

**DARLINGTON PHARMACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
CONSULTATION REPORT AND FINAL APPROVAL**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the consultation and to approve the final version Pharmacy Needs Assessment (PNA) which has been updated as a result of comments through the consultation.

Summary

2. In keeping with the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations (2013), 60 day period of consultation took place between 1st July and 30th August 2025. Key statutory stakeholders including those who use pharmacy services were consulted.
3. Three consultation responses were received and analysed by the North of England Commissioning Support Unit on behalf of the Public Health Team. The draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment was updated considering these responses.
4. The overall conclusion of the pharmaceutical needs assessment was that there are sufficient pharmacy services in Darlington in place at this time and for the lifespan of the PNA (2025 – 2028). The three '100 hour' pharmacies in Darlington provide patients access and choice of pharmacies within the town centre and the main suburbs.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) The consultation report is noted.
 - (b) The Health and Wellbeing Board approve the updated Pharmacy Needs Assessment for publication.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

- (a) It is a statutory duty that the Council publishes the PNA by 1st October 2025.
- (b) The Health and Wellbeing Board delegated authority to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Director of Public Health to manage and approve the PNA process at the March 2025 meeting.
- (c) A 60 day consultation took place between 1st July and 30th August 2025
- (d) Consideration was given to all feedback received. Amendments to the PNA following the consultation were minor and included adding further detail about notice periods for supplementary hours and adding references to the new 10 Year Health Plan for England.

Lorraine Hughes
Director of Public Health

Background Papers

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment – final Draft

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Council Plan	The report supports the Council Plan priority of Living Well as it focuses on the health and wellbeing of the population.
Addressing Inequalities	The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment ensures that pharmaceutical services are accessible to all inclusion groups in Darlington.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme as actions delivered will need to be contained within agreed budgets.
Health and Wellbeing	The PNA is intended to be used in relation to the commissioning of services to meet the pharmaceutical needs of the local population
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	The whole population of Darlington
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) has the responsibility for the development and updating of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) at least every three Years. The PNA for 2025 is required to be published by 1st October 2025.
8. A paper was brought to the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2025 which provided the Board with the background detail about the PNA including the process for collecting the information, how the PNA would be used and the services currently commissioned from community pharmacies.

Outcome of Consultation

9. A 60 day consultation took place between 1st July and 30th August 2025 with the following groups being consulted as instructed by the regulations:
 - (a) Community Pharmacy Tees Valley (Local Pharmaceutical Committee);
 - (b) County Durham and Darlington Local Medical Committee
 - (c) All those currently on the pharmaceutical list and all dispensing doctors in the borough area;
 - (d) North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
 - (e) Healthwatch Darlington

- (f) County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust and Tees Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health NHS Foundation Trusts
 - (g) NHS England (through North East and North Cumbria ICB as delegated commissioner of primary care services)
 - (h) Neighbouring Health and Wellbeing Boards in Durham County Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, and North Yorkshire Council.
10. 3 responses were received to the formal consultation, one from a pharmacy contractor, one from the local pharmaceutical committee and one from Healthwatch Darlington.
 11. 67% of respondents agreed that the PNA reflects the current provision of pharmaceutical services. 33% of respondents selected "not sure" when answering this question.
 12. 67% of respondents believed that there were no gaps in provision of pharmaceutical services for Darlington that were not identified in PNA.
 13. 67% of respondents felt the PNA reflects the needs of the local population. 33% of respondents selected "not sure" when answering this question
 14. 67% felt that the PNA provided enough information to inform future pharmaceutical provision and plans for pharmacies and dispensing appliance contractors. 33% of respondents selected "not sure" when answering this question
 15. 67% of respondents agreed with the overall conclusions presented in the PNA. 33% of respondents selected "not sure" when answering this question.
 16. A key theme from the comments received was the importance of promoting and raising awareness of the breadth of services offered by community pharmacy to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington
 17. Consideration was given to all comments received during the consultation when drafting the final PNA. The consultation report was attached as appendix 3 to PNA report.
 18. The overall conclusion of the pharmaceutical needs assessment was that there are sufficient pharmacy services in Darlington in place at this time and for the lifespan of the PNA (2025 – 2028). The three 100 hour pharmacies in Darlington provide patients access and choice of pharmacies within the town centre and the main suburbs.