



## SHROPSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

### Report

Meeting Date	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2025					
Title of report	Draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025					
This report is for (You will have been advised which applies)	Discussion and agreement of recommendations		Approval of recommendations (With discussion by exception)	x	Information only (No recommendations)	
Reporting Officer & email	Mark Trenfield <a href="mailto:Mark.trenfield@shropshire.gov.uk">Mark.trenfield@shropshire.gov.uk</a>					
Which Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities does this report address? Please tick all that apply	Children & Young People		Joined up working	x		
	Mental Health		Improving Population Health	x		
	Healthy Weight & Physical Activity		Working with and building strong and vibrant communities			
	Workforce		Reduce inequalities (see below)	x		
What inequalities does this report address?	Inequalities in the county regarding access to pharmacy provision, and variation in the services that they offer.					

## **Report Content:**

### **1. Executive Summary**

The production and publication of a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) became a statutory requirement in the Health Act 2009. Following the abolition of Primary Care Trusts (PCT) in 2013 this statutory responsibility was passed to Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBB) by virtue of the National Health Service (NHS) Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services (Amended) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1st April 2013. The requirement is to publish a PNA at least every 3 years; there have been four previous PNAs in 2011, 2015, 2018 and 2022 (deadline was extended due to the impact of COVID-19). This PNA is due to be published by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025

The PNA should highlight the needs for pharmaceutical services in the area, current provision of services, identify gaps and unmet needs and in consultation with stakeholders make recommendations on future developments that are required. The PNA will be used by organisations including Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and the Local Authority (LA) to plan and commission future services.

The PNA is a key document used by local area teams to make decisions on new applications for pharmacies and change of services or relocations by current pharmacies and is also used by commissioners reviewing the health needs within their area and to identify if any services can be commissioned through community pharmacies.

Pharmacies play an important role in the health system, not just the dispensing of medicines, but now providing additional clinical services, and as they are one of the first points of contact, they can improve people's health and wellbeing and also reducing health inequalities. There are more pharmacies in Shropshire than there are GP practices, and they are more accessible, including for those who might otherwise not access health services.

Shropshire HWBB considers community pharmacies to be a key public health resource and recognises that they offer potential opportunities to commission health improvement initiatives and work closely with partners to promote health and wellbeing.

Before publishing the PNA, there is a statutory requirement to hold a 60-day public consultation, and this period was from 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025 until 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025. The purpose of the consultation is to identify the views of the statutory consultees, other stakeholders and members of the public on whether the PNA addresses the necessary and important issues.

### **Local Context**

This PNA Covers the Shropshire Local Authority area; it together with Telford and Wrekin Council both form the geography which is coterminous with NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board (ICB).

### **Key demographic messages for Shropshire**

- Shropshire is a diverse, large, predominately rural inland county with a wide range of land use, economic activities, employment and social conditions

- Shropshire's population was increasing more slowly than England between 2000 and 2020 (using ONS population estimates) but increase more sharply between 2020 and 2022. Much of the Shropshire population growth has been due to migration.
- Shropshire has a relatively high concentration of people in the older age groups. In 2023, 54.2% (52.7% in 2020) of the County's residents were aged 45 or over, 26.2% were aged 65 and above, and 3.6% were aged 85 and above, when compared to England this was 44%, 18.7% and 2.5% respectively (ONS 2024 Estimates).
- Shropshire, like many parts of the country, has an ageing population, with the median population age now 48.5 compared to 40.5 in England.
- Lower-Level Super Output areas in Harlescott, Monkmoor and Ludlow East wards are the three LSOAs with the highest deprivation levels within Shropshire. All three fall within the top 10% of most deprived LSOA areas within England. Looking at whole wards, the three most deprived wards within Shropshire are Monkmoor, Harlescott and Castlefields & Ditherington, (ONS 2019)
- 42.6% of Shropshire's population is classified as being 'Urban' and 57.4% as 'rural' and has an overall population density of just over 101 persons per square kilometre, compared to 433 in England. Population density is particularly sparse in the South West of the county (39 persons per square kilometre).

### Access to pharmaceutical services

- There are currently 43 community pharmacies and 17 dispensing GP practices in Shropshire. located throughout the county in towns, market towns and larger villages. Most community pharmacies are close to GP practices providing choice and convenience for patients.
- Approximately 91% of residents are within a 10-minute car journey of a community pharmacy or dispensing GP practice. However, there are greater challenges for those without access to cars, with only 48% of the population within 10 minutes of one using public transport on a weekday morning.
- As much of Shropshire is very rural, many localities are supported by GP practices that dispense to patients that are outside of a 1.6km radius of a community pharmacy. Dispensary opening hours usually reflect the opening times of the practice. Dispensing doctors offer a dispensing service to help fulfil the pharmaceutical needs of the patients in these areas but don't offer the full range of pharmacy services that community pharmacies offer, that help reduce pressure on GP appointments.
- Most pharmacies opening times generally mirror those of the GP practices, however while most pharmacies open for at least some of the day on a Saturday, there are only 2 pharmacies that open after 6pm on a Saturday and there are only 6 pharmacies open at all on a Sunday in Shropshire, and only 4 pharmacies that open past 6pm on a weekday. There are no 24-hour pharmacies in Shropshire.
- There appears to be reasonable access to some services commissioned by Public Health in Shropshire, such as emergency hormonal contraception, however, some of these services do not operate at all pharmacies, and for some pharmacies that offer those services, activity is very low.
- In addition to these pharmacies and dispensing GP practices in Shropshire there are also 54 community pharmacies in other local authorities in England and 7 in Wales that are within 5 kilometres of Shropshire's borders which could offer pharmacy services to Shropshire residents. Several of these pharmacies are open past 6pm on a weekday, (mostly in Telford and Wrekin), most are open on a Saturday and 8 of them are open on a Sunday (7 in Telford and Wrekin and 1 in Cheshire).

### Current pharmaceutical provision

- The distribution of pharmacies per head-of-population, with or without dispensing GP practices, is of a lower ratio than the national average.

- Compared to the 15 other local authorities that are deemed comparable to Shropshire, Shropshire's ratio of patients per pharmacy is the second highest (only lower than central Bedfordshire) based on their most recent PNAs, although when dispensing GP practices are included in this comparison, Shropshire is the sixth highest. Shropshire has a significantly higher proportion of dispensing GP practices than the rest of England due to its rurality, and while they provide a vital pharmaceutical supply function for patients unable to access a community pharmacy, they are unable to offer the enhanced and advanced services community pharmacies can, which is a gap for Shropshire residents.
- The number of pharmacies has reduced by 4 since the previous PNA and therefore the ratio has increased. The locations of the pharmacies that closed were 1 in Shrewsbury town centre, 1 in Shrewsbury Meole Brace retail park, 1 in Church Stretton and 1 in Ludlow.
- In 2024/25, there were over 6.5 million items prescribed by Shropshire GP practices, and nearly 300,000 (4.5%) were dispensed at distance selling pharmacies, with the highest percentage of items prescribed that were dispensed at distance selling pharmacies being from Station Drive in Ludlow, with 16% of all items (34,107). No data is currently available for previous years, but this could have an impact on community pharmacies or be an impact of one pharmacy in Ludlow closing in this time period. It may be necessary to assess whether the increased use of distance selling pharmacies is reflected of patient choice or due to an unmet need for additional community pharmacy provision
- There is only one 100-hour pharmacy in Shropshire, as opposed to three in the previous PNA, this pharmacy is in Oswestry.
- Some advanced and locally commissioned pharmacy services are only provided by a small number of pharmacies, if at all. While pharmacies will dispense some appliances in some circumstances in their usual business, no pharmacy in Shropshire is actually signed up to the 'dispensing appliances' service although this service is available by a national contractor in Telford and Wrekin.

### Gaps in pharmaceutical provision

- Weekend and night access - There isn't pharmacy provision in Shropshire for 24 hours 7 day a week and there is limited provision on Sundays, particularly in the South of the county. There is also limited provision after 6pm on weekdays and Saturdays, although where necessary the supply of medicines could be made by out of hours teams. While there are several pharmacies that are open later on weekdays and Saturday nights and on Sundays in Telford and Wrekin primarily, this does not seem to be the case in pharmacies close to the south of Shropshire or in Wales.
- Threats to viability of community pharmacies – Research commissioned by NHS England showed that large amounts of community pharmacies were loss making and whilst changes to community pharmacy funding have helped with this, there is still a shortfall and pharmacies are still closing. The effects of losing a community pharmacy in a rural area would be greater particularly if there are no other community pharmacies nearby to deliver the slack, while dispensing GP practices and distance selling pharmacies could absorb supply work, they would not be able to deliver the full pharmacy services.

### Opportunities for future development

- Visibility of services - The resident survey highlighted that there were several services that community pharmacies provide, but the respondents didn't necessarily know that the pharmacy provided them. Likewise, there are some services that the pharmacies offer but activity was very low. Some of the services offered are quite new and have

not benefitted as expected from the lack of referrals in many places. However, there may need to be a more detailed review as to whether there are specific gaps in provision.

- Increase in pharmacies signing up for services – The contractor survey highlighted a willingness for those contractors to provide more services if they were commissioned, if they were not always providing them or were intending to provide them.

Further investigation and consideration may become necessary to evaluate if there is enough pharmacy provision given the projected growth of the population in future as growth between 2022 and 2032 is expected to be 7.89% - 26,268 people, although as this would be spread across the whole county this might mitigate the impact.

## Recommendations

1. Raise the visibility of some of the new services offered by pharmacies to increase awareness and usage.
2. Consider the impact of healthcare transformation - The recently published 10-year health plan outlines community pharmacies key role in the management of long-term conditions, prevention, and deeper integration into neighbourhood care teams. As such, there will be a period of transformation within the pharmaceutical provision, primary care and neighbourhood health and it might be necessary for an interim review of services if necessary

## 2. Report Recommendations

That the committee notes the contents of the presentation and report

## 3. Main Report

Please see:

Appendix A. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2025 – draft report

<b>Risk assessment and opportunities appraisal</b>	N/A	
<b>Financial implications</b>	N/A	
<b>Climate Change Appraisal as applicable</b>	N/A	
<b>Where else has the paper been presented?</b>	System Partnership Boards	ShIPP, HWBB
	Voluntary Sector	
	Other	
<b>List of Background Papers - NA</b>		
<b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) or your organisational lead e.g., Exec lead or Non-Exec/Clinical Lead</b> Rachel Robinson, Executive Director – Public Health (DPH) Cllr Bernie Bentick, Portfolio Holder for Health & Public Protection		
<b>Appendices</b> Appendix A. Draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2025 – draft report		