

# A PRESCRIPTION FOR SUCCESS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government's [10-Year Health Plan](#) rests on three fundamental shifts: from hospital to community care, from analogue to digital systems, and from treatment to prevention. These shifts align remarkably well with the earlier [Vision for Community Pharmacy](#), developed by the Nuffield Trust and The King's Fund, positioning pharmacies as central to the proposed Neighbourhood Health Service. This neighbourhood service aims to bring care into local communities, create patient-centred teams, end fragmentation, and transform access to general practice while preventing unnecessary hospital admissions.



Community pharmacy has demonstrated its capacity for transformation over recent years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, pharmacies remained open when other services became inaccessible, and were a key part of the testing and vaccination programmes. Post-pandemic, the sector has continued evolving through initiatives like Pharmacy First. Over 9,000 pharmacists are now qualified as independent prescribers, and soon all newly registered pharmacists will have prescribing qualifications.

However, the sector is operating with significant financial pressures: over half of pharmacy owners are operating at a loss, with 42% having to reduce their opening hours and 15% needing to cut back on some national services. Increased investment is essential – not by diverting funds from general practice, but through recognition that the whole of primary care requires adequate resources to meet current demand.

In this context, five essential questions requiring attention have been identified. Addressing these, together, commissioners and pharmacy leaders can maximise the contribution which community pharmacies can make to delivering the 10-Year Health Plan:

- 1** How will community pharmacists be engaged in service transformation?
- 2** How will investment be made in pharmacy IT and estates?
- 3** How will commissioning capacity be strengthened?
- 4** How will pharmacy be integrated into system-wide workforce planning?
- 5** How can the pharmacy contract be reformed to ensure long-term sustainability?

There is an unprecedented opportunity to transform the community pharmacy sector into a cornerstone of the Neighbourhood Health Service, delivering integrated, accessible, and preventative care to communities across England.

Realising community pharmacy's potential requires coordinated action: embedding pharmacists in strategic planning, investing in infrastructure, strengthening commissioning capacity, integrating workforce planning, and reforming the funding model. The imperative for change is clear.



Community pharmacies are a familiar presence on every high street, trusted by patients and increasingly recognised for the contribution they make to neighbourhood healthcare, which goes far beyond the dispensing of medicines. But there is work to be done at both national and local level to ensure that community pharmacy can fully realise its potential as a cornerstone of the Neighbourhood Health Service. Without investment in both workforce and infrastructure, and a commitment on the part of community pharmacy to continue to transform, there is a real risk this opportunity will be missed.”

**Helen Buckingham**  
Author of *A Prescription for Success*



This important review of the relationship between the Vision for Community Pharmacy and the 10-Year Health Plan sets out a clear pathway to ensure the pharmacies of tomorrow can become a cornerstone of neighbourhood health. It’s landing at a pivotal moment as policymakers are working out how best to implement the 10-Year Plan and Community Pharmacy England prepares to enter discussions on what comes next for the sector.

Community pharmacies are highly valuable and relied on by many millions of people, but there is still so much potential for them to do more. However, the sector is being held back by a number of barriers and obstacles which need to be overcome. We hope it will encourage policymakers to think more about how we can ensure that their ambitions for the pharmacies of tomorrow can become a reality.

Delivering elements of the 10-Year Health Plan and safeguarding pharmacy’s future will require action from local and national NHS commissioners, as well as Government, and from all in community pharmacy: all for the benefit of patients.”

**Janet Morrison**  
Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy England

### Actions for Local Pharmaceutical Committees to consider:



Send [A Prescription for Success](#) to Integrated Care Board (ICB) system leaders, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Public Health Directors and local MPs, aiming to arrange local discussions and seek their support.



Add it as an agenda item for LPC meetings to discuss and track progress, feeding back to Community Pharmacy England via CLOT.

### Actions for pharmacy owners to consider:



Discuss *A Prescription for Success* and the direction of travel with your teams.



Raise it in neighbourhood health meetings.



Ask your LPC how you can further help them to seek support for its call to action.

