity in their teams to undertake more patient centered services. These changes include the introduction of original pack dispensing, hub and spoke dispensing and reforms to provisions for the supervision of medicines supply within community pharmacies. Changes to legislation will also be progressed to regulate pharmacy technicians in Northern Ireland.

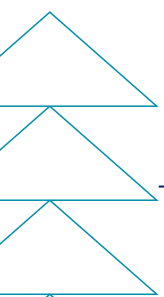




In addition, legislation will be changed to allow the electronic transmission of prescriptions in primary care. The legal framework for the commissioning and delivery of community pharmacy services will be updated to support the continued provision of safe and reliable services to the public.

By 2030 these reforms will support changes in how pharmacies operate. For example, pharmacies may choose to work together in a hub and spoke model to deliver dispensing services more efficiently and release capacity for service delivery. Legislative provisions for greater use of manufacturer's original packs will support the move towards more automation and greater use of robotics in dispensing. Pharmacy Technicians will be a regulated profession and proposed amendments to supervision provisions will allow pharmacists to authorise pharmacy technicians to assume greater responsibility for the medicines supply process.

Community pharmacists will continue to provide a clinical check to ensure that medicines supplied are safe and effective for use by an individual patient. However, the day-to-day assembly of prescription medicines in community pharmacies will increasingly become a process managed by pharmacy technicians and other trained pharmacy staff. This will release pharmacist time for the provision of more clinical roles. The aim is that the whole prescribing, dispensing and reimbursement process for prescription medicines should be paperless by 2030. Opportunities will also be explored to allow electronic repeat dispensing as new systems become available to increase efficiencies for patients and healthcare practitioners in prescription management processes.

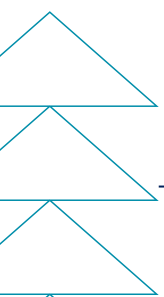




Delivering the change – the Legislative Reform Programme

The Department of Health will lead a Legislative Reform Programme for medicines and the pharmacy profession to deliver these changes as outlined above, working with the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSC), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Home Office. The Programme includes amendments to the Human Medicines Regulations 2012, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations (NI) 2002, the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations (NI) 1997, and the Health and Personal Social Services (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004.

The current legal framework for the commissioning and delivery of community pharmacy services was established in the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations (NI) 1997 and reflects the scope of practice at that time with a focus on dispensing within set opening times. Since then, community pharmacy service provision has been transformed with a much greater focus on patient focused clinical service delivery, and the legal framework needs to be updated to reflect this. Changes are needed to this legal framework to support the underpinning clinical governance arrangements necessary for safe and reliable service delivery, articulate expectations for service providers, and set out performance and accountability arrangements.





Strategic priority 3

Develop the capacity and capability of the community pharmacy workforce

The Northern Ireland Pharmacy Workforce Review was published in 2020 to support the development of the pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician workforce up to 2030.⁸ Implementation of the review is beginning to have a positive impact on the numbers and skills of pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians in the HSC.

A 'Pharmacy Futures NI' campaign designed to attract, recruit, and retain pharmacists has helped to increase the numbers of students applying and studying pharmacy at the two universities in Northern Ireland.⁹

Reforms to the initial education and training of undergraduates mean that all newly registered pharmacists will be joining the workforce as independent prescribers from the summer of 2026. In addition, a cohort of qualified pharmacists, including existing community pharmacists, will undertake postgraduate training each year to become independent prescribers. This means that by 2030 it is anticipated that there will be over one thousand more independent pharmacist prescribers trained in Northern Ireland than in 2023.

Changes to legislation will introduce a regulated Pharmacy Technician profession in Northern Ireland by 2026 with plans to grow and develop this workforce.

To make the most of these workforce developments, community pharmacy services will be designed to enable patients and the public to benefit from the enhanced skill mix available.

For example, independent prescribing will increasingly be embedded within services such as Pharmacy First, with the parallel use of PGDs enabling most community pharmacies to provide these services while the number of independent prescribers within the community pharmacy workforce increases. In the period to 2030 it is anticipated that there will also be a natural progression to advanced practice roles for community pharmacists as clinical skills develop. This would allow community pharmacists to become involved in more complex patient pathways and shared care arrangements, further improving access for patients.

Deliver the change - the Pharmacy Workforce Review Programme



The Pharmacy Workforce Review Programme was established in 2020 to drive the implementation of recommendations to reform the pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician workforce in Northern Ireland outlined in the Pharmacy Workforce Review.

The Programme Board, led by the Department of Health, oversees projects including an “Attract, Recruit, Retain campaign”, reforms to the initial education and training of pharmacists, regulation of pharmacy technicians, strategic development of general practice pharmacists and guidance for advanced practice.



In 2023 the implementation of the Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020 saw:

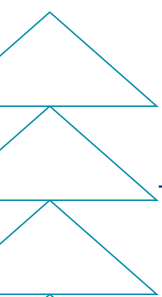
- Launch of phase 3 of the Pharmacy Futures NI campaign to attract, recruit, retain pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in NI.¹⁰
- Publication of guidance to develop consultant pharmacists in NI.¹¹
- Experiential learning for undergraduate pharmacists included in MPharm education.
- Additional independent prescribing training places available for pharmacists.
- Launch of a pharmacy technician regulation and development programme.
- Publication of Pharmacist and Pharmacy Technician/support staff workforce surveys.^{12 13}

In 2024 the implementation of the Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020 will see:

- New guidance developed to support advanced practice roles for pharmacists.
- Foundation year training places increased.
- Consultation on legislative changes for pharmacy technician regulation in Northern Ireland.
- Additional independent prescribing training places available for community pharmacists.
- A pharmacy technician development programme established in community pharmacy.

In 2025 the implementation of the Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020 will see:

- Independent prescribing included in the foundation year training.
- Legislation changed to introduce the regulation of pharmacy technicians in NI.
- Additional independent prescribing training places available for community pharmacists.





In 2026 the implementation of the Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020 will see:

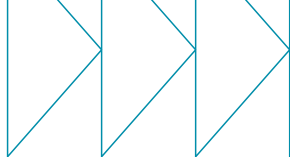
- All pharmacists registering in NI, after successful completion of their foundation training, will be independent prescribers.
- Independent prescribing training places will continue to be available for community pharmacists.

Strategic priority 4

Build the digital architecture needed for safe, connected, and paperless systems and services

By 2030 an ePharmacy Programme for community pharmacy will have transformed the experience of patients, the public, community pharmacies and the wider healthcare system. Access to patient records, electronic transmission of prescriptions and investment in technologies and digital systems, will support the safe supply of medicines and delivery of services to large numbers of people and release time from within the medicines supply process for delivery of new patient centred services.

Key steps will include introducing systems to enable pharmacists access to patient records through the Northern Ireland Electronic Care Records (NIECR) and connecting pharmacies within HSC triage and referral processes. A Go Pharmacy NI system will digitise services allowing effective data analytics and offer the potential for patients to register with a community pharmacy for continuity of care and provision of clinical patient facing services. Systems will be introduced for the electronic transmission of prescriptions (ETP) and modernisation of payments systems including EPES. This will seek to remove paper prescriptions and make processes safer, quicker, and more efficient for patients, pharmacies and general practices.



The e-Pharmacy Programme will link to other major reforms such as Encompass in secondary care and robust arrangements will be needed for the management of practitioner identity; digital coding of medicines (DM&D); and cyber security.

Delivering the change - the ePharmacy Programme

In 2023/24 developments will include:

- Read access for community pharmacists to the Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record (NIECR).

From 2024/25 – 2027/28 developments will include:

- Development of the Go Pharmacy NI and ETP systems from business case to procurement and contract award.

From 2027/28 – 2029/30 developments will include:

- Launch the Go Pharmacy NI digital solution allowing more effective service delivery including patient registration models, enhanced performance reporting and better data analysis. The solution will also enable electronic payments of many of the additional services delivered within community pharmacy and significantly reduce the need for administration of, for example, Pharmacy Vouchers (PVIs). Go Pharmacy NI digital solution will provide the means to electronically share patient records into the GP clinical systems and Encompass. The solution could provide the IT infrastructure upon which the functionality to enable community pharmacist independent prescribers to electronically prescribe can be established.

- Complete design and build of the ETP solution.

From 2029/30 – 2030/31 developments will include:

- Launch the electronic payments for prescriptions.
- Launch the electronic transmission of prescriptions.

Strategic priority 5

Strengthen community development links to help address health inequalities and improve health literacy

For over twenty years community pharmacies in Northern Ireland have been involved in community development through the Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership Programme (BCPP). To date over £7m has been invested into BCPP and supported more than 1,000 partnerships between community groups and their local pharmacies.

BCPP uses a community development approach to harness the energy, leadership, skills, and knowledge of local people to tackle a community's health related problems and improve health literacy. It enables partnerships with voluntary, community and statutory sectors and community pharmacy to define needs and plan action often focusing on the disadvantaged and impoverished in society. Many regular users of pharmacies are vulnerable to poor health (the poor, the elderly, those with young children, and other marginalized groups such as those with disabilities, mental health issues and their carers). Community pharmacists are well placed to help improve health and reduce health inequalities of those who find it harder to interact with mainstream health care.

The continued delivery of BCPP to 2030 and beyond will allow community pharmacies to strengthen their role in community development, contribute to improved understanding of the broader determinants of health and help address health inequalities and improve health literacy.

By taking part in the programme, I realised the extent of the health problems and effects of the social determinants of health in the local area. Throughout the programme, we discussed a range of topics and I gained a degree of trust with the women in the group - they now know that they can approach me at any time. I am now in a great position to offer advice and signpost the women on to someone that can help them further.

Jarlath McCarthy, Pharmacist

It has been fantastic to interact with the community in a way that removes the 'white coat' and provides a unique opportunity to build great community relationships. It has been great to see the improvement in understanding amongst the group in terms of disease management and self care as well as their understanding of where and when the Pharmacist can help them during their health and wellbeing journey. I've really loved being part of it!

Eamon O'Donnell, Pharmacist

The Pharmacy Schools Programme is an innovative enabler of health literacy, focused on children in Primary 1 to 7. It was developed by Belfast Healthy Cities, working in partnership with the Department of Health and co-produced with organisations across pharmacy, education, health, academia and community/voluntary sectors. The Programme promotes self-care and medication safety through a health literacy approach that teaches children to critically appraise health information and to practice shared decision-making. The Programme teaches children about the role of their local community pharmacy in supporting their health.



Up to 2030 the Pharmacy Schools Programme will continue to be promoted to schools by Belfast Healthy Cities and the Department of Health, working with education partners. An evaluation during 2023/24 supported by MOIC will inform further development and potential expansion to secondary schools.

The Pharmacy School's Programme, addressing health inequalities and improving health literacy are key actions of the Department of Health's *Transforming Medication Safety in Northern Ireland strategy* implementation plan.



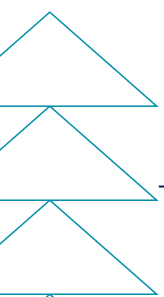
Strategic Priority 6

Become a sector recognised as a great place to work, train, and build careers

Community pharmacy will, through the delivery of this vision, become known as a great place to work, train, and build careers. This will lead to increased retention, improved morale, pride and job satisfaction. An important enabler of this will be creating psychological safety in the workplace through a positive, open, and inclusive culture that values and celebrates the achievements and skills of everyone in the community pharmacy team. The Pharmacy Futures NI campaign is a great example of a successful regional initiative to build positivity and belief and has created a network of 'Pharmacy Champions' that includes pharmacists and pharmacy technicians from many backgrounds, including community pharmacy.

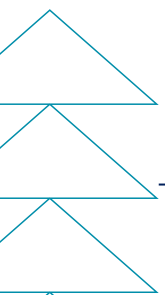
On a day-to-day basis, creating and fostering a positive work culture is the responsibility of everyone working in an organisation, from the senior leaders to individual employees. It is hoped that this strategy can foster a sense of belonging and engagement more widely in community pharmacy, deliver positive leadership and support inclusivity and diversity so that everyone in community pharmacy feels welcome.

By clearly describing the vision and setting out the strategic priorities and roadmap for change it is hoped that pharmacy teams will see the ambitious changes that are planned for community pharmacy up to 2030 and their place in them. The ECHO Collaborative Forum for Community Pharmacy will be used as the vehicle to keep everyone up to date with progress and help build confidence in the future and create a safe, inclusive space for involvement.






Pharmacy workforce surveys completed every two years will also shine a light on areas that contribute to a positive culture. Some of the areas highlighted to date include the need to support wellbeing, reduce professional isolation and stress at work by improving connectivity and building professional networks.



Realising the vision and strategic opportunities

It is proposed that the ECHO Community Pharmacy Collaborative Forum is used to raise awareness of the vision, strategic priorities, and work being undertaken to implement the strategic plan for community pharmacy up to 2030.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

 <p>Department of Health www.health-ni.gov.uk</p>	<p>ECHO COMMUNITY PHARMACY COLLABORATIVE FORUM Strategic Plan for Community Pharmacy 2030</p>
<p>Vision</p>	<p>Community pharmacies across Northern Ireland will provide access to safe and reliable supplies of medicines, professional advice, and an increased range of clinical services to prevent and treat illness. The skills of community pharmacists and pharmacy teams will be fully utilised to increase capacity within health and social care, to manage demand and support people to maintain their wellbeing and lead healthy, active lives.</p>
<p>Strategic Priorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand the range of clinical services available through community pharmacies to improve access to patient care pathways for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of illness. 2. Maintain and modernise systems for the safe and reliable supply of medicines and professional advice from community pharmacies across Northern Ireland. 3. Develop the capacity and capability of the community pharmacy workforce. 4. Build the digital architecture needed for safe, efficient, connected, and paperless systems. 5. Strengthen community development links to help address health inequalities and improve health literacy. 6. Promote community pharmacy as a great place to train, work and build pharmacy careers.
<p>Aim</p>	<p>To support the delivery of the vision and strategic priorities for community pharmacy.</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>The objectives of the Forum are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To raise awareness of the vision, strategic priorities, and strategic plan for community pharmacy up to 2030. 2. To help build a positive and inclusive culture in community pharmacy and celebrate the achievements and skills of the workforce. 3. To allow members to follow progress and stay up to date on the implementation of the work programmes relevant to the strategic plan. 4. To communicate effectively to members to allow good understanding of the work being undertaken to support community pharmacy.

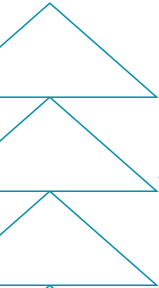
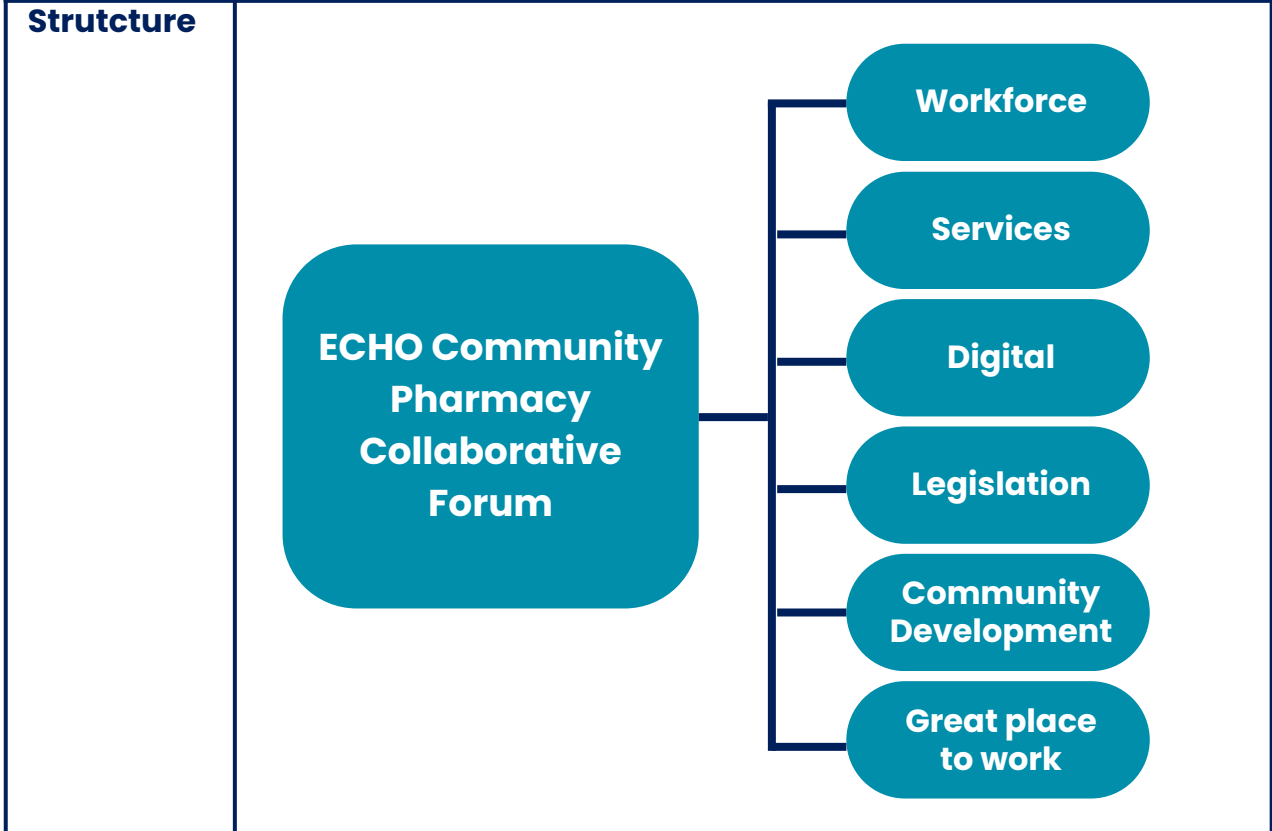
Scope**Figure 1. Community Pharmacy Work Areas**

Work area	Description	Governance
Workforce	<p>Pharmacy Workforce Review 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pharmacy Technician regulation• Initial Education & Training (IET)• Independent Prescribing (IP)• Attract, Recruit, Retain• Advanced Practice Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pharmacy Workforce Review Programme Board & subgroups
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2022-2025 Community Pharmacy Commissioning Plan• UKRI Clinical Pharmacy Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community pharmacy service development group• UKRI clinical pharmacy project
Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic Transmission of Prescriptions (ETP)• Community Pharmacy Technology Service (CPTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• E Pharmacy Programme Board
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original pack dispensing• Hub and Spoke• Supervision• Electronic Transmission of prescriptions• Terms of Service• Pharmacy technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative process includes stakeholder engagement, consultation and statutory duties undertaken regarding equality screening under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and rural proofed in line with the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

***Additional areas of work may be added to the scope as they develop.**



	Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership (BCPP) • Pharmacy Schools Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCPP Programme Board • Pharmacy Schools project
	Great place to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoH Communications plans
*Additional areas of work may be added to the scope as they develop.			



Membership	The group will consist of all members of the ECHO Collaborative Forum for Community Pharmacy and is open to all community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians
Frequency of meetings	Up to ten meetings per year.
Attendance at meetings	Attendance at the Forum is voluntary
Duties and responsibilities	Members are obliged to comply with ECHO standards of behaviour and code of conduct.
Accountability	This work is being carried out under the governance of the Department of Health's Chief Pharmaceutical Officer.
Secretariat	DoH will support the delivery of updates on the strategic plan at the ECHO sessions.

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