



Community Pharmacy Gloucestershire Strategic Plan 2026-2027

Introduction

This strategic plan outlines Community Pharmacy Gloucestershire's (CPG) priorities for 2026–2027 and sets a foundation for longer-term transformation in line with system-wide ambitions. CPG will enable community pharmacies to deliver more proactive, preventative, digitally enabled care and play a pivotal role in reducing health inequalities and supporting population health outcomes. This strategy reflects the national and local drive to move care closer to communities, improve healthy life expectancy, and reduce pressure on secondary care services.

A Vision for Community Pharmacy Gloucestershire

To empower and support a thriving network of community pharmacies that are fully integrated into the healthcare system—delivering *equitable, accessible, and sustainable* services that improve *health and wellbeing* for all. We envision a future where every pharmacy encourages and enables individuals to take control of their health through trusted, high-quality care at the heart of their community.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to champion, support, and empower Community Pharmacies across Gloucestershire as vital, sustainable pillars of the local health and care system. We strive to ensure that Community Pharmacy is universally represented at all levels of strategic decision-making, including integration within the Integrated Care Board (ICB) structures and processes.

We are committed to advocating for the long-term viability of Community Pharmacy, recognising its critical role in improving population health, delivering high-quality, accessible care, and supporting NHS priorities. Through meaningful, regular engagement with Community Pharmacy Contractors and system partners, we aim to maintain open channels of communication that are informative, supportive and responsive.

Our approach includes the use of innovative communication and engagement strategies to amplify the voice of Community Pharmacy, strengthen its influence, and foster collaboration. By encouraging, supporting, and empowering the pharmacy workforce, we will promote excellence, adaptability, and leadership across the sector.

Ultimately, we are working to build a sustainable, resilient, and integrated Community Pharmacy network that delivers measurable outcomes, reduces inequalities, and enhances the health and wellbeing of Gloucestershire residents.

Strategic Priorities and Alignment with Gloucestershire's Integrated Care Strategy

1. Expand Community Pharmacy's Role in Preventive and Population Health Services

ICB Strategic Ambition: Healthy Lives & Health Equity

NHS Plan Shift: From Sickness to Prevention

CPG will support the prevention agenda by ensuring pharmacies play a proactive role in prioritising prevention, early intervention & reducing health inequalities and preventing avoidable hospital admissions.

Key Actions:

- **Pharmacy First Service.** Encourage the increase in referrals from GP practices, UTC and NHS 111; and help to improve conversion of walk-in patients to clinical pathways consultations- helping to reduce avoidable A&E attendance and demand on other areas of the NHS. Support pharmacies to identify and overcome barriers to service delivery. Encourage the embedding of antimicrobial stewardship principles into consultations.
- **Hypertension Case-Finding Service.** Support the system-wide effort to reduce cardiovascular disease, a leading cause of premature mortality in Gloucestershire.
- **Increase access to the Pharmacy Contraception Service,** targeting Core20PLUS5 groups to improve access to reproductive health and minimise health inequalities.
- **Support the uptake of NHS Vaccination and Screening Services.** Advocate for local commissioning of vaccination services through community pharmacy and encourage pharmacy teams to identify and refer patients to other clinical settings following opportunistic intervention.
- **New Medicines Service.** Support pharmacy teams to enhance the quality, consistency, and clinical impact of New Medicine Service consultations to improve patient outcomes, medicines adherence, and alignment with local health priorities.

2. Strengthen pharmacy-based care pathways in partnership with Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs)

ICB & NHS Priority: Integrated Neighbourhood Health Services

Key Actions:

- **Strengthen integration with PCNs and INTs to enable care closer to home.** Promote, build and strengthen relationships between HCPs, VCSE and other strategic partners across the system. Work with the ICB to develop and support the community pharmacy PCN leads. Identify, develop relationships and work with key stakeholders within the new ICB structures.
- **Promote pharmacy-delivered post-discharge care to reduce readmissions.** Maximise uptake and delivery of fully completed, quality interventions via DMS to support local target to prevent 90-day readmissions; support the use of appropriate medication adjustments whilst reducing delivery of un-funded non-contractual workload; and promote joined up working and development of communication pathways within INTs

- **Implement digital referral and consultation models aligned with NHS health service transformation.** Embed the use of GP connect, the NHS app and other NHS systems to join up patients with pharmacies, streamline referrals and improve pharmacy recording and reporting pathways.
- **Collaborate with VCSE organisations to maximise uptake of pharmacy services in deprived communities.** Support pharmacy teams in delivering targeted interventions aligned with Core20PLUS5, including culturally competent care and outreach for marginalized populations. Identify opportunities to integrate community pharmacy services with local VCSE organisations- enabling holistic, person-centred care and reducing avoidable health system demand and hospital admissions.

3. Develop a Digitally Enabled Pharmacy Network

NHS Plan Shift: Analogue to Digital

ICB Priority: Equitable Access through Innovation

Key Actions:

- **Encourage contractors to improve their understanding and use of digital tools.** Promote use of the NHS App and effectively utilise National Care Records via GP Connect. Identify opportunities to upskill pharmacy staff in use of digital applications and support contractors in embedding digital solutions into workstreams to increase efficiencies and maximise revenue. Encourage contractors to put pressure on system suppliers to implement prescription tracking systems within PMRs.
- **Promote public use of self-referral and digital triage tools in pharmacy services.** Support the promotion of digital options to patients including advocating for the use of NHS App and equitable digital triage systems.
- **Social media.** Use social media appropriately to engage contractors in local and national issues (X, LinkedIn), to raise awareness of pharmacy services with the public (Facebook, Insta) and raise the profile of Community Pharmacy Gloucestershire.

4. Financial Resilience and Sustainability of the local pharmacy network

ICB Priority: Value-Based Commissioning

NHS Plan: Productivity and New Financial Model

Key Actions:

- **Advocate for well-funded activity-based funding models that reward outcomes and prevention.** Contribute to local and national discussions involving pharmacy funding. Escalate contractor concerns about funding and rigorously oppose decisions that may adversely affect financial stability. Be open and transparent when considering pharmacy funding models locally. Advocate for commissioning of locally funded services that support the wider ICB agenda.
- **Promote service diversification to improve resilience (e.g. private services, clinical trials).** Encourage contractors to explore new income streams to reduce risk associated with high volume dispensing and reliance on NHS service income. Identify and develop potential new sources of income for contractors. Enable shared learning on cost-efficiency, innovation, and digital adoption.
- **Support contractors with contractual and regulatory compliance to reduce risk of financial penalties.** Provide information, support, training and resources to help

contractors more easily comply with regulatory and contractual requirements.
Respond promptly, accurately and appropriately to queries and requests for help

5. Strengthening Workforce Development and Pharmacy Integration

ICB Strategic Pillar: One Workforce for One Gloucestershire
NHS Focus: Workforce Fit for the Future

Addressing workforce shortages and supporting career development are essential to maintaining high-quality pharmacy services.

Key Actions:

- **Develop a skilled pharmacy workforce** by supporting the local workforce agenda, trainee pharmacist programme, PTPT programme and independent prescribing (IP) training for pharmacists. Explore opportunities to embed AI and digital literacy into local CPD. Advocate for training opportunities for Community Pharmacy Teams.
- **Encourage workforce retention** through maximising service delivery opportunities and collaboration with strategic partners to explore new funding opportunities.
- **Promote the recruitment and training of pharmacy technicians.** Support career progression for pharmacy technicians and help contractors identify how staff can work at the top of their license to drive quality and efficiency in pharmacies.
- **Collaborate with educational institutions** to promote pharmacy as a career choice and support apprenticeships. Continue to provide support and feedback as required for the proposed new pharmacy school in Worcester to develop local workforce opportunities.
- **Collaborate with pharma companies and training providers** to provide training, development and service delivery opportunities for pharmacy staff.
- **Explore and promote the availability of research opportunities** for community pharmacy participants

Monitoring and Evaluation

CPG will track the progress of this strategy through:

- **Bi monthly committee action tracker and a 6 monthly formal review meeting** to track actions completed and progress against key objectives.
- **Performance metrics** Targets to be achieved in at least one month before the end of March 2027 (dependent on availability of data)

| Item | Metric |
|---------------------------|--|
| Pharmacy First | 90% pharmacies achieving least 50% threshold payment, 76% pharmacies achieving 100% threshold payment |
| GP referrals | 50% of surgeries making referrals to pharmacy each month. 25% growth of pharmacy referrals for Pharmacy First (if data is available) |
| Hypertension Case Finding | 50% of high clinic BP converted to ABPM (excl referrals to 999/A&E) |

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Contraception Service | 50% Growth of number of monthly services |
| Contraception service | 25% of surgeries referring patients to pharmacy for contraception services |
| Contractors completing CPAF | 100% contractors submitting CPAF short survey before deadline |
| Engagement with ... | |
| Newsletters | Produce and circulate 3 newsletters |
| Contractor Surveys | Produce, send out and report on 2 contractor surveys |
| Training opportunities | Arrange and promote 3 contractor training or engagement events |
| Activity tracker | Completed by all committee employees every 2 months and circulated with monthly reports prior to committee meetings |

- **Annual report publication** to provide transparency and accountability.

Long-Term Strategic Objectives (to 2031 and beyond)

1. A Fully Integrated Neighbourhood Pharmacy Service

- Community pharmacy co-located or digitally linked to every 'neighbourhood health hub'. Pharmacy teams working closely with General Practice, Dental and Optometry to help patients manage their health and live healthier lives for longer.
- Pharmacist prescribers managing long-term conditions as standard practice.
- Pharmacy-led clinics supporting diabetes, CVD, mental health, contraception or respiratory health.
- Pharmacy as first port-of-call for low acuity minor conditions

2. AI-supported digital solutions to maximise efficiencies

- Digital referrals and two-way communication between primary and secondary care
- Patient-initiated digital triage integrated into pharmacy services.
- Routine use of AI to support dispensing processes, prescribing, safety checks, and service delivery to free up registered staff time to work at the top of their license.

3. Driving Equitable Outcomes Through Community Pharmacy

- Pharmacy delivery focused on **supporting Gloucestershire residents to live healthier lives for longer, helping patients to self-care and access care closer to their homes and workplaces.**
- Increased participation in national vaccination and screening programmes to improve access for Core20PLUS5 groups and offer increased choice to Gloucestershire residents.
- Closer working with VCSE to reduce health inequalities

