

2026 Pharmacy Pressures Survey: Business Owners/Head Office

Questions for Head Office Representatives/Pharmacy Business Owners

Please note that only one representative from each pharmacy business should complete this survey – please check this is the case before doing so.

Individual information is for internal use only. Results will be collated and anonymised before sharing externally.

A. Introduction Questions

1. Number of premises:

2. In which Community Pharmacy England region(s) are your pharmacies in?

- ☐ East of England
- ☐ North West
- ☐ South East
- ☐ East Midlands
- ☐ North East
- ☐ South West
- ☐ Yorkshire and Humber
- ☐ London
- ☐ West Midlands

3. If you feel able to, we would be very grateful if you can please enter the name of the pharmacy business and/or an ODS or POC code (this information will be used to help us produce constituency averaged data for MPs)

ODS and POC codes can be accessed using [this link](#)

Name of business:

Pharmacy
Organisation Code (for
organisations with
more than 1 premise):

ODS Code(s):

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B. Financial Pressures

4. How do the current costs for your pharmacy (or pharmacies) compare with this time (February) last year?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Significantly higher | <input type="radio"/> Slightly lower |
| <input type="radio"/> Slightly higher | <input type="radio"/> Significantly lower |
| <input type="radio"/> About the same | |

5. What have been the main drivers of any cost increases? (please select up to three)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase in remunerated business being carried out (e.g. more NHS services/dispensing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Capital expenditure (e.g. equipment costs, fitout) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing/wages | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicines purchasing costs not being fully covered by NHS reimbursement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased spend on staff time sourcing medicines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business rates | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased spend on staff time handling complexity of patient queries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transport/fuel costs | |

Other (please state)

6. Can you quantify any of your increased costs? If yes, please provide details below.

7. Is your business having to spend longer to procure medicines than this time (February) last year?

- ☐ Yes - longer than ever before
- ☐ Yes - longer than this time last year
- ☐ About the same as last year
- ☐ No - not as long as last year

8. If longer, can you estimate on average how many additional hours per week? (e.g. one extra hour per week per pharmacy)

9. How profitable is your pharmacy business at present?

- ☐ We are still profitable
- ☐ We are still profitable, but only just
- ☐ We are breaking even
- ☐ We are losing money, but only just
- ☐ We are losing money

10. Have any of the following statements applied to you in the past year?

- ☐ The business has not been able to pay wholesaler bills on time
- ☐ The business has not been able to pay other bills on time
- ☐ The contractor, or other Directors, have not taken any salary or income from the business
- ☐ The business has closed branches
- ☐ The business has made staff redundant
- ☐ The business has been subsidised by personal savings
- ☐ The business has been subsidised by other parts of a larger business
- ☐ The business has taken out additional financing to support its daily operations and cash flow

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C. Business Threats and Outlook

11. How serious are the threats to your pharmacy business at present?

- ☐ The threats are manageable
- ☐ We are managing the threats, but we don't know for how much longer we can do so
- ☐ We won't survive another year
- ☐ We won't survive another six months

12. How will your business manage the upcoming increase in National Minimum Wage and changes to business rates, from April 2026?

- ☐ We will be able to absorb the cost increases
- ☐ We are looking at ways to reduce our costs further - this should not impact on patients
- ☐ We are looking at ways to reduce our costs further - this will impact on patients
- ☐ We won't be able to absorb these costs

13. Have you had to do any of the following in order for your business to survive the past year? And do you expect to have to do any in 2026?

	Already done in 2025	Will have to do in 2026
Reduce staff headcount	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce opening hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limit answering telephone calls/emails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Refinance elements of the business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Invest personal savings into the business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Subsidise the NHS business in other ways, e.g. provision of private services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take out emergency financing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charge for previously free services (e.g. delivery of prescriptions)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce offering NHS funded services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stop offering some locally commissioned services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other - please specify if this has already stopped or will have to stop

14. Which of the following specific changes would most help alleviate pressures on your pharmacy? (Please rank the following in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 9 being the least important.)

- Increased funding for community pharmacies
- Higher remuneration rates for dispensing medicines
- Higher fees for provision of clinical services
- Addressing medicines shortages and supply chain issues
- Funding to support recruitment and retention of pharmacy staff
- Expanding the range of appropriately funded NHS services that pharmacies can deliver
- Increase in allowable medicines margin
- Cessation of margin clawback
- Payment of an establishment/infrastructure fee to cover baseline costs

15. Please specify any other changes you think are needed:

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D. Staffing pressures

16. Is your business consistently experiencing staff shortages?

☐ Yes

☐ No

17. If yes, are these due to (please tick all that apply):

☐ Staff sickness, due to illness unrelated to their work

☐ Difficulties finding locums

☐ Staff sickness, due to stress or other issues linked to working in the pharmacy

☐ Difficulties covering staffing or locum costs

☐ Difficulties recruiting permanent staff

18. Is your business currently struggling to recruit permanent team members?

Yes

No

Pharmacists

☐
☐

Support staff
members

☐
☐

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E. Impact on Patient Services

19. Is your business experiencing an increase in any of the following compared with (January / February) this time last year?

	Yes, significant increase	Yes, small increase	No increase
Requests for healthcare advice - for minor conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requests for healthcare advice - for more serious conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requests from patients unable to access General Practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Delays in prescriptions being issued by GP practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorrect messaging from GP practices to patients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medicines supply chain/wholesaler issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informal referrals from General Practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patients visiting our pharmacy/pharmacies after already visiting other pharmacies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aggression and abuse from patients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. Are patient services being negatively affected by the pressures on your business?

- ☐ Patients are not being impacted
- ☐ We are struggling but mostly managing to protect our patients
- ☐ They are being impacted but not critically
- ☐ They are being severely impacted

21. What has the impact on patients been? (please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking longer to dispense prescriptions | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to provide some locally commissioned services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to source some medicines and supply these to patients | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to spend as much time supporting/advising patients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting longer to seek advice from staff in the pharmacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to respond to patients' phone calls/emails as promptly as usual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to provide some NHS funded clinical services | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary closures meaning patients have to visit other pharmacies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to provide some Pharmacy First Consultations | <input type="checkbox"/> Local pharmacy closures driving up wait times |

Other (please state)

22. If patients are being impacted, can you provide any examples of harm this has caused to the health or wellbeing of individual patients?

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We track the pressures on community pharmacies on a regular basis ahead of all Community Pharmacy England Committee Meetings which these answers will inform.

G. Pressures Tracker

23. How concerned are you about the following issues at the moment?

	Extremely concerned	Concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned
Staffing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medicines supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My team's wellbeing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our ability to deliver non-Essential services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My pharmacy's ability to stay open	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patient safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our ability to help patients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. How are the following financial pressures affecting your pharmacy's overall ability to operate?

Please rank from a scale from 1-10, where 1 is minimum and 10 is maximum pressure.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know / prefer not to answer
Medicine market instability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inflation and utility bills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in demand for services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in demand for healthcare advice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workforce costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing rental rates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unpredictable revenue stream	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Are there any further comments you would like to make about the ongoing pressures on community pharmacies or about what, beyond additional funding, would help to ease them? Please feel free to share details of any ongoing pressures and concerns and how these are affecting you and your business.

26. Would you be happy to be contacted by a member of the Community Pharmacy England team to talk more about your experiences?

☐ No

☐ Yes (please provide contact details)

Thank for your taking the time complete this survey, particularly at this very busy time. We value your views.