

Community Pharmacy Bulletin

Date: 26 September 2025

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2025 Mandatory Workforce Survey – Open 22 September 2025

Pharmacies will start receiving invitations via email from NHSBSA to complete the survey from **Monday 22 September 2025**. Reminder emails will be sent where surveys remain incomplete.

Where a head office submits data centrally, the NHSBSA email will confirm this. In these cases, individual branches do not need to complete the survey. If in doubt, branches should check with their head office

Completion of the survey is compulsory for all pharmacy owners, and the deadline is **11:59pm on Friday 21st November 2025**.

The 2025 Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey contains the same questions as the 2024 survey, focusing on:

- Number of staff
- Full-time equivalents (FTE)
- Vacancies across ten staff categories employed in community pharmacy

As with previous years, there are two submission routes:

1. Online survey – accessed via:
 - A unique link emailed to pharmacies by NHSBSA, or
 - The *Manage Your Service (MYS)* portal.
2. Head Office submission – via Excel spreadsheet:
 - NHSBSA will send this to multiple pharmacy groups that submitted centrally last year.

[Community pharmacy workforce survey | NHS England | Workforce, training and education](#)

Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) 2025/26 Update

We would like to thank all community pharmacies who have completed the CPAF screening questionnaire. We have already been in contact with a small number of pharmacies who have been selected for a validation visit.

Based on the results of the screening questionnaire, and other mandatory selection factors, a number of community pharmacies across the South West have then been identified to complete the full CPAF questionnaire. This information has been shared with the NHSBSA, who will be in contact with those selected pharmacies shortly. The window for completing the full questionnaire is expected to run from **1st October 2025 to 23:59 on 31st October 2025** (this is subject to change).

The full version of the CPAF questionnaire, which may be helpful to view before starting to complete it, will be available on the [NHS Business Services Authority \(NHSBSA\) website](#). If you have a query about accessing or completing this questionnaire when the completion window is open, please email pharmacysupport@nhsbsa.nhs.uk. Be sure to include your pharmacy ODS code and pharmacy contact details.

Based on the results of the full CPAF questionnaire and/or other mandatory selection factors, pharmacies may be selected for a contract monitoring visit. Further information will follow early next year about those visits.

Flu & COVID-19 Vaccination Programme 2025/26

Key programme dates are:

- Pregnant women & eligible children:
Start 1 September 2025
School-aged cohorts: vaccination in schools should be completed by 12 December 2025 (with catch-up where needed).
- All other adult flu cohorts:
Start 1 October 2025 → 31 March 2026
Aim to complete the majority of vaccinations by end of November 2025 to maximise protection ahead of winter.
- COVID-19 Vaccinations:
Run from 1 October 2025 → 31 January 2026
Aim to complete the majority by 19 December 2025.

The aligned start date for adult flu and COVID-19 vaccinations is intended to support co-administration, ensuring maximum protection for patients as we enter the winter period.

National Health Campaigns

The first national campaign topic has now been confirmed with NHS England and DHSC. The campaign will focus on promoting **Pharmacy First** to the public and is expected to run later in 2025.

All pharmacies will be required to participate, using the campaign materials provided to raise awareness locally.

Campaign requirements (from 2025/26):

- 2 national health campaigns
- 2 local health campaigns
- Pharmacy owners must participate in all four campaigns

More details will be shared when we have received the information relevant to the campaigns

Regulatory Changes Effective 1 October 2025

Several regulatory changes will come into effect from **1 October 2025**, following the introduction of the amendment regulations – *The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2025* – laid before Parliament last week.

Key changes include:

- Terms of Service updates – amendments relating to practice leaflets.
- Minor clarifications – small changes introduced to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity.
- HPV vaccine availability – the HPV vaccine will now be added to the list of those that can be supplied to community pharmacies via centrally procured stock.

A number of these changes were agreed, with the intention of easing some of the regulatory burden on pharmacy owners while ensuring patients continue to receive safe and effective care.

Distance Selling Premises (DSP) Changes

From 1 October 2025:

DSP pharmacies will no longer be able to provide Directed services (Advanced, National Enhanced, Enhanced Services) face-to-face on site.

DSPs will only be permitted to deliver:

- Directed services remotely from the DSP premises, or
- Face-to-face off-site if the service specification allows.

This brings DSP provision in line with how Essential services are currently delivered.

National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme

All ICBs across the South West have submitted proposals in response to this invitation to be involved in a national Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme. Across the South West, there will be a minimum of 1 proposal taking forward per ICB Cluster:

- Cornwall / Devon
- Dorset, BSW and Somerset
- BNSSG and Gloucestershire

The selected proposals will be confirmed to ICBs in September. Your representative committee will be aware of the ICB approach through their involvement in the ICB primary care operational group (or equivalent) and the Primary Care Commissioning Team will work with ICB colleagues as the role of Community Pharmacy, Optometry and Dental providers in neighbourhoods is developed.

[NHS England » Your invitation to be involved in the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme](#)

Help with NHS health costs if you're in full-time education-Information about prescription charges

Under 16

- Automatically entitled to help with NHS health costs (education status doesn't matter).

Aged 16–18 and in full-time education

If you're in full-time education (school, college, university, or home schooling), you're automatically entitled to:

- Free NHS prescriptions
- Free NHS sight tests
- A voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses
- Free NHS wigs and fabric supports

This applies until your 19th birthday **or** until you leave full-time education (whichever comes first).

Important to note:

- Apprenticeships or workplace learning are *not* considered full-time education.
- If you're between two full-time education courses, you remain entitled until you turn 19.

- Your entitlement is not affected by whether your next course offer is conditional or unconditional.

Campaign Information

Let's Quit Smoking Together this Stoptober!

Smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable ill health and death, and costs society an estimated £21.3 billion per year in England.

Stoptober is a great opportunity to promote the range of national and local support available and, as a result, increase successful quit attempts.

The 2025 campaign focuses on the core message of 'Let's quit smoking together' this Stoptober'. This conveys strength in numbers - it allows reassurance to people that when quitting, they're part of a large and supportive community of people like them. It also refers to the vast range of support that's available to help people quit successfully. Ultimately, our aim is to let the smokers know that they are not alone in their quit attempt.

There are various resources available please visit [Stoptober 2025 | Campaigns | Campaign Resource Centre](#)

This is not a mandatory campaign

National Pharmacy Week: October 19–25, 2025

National Pharmacy Week (third full week in October) is our chance to shine a spotlight on the incredible contributions pharmacists and pharmacy technicians make every day.

From community pharmacies to hospitals to outpatient clinics, community health centres to GP practices, pharmacists and their teams are at the heart of patient care — ensuring medicines are used safely, effectively, and with compassion.

Why Pharmacy Week matters

- It's a time to recognise the powerful impact pharmacists have on patients' lives.
- It raises awareness of the vital role pharmacy plays in the healthcare team.
- It's a chance to say thank you to pharmacy staff for their dedication and hard work.

Let's take this week to celebrate pharmacists and pharmacy technicians everywhere — for going the extra mile, supporting colleagues, and making sure patients achieve the very best outcomes.

Please join us in showing appreciation to the pharmacy teams who keep healthcare moving forward every single day.

This is not a mandatory campaign

Tea & Talk – World Mental Health Day (10th October)

Talking is good for your mental health — and that's exactly what Tea & Talk is all about!

On World Mental Health Day (10 October), everyone is invited to pause, share a cuppa, and have a conversation that matters.

Why Tea & Talk?

- Research shows that simply talking is one of the best ways to protect and improve mental wellbeing.
- It's a chance to connect with colleagues, friends, or family and remind each other that nobody has to struggle alone.
- Every event can also help raise vital funds to support better mental health for all.

How to get involved

1. Organise your own Tea & Talk — big or small, in-person or virtual.
2. Use the free resources to make your event a success. [World Mental Health Day 2025 | Mental Health Foundation](#)
3. Encourage open conversations and let people know support is always available.

Poor mental health is not inevitable. This World Mental Health Day, let's come together, share a brew, and act for better mental health.

This is not a mandatory campaign

Useful Information

GDPR email requirements

We would like to remind all contractors that any email containing patient identifiable information must be sent from a secure email address, preferably the pharmacies shared generic nhs.net store email address. Any emails with patient details must not be sent from a non-secure email address as this could result in a breach of GDPR.

Email Correspondence – Signature Details

Please can you ensure when communicating with the NHS South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub's Community Pharmacy Team you include the following details within your correspondence to help us with responding to your enquiry. Many thanks.

- Contact Name
 - Name of Contractor
 - ODS Code (F Code)
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Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs)

All current Serious Shortage Protocols can be viewed via [BSA website](#).

If you have any questions regarding SSPs please contact the NHS Prescription Service:

- Email: nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
 - Telephone: 0300 330 1349
 - Textphone: 18001 0300 330 1349
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DHSC Medicine Supply Notifications

DHSC and NHSE/I have now launched an online [Medicines Supply Tool](#), which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. The contents of these MSNs can now be viewed on the Tool. The Tool also details any changes to resupply dates and updates to the entries. To access the Tool, you will be required to register with the [SPS website](#).

The Medicine Supply Tool is moving on the SPS website. Update your links and bookmark its new home in the 'Tools' section: <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/home/tools/medicines-supply-tool/>

Medicine Alerts

For information on medical alerts, recalls and safety information regarding drugs and medical devices please see the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency below:
Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Reporting a Temporary Suspension of Service

In accordance with regulations, contractors must notify the commissioner of any temporary suspension in service; including those for reasons due to illness or causes beyond the control of the contractor. In accordance with pharmacy regulations contractors must provide evidence to the commissioner that they have undertaken the following:

- Notified the commissioner of the suspension as soon as practical.
- Used all reasonable endeavors to implement the business continuity plan required by paragraph 29D, Schedule 4 of the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, and
- Used all reasonable endeavors to resume the provision of pharmaceutical services as soon as is practicable. (Paragraph 23(10), Schedule 4, of the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013.

In the event of you being unable to open please complete a Temporary Suspension closure form via one of the following ways either:

1. via [Manage Your Service \(MYS\) portal](#).
2. Completing the Temporary Suspension Form found [here](#) titled Annex 18 and sending this to the SW generic email address: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.

Details of the new Temporary Suspension policy can be found [here](#), the new temporary suspension policy went live on the 1st of April.

Changes of director and/or superintendent pharmacist

When a body corporate appoints a new director and / or a new superintendent they must inform the commissioner within 30 days of the person taking up that new position. Recent experience suggests that contractors sometimes overlook making these declarations.

To make such a declaration you should go to the Primary Care Support England (PCSE) website at <https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/services/pharmacy-market-administration-services/market-entry/> where you will be able to complete the necessary declarations. Failure to notify any changes to directors and / or superintendent pharmacist maybe a breach of your terms of service.

NHSBSA Hints and Tips

Please see below the links to the NHSBSA website and a link for previous back copies

- [GP and Pharmacy support: open days, webinars and newsletters | NHSBSA](#)
 - <https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/7R9K-79Q/sign-up-for-the-hints-tips-bulletin>
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Pharmacy Support for Health & Wellbeing

Please see below support available for our NHS people with free confidential coaching and support for the primary care workforce.

- Wellbeing apps:
 - NHS staff have been given free access to a number of wellbeing apps to support their mental health and wellbeing.
 - Link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/>
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing:
 - Guidance and advice on how you can stay mentally healthy and boost your wellbeing from Pharmacists' Support.
 - Link: <https://pharmacistsupport.org/i-need-help-managing-my/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>
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Interpretation & Translation Services

Interpretation and translation services are available for Community Pharmacies when treating NHS Patients. These services are commissioned and paid for by NHS England.

The information and how to access these are available on the South West Pharmacy website page via the following link [NHS England — South West » Interpretation and Translation Services](#)

The services commissioned cover the following areas:

- Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG)
 - Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW)
 - Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
 - Devon
 - Dorset
 - Gloucestershire
 - Somerset
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Contact Details and Further Information

South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub Community Pharmacy Contract Management Team contact information: email: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.

Website: [South West Community Pharmacy information](#) for more further information, blank templates, forms, and documents.

Please report any controlled drug incidents to us via our reporting website www.cdreporting.co.uk
The NHSE SW Controlled Drugs Team can be contacted at ENGLAND.southwestcontrolleddrugs@nhs.net

Riddle of the Month

The answer to last month's riddle is a Map - Well done to the team at Shiphay Pharmacy! 🎉
for being the first to send in the correct answer, we need to mention Ramesh Phuyal Pharmacy manager at Tesco's Gloucester as their answer was also correct, and they sent it two minutes after the team at Shiphay Pharmacy

This month's riddle is

You see a boat filled with people. It has not sunk, but when you look again you don't see a single person on the boat. Why?



Send your answers to the pharmacy team at england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net. We will share the answer in the next bulletin