

## **Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire Working Group Update**

I attended a special working group this morning (13<sup>th</sup> February 2025) to go through pharmacy provision in Lincolnshire.

It's a rather limited consultation done every three years to ensure there are adequate prescribing options for patients. If housing developments grow in Lincolnshire, then more pharmacies may well be needed and this will cover that eventuality... but I think our challenge is more to keep our chemists open!

There was a council officer to outline the service and explain anything we might be unclear about, then a series of questions to answer. It's a one size fits all nationally and basically rural areas have significant problems but not problems this document is required to address to sign off the policy!

It was useful attending to make more localised but nevertheless important comments and these are now forwarded to Tony McGinty, the deputy Public Health Director for the county for further consideration.

I have attached the East Lindsey section out of interest to members.

### **East Lindsey District Council**

Housing growth for the East Lindsey District Council area is managed by the Council's in-house strategic planning team and committee through the East Lindsey Core Strategy.

The local plan indicates a total of 7,819 new homes for the period 2016-2031, at an annual average build rate of 558 per year. Most of these homes are expected to be built in groups of under 500 homes and dispersed across the planning area and are therefore considered unlikely to create additional community pharmacy needs beyond that which can be absorbed by existing local pharmacies or DSP's.

However, 2,851 homes are planned in groups where more than 500 homes are to be built in the same locality. Further analysis of future community pharmacy needs has been undertaken on developments of more than 500 houses, as these may be more likely to generate additional needs which cannot be met by existing provision arrangements.

Over the life of the East Lindsey Core Strategy the total of 2,851 additional homes planned in groups in the East Lindsey area in three defined areas. 1,619 of these are ascribed to the market town of Louth; 683 are ascribed to the market town of Horncastle; and 760 are ascribed to the combined villages Coningsby and Tattershall.

If the expected average build rate of 7.1% per year was achieved in East Lindsey for the period of the plan to 2025 then 1,822 of the homes planned in groups of 500 or more for the East Lindsey area will have already been built. At this average delivery rate, a further 607 homes of the remainder are forecast for completion between 2025 and 2028, the lifespan of this PNA, those being added to the existing 64,754 households in the Council area.

Park homes or caravans are not considered as part of local plans. However, planning applications can be submitted for either permanent residential or holiday sites, or extensions to existing sites.

Irrespective of the status of the sites there are issues in relation to meeting the health needs, including pharmaceutical needs of temporary or permanent residents.

**Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025:** This is particularly pertinent on the coast in East Lindsey where there is a desire to promote tourism; caravans often house 'holidaymakers' or seasonal workers for long periods of time. Working with the site owners, efforts are made to encourage residents to arrange for the required prescription medication in advance, before travelling. Inevitably, there is still demand placed on pharmaceutical services available locally.

Given the geographical relationship between several existing pharmacies and the site of this housing growth, it is unlikely that the need for pharmaceutical services will not be met by existing provision over this period, including the 6% and growing uptake of digital and distance pharmacy provision in Lincolnshire.

## **8.2 Necessary services: current provision within the locality's area**

There are 23 pharmacies in the locality operated by ten contractors and 15 of 16 the GP practices dispense from 17 premises. The percentage of the practice list sizes that are dispensed to is 6.1 to 97.0%.

As can be seen from the map below, the pharmacies are mainly located in areas of higher population - but it won't print! In the first four months of 2024/25, 61.2% of prescriptions written by the GP practices in the locality were dispensed within the locality by one of the pharmacies and 30.5% by the dispensing practices (this includes items personally administered by the practices as this information cannot be separated out from the number of items dispensed).

The Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation tool confirms not all residents are within 20 minutes by car of a pharmacy located in the locality. There are approximately 1,300 people living in lower super output area East Lindsey Whilst there are other areas that appear to be more than 20 minutes from a pharmacy, there is no resident population living there.

Being a predominantly rural area access to the pharmacies using public transport is limited outside of the towns and not a realistic method of transport for parts of the locality.

### **The 23 pharmacies open as follows:**

- Five open Monday to Friday (two in Skegness, and one each in Ingoldmells, Sutton-on-Sea and Chapel St Leonards),
- seven open Monday to Friday and Saturday morning,
- nine open Monday to Saturday, and
- two open seven days per week, one in Skegness and one in Mablethorpe.

However, when looking solely at core opening hours:

- 12 have core opening hours Monday to Friday only,
- seven have core opening hours Monday to Friday and Saturday morning,
- four have core opening hours Monday to Saturday, and
- none have core opening hours on Sundays.

The Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation tool confirms the same level of access to a pharmacy that has core opening hours on Saturdays as during the week, i.e. all but one lower super output area with a resident population is within a 20-minute drive of a pharmacy.

### **With regard to core opening hours, Monday and Friday:**

- two have core opening hours until 17.00 (Skegness and Sutton-on-Sea),
- one until 17.15 (Louth),

- eight until 17.30 (Horncastle, two in Louth, two in Mablethorpe, two in Skegness and Sutton-on-Sea),
- ten until 18.00, and • two until 18.30 (Alford and Coningsby).

**When supplementary opening hours are taken into account:**

- eight pharmacies are open until 17.30, • ten until 18.00,
- three until 18.30,
- one until 19.00 (Mablethorpe), and
- one until 20.00 (Skegness).

Two of the pharmacies open at 08.00 (one in each of Mablethorpe and Skegness), three at 08.30 (two in Skegness and one in Louth), one at 08.34 (in Horncastle), and the remaining open at 09.00.

Opening hours information is as of October 2024 as provided by the ICB.

The dispensaries within the dispensing practices will generally open in line with the opening hours for the medical practice premises, Monday to Friday. Three of the pharmacies responded to the contractor questionnaire and confirmed that they do not dispense appliances listed in Part IX of the Drug Tariff. Four of the dispensing practices responded to the contractor questionnaire and confirmed they dispense appliances, but only one dispenses all types. One dispenses appliances other than incontinence appliances and two only dispense dressings and creams.

**Necessary services: current provision outside the locality's area**

Some residents choose to access contractors outside both the locality and the HWB's area in order to access services:

- offered by dispensing appliance contractors,
- offered by DSPs, or
- which are located near to where they work, shop, or visit for leisure or other purposes.

Whilst 91.7% of items prescribed by the GP practices in the first four months of 2024/25 were dispensed by a pharmacy or dispensing practice in the locality, of the remaining 8.3%:

- 2.1% were dispensed by contractors elsewhere in Lincolnshire,
- 2.0% were dispensed by three contractors in Leeds (predominantly by one DSP),
- 1.0% were dispensed by 30 contractors in North East Lincolnshire (predominantly by two pharmacies in Grimsby),
- 0.7% by a DSP in Ealing, and
- 0.6% were dispensed by 12 contractors in Peterborough (predominantly by one dispensing appliance contractor and one pharmacy in Peterborough itself).

The remaining 1.9% were dispensed by 640 contractors in 123 different HWB areas. While the majority of items were dispensed by a 'bricks and mortar' pharmacy, 3.5% were dispensed by 32 DSPs. 1.3% were dispensed by 46 dispensing appliance contractors. When taking into account the provision of necessary services outside of the locality, not all of the whole locality is within 20 minutes of a pharmacy. In addition, dispensing practices in neighbouring localities may provide a dispensing service to residents of the locality.

### **8.3 Other relevant services: current provision**

All but one of the pharmacies provided the new medicine service in the first four months of 2024/25, however one hasn't provided it since April 2024. The pharmacy that hasn't provided it is in Chapel St Leonards and didn't provide it in 2023/24 either. 4,792 full service interventions were provided in the first four months of 2024/25, with a range at pharmacy level of three to 924.

It is unknown if any of the pharmacies dispense prescriptions for appliances (the three that responded to the contractor said they did not). None provided the appliance use review service between April 2023 and July 2024. One pharmacy provided the stoma appliance customisation service in 2023/24 (22 customisations) and has continued to provide it in 2024/25 (six customisations).

All but two of the pharmacies have signed up to provide the hypertension case-finding service with all of those that have signed up having provided the service in the first four months of 2024/25.

The two pharmacies that had not signed up as of October 2024 are in Skegness and Chapel St Leonards. The range of checks undertaken at pharmacy level is 15 to 201. 18 of the pharmacies have undertaken a total of 166 ambulatory blood pressure checks in the first four months of 2024/25, with a range of one to 21 checks at pharmacy level.

As of October 2024, four of the pharmacies have signed up to provide the smoking cessation service, but to date have not had any referrals. 22 of the pharmacies provided influenza vaccinations under the advanced service in 2023/24 vaccinating a total of 10,504 people with a range at pharmacy level of 17 to 2,934.

The pharmacy that did not provide the service is in Chapel St Leonards. 17 of the pharmacies have signed up to provide the contraception service as of October 2024, five having provided an ongoing supply of oral contraception in the first four months of 2024/25, and five having initiated a supply of oral contraception. 12 of the pharmacies have made 709 supplies of lateral flow device tests in the first four months of 2024/25.

All of the pharmacies have signed up to provide the Pharmacy First service. All have provided consultations for the clinical pathways in the first four months of 2024/25 - 1,657 consultations with a range at pharmacy level of 11 to 191.

All have made supplies of urgent repeat medicines over the same timescale - 960 supplies with a range at pharmacy level of two to 220. All have provided consultations for low acuity, minor illness - 362 consultations, with a range at pharmacy level of one to 84.

Five of the pharmacies are commissioned to provide the palliative care drugs enhanced service. They are located in Coningsby, Holton Le Clay, Horncastle, Louth and Skegness. Ten of the pharmacies are commissioned to provide the Covid-19 vaccination service. They are spread across the locality.

### **8.4 Other NHS services**

The following NHS services are deemed, by the HWB, to affect the need for pharmaceutical services within its area.

- Hospital pharmacy departments - reduce the demand for the dispensing essential service as prescriptions written in hospitals are dispensed by the hospital pharmacy service.

Personal administration of items by GPs - similar to hospital pharmacies this also reduces the demand for the dispensing essential service. Items are sourced and personally administered by GPs and other clinicians at the practice thus saving patients having to take a prescription to a pharmacy, for example for a vaccination, in order to then return with the vaccine to the practice so that it may be administered. It is not possible to identify the number of items personally administered as they are not recorded separately to those that are dispensed. GP out of hours service - whether a patient is given a full or part course of treatment after being seen by the out of hours service will depend on the nature of their condition. This service will therefore affect the need for pharmaceutical services, in particular the essential service of dispensing.

- GP extended access hubs - generate prescriptions which affects the need for the dispensing essential service.
- Community nurse prescribers - generate prescriptions which affects the need for the dispensing essential service.
- Primary dental services - dentists will issue prescriptions which affect the need for the dispensing essential service.
- Urgent treatment centres and clinical assessment service operated by Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust - generate prescriptions which affects the need for the dispensing essential service.
- Lincolnshire ADHD service - generates prescriptions which affects the need for the dispensing essential service.

#### **8.5 The GP practices in the locality provide the following services which reduce the need for certain pharmaceutical services:**

- initiation and ongoing supply of oral contraception,
- flu vaccinations,
- blood pressure checks, and
- advice and treatment for common ailments.

Unlike GP practices, prescriptions written by dentists are not aligned to the dentist's practice. It is therefore not possible to identify how many items were prescribed by the dental practices in Lincolnshire. However, it is possible to identify the number of dental prescriptions dispensed by the pharmacies in Lincolnshire. A total of 7,957 dental prescription items were dispensed in 2023/24 and 3,155 in the first five months of 2024/25.

The Skegness & Coast GP extended access hub provides appointments Monday to Friday 17.30 to 20.30 and at the weekend between 08.00 and 19.00. Appointments are booked through Beacon Medical Practice and appointments are at its premises in Ingoldmells. The service is available to people registered with Beacon Medical Practice, Hawthorn Medical Practice, Spilsby Surgery, Marisco Medical Practice, Alford Surgery and Stickney Surgery.

In the first four months of 2024/25, 107 items were prescribed. 66.4% of these items was dispensed in the locality and 16.8% by a contractor elsewhere in Lincolnshire. The remaining 16.8% of items were dispensed elsewhere in England, predominantly by two DSP's. The East Lindsey extended access hub provides appointments between 18.30 and 20.00 Monday to Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday from The Woldside Unit, Louth County Hospital.

In the first four months of 2024/25, 348 items were prescribed. 96.3% of these items was dispensed in the locality with the remaining 3.7% of items dispensed elsewhere in England, predominantly in Leeds (one DSP) or North East Lincolnshire. The Mablethorpe GP extended access hub prescribed 605 items in the first four months of 2024/25. 95.9% of these items were dispensed in the locality with 0.3% dispensed elsewhere in Lincolnshire. The remaining 3.8% of items was dispensed elsewhere in England, predominantly by a DSP in Leeds.

The Skegness urgent treatment centre is based at Skegness Hospital, Skegness and provides treatment for a range of conditions which are not critical or life threatening. This includes:

- sprains and strains
- suspected broken limbs
- bites and stings
- eye problems
- feverish illness in adults and children
- minor scalds and burns
- emergency contraception.

In the first four months of 2024/25 the centre prescribed 3,037 items. 98.5% of these was dispensed in the locality, with a further 0.3% dispensed elsewhere in Lincolnshire. The remaining 1.2% were dispensed by contractors in 19 different HWB areas. The Louth urgent treatment centre is based at County Hospital, Louth and provides treatment for a range of conditions which are not critical or life threatening.

This includes:

- sprains and strains
- suspected broken limbs
- bites and stings
- eye problems
- feverish illness in adults and children
- minor scalds and burns
- emergency contraception.

In the first four months of 2024/25 the centre prescribed 2,836 items. 91.3% of these was dispensed in the locality, with a further 4.1% dispensed elsewhere in Lincolnshire. The remaining 4.6% were dispensed by contractors in 14 different HWB areas, predominantly Northeast Lincolnshire.

Lincolnshire Community Emergency Medicine Services is a rapid response service for Lincolnshire. It provides enhanced care, over and above the care accessed at the GP practices, including blood testing and ultrasound. It prescribed 119 items in the first four months of 2024/25 of which 23.5% were dispensed in the locality and 67.2% elsewhere in Lincolnshire reflecting the fact it is a county-wide service. The remaining 5% was dispensed in Nottingham City and North East Lincolnshire.

Residents will access other NHS services located in this locality or elsewhere in the HWB's area which affect the need for pharmaceutical services, including:

- hospital services,
- public health services commissioned by the council, and
- other services provided within a community setting.

No other NHS services have been identified that are located within the locality and which affect the need for pharmaceutical services.

## **8.6 Choice with regard to obtaining pharmaceutical services**

Those living within the locality and registered with one of the GP practices generally choose to access one of the pharmacies in the locality in order to have their prescriptions dispensed or, if eligible, to be dispensed to by their practice. Those that look outside the locality usually do so either to access a neighbouring pharmacy or a dispensing appliance contractor or DSP outside of the HWB's area.

In the first four months of 2024/25, a total of 814 contractors dispensed items written by one of the GP practices, of which 694 were outside of Lincolnshire. Some were quite a distance from the area, for example Leeds, Ealing, Salford, Bristol, and Lancashire.

### **8.7 Necessary services: gaps in provision**

The HWB has noted the location of pharmacies across this locality, and the fact that not all of the locality is within 20 minutes by car of a pharmacy located in the locality. There are approximately 1,300 people living in lower super output area East Lindsey 001G (North Cotes) and not all of them are within 20 minutes of a pharmacy by car.

It has also noted the influx of tourists to the area and has considered their needs for pharmaceutical services, namely the dispensing service and Pharmacy First. As this group will have travelled to the area by car it is mobile and will therefore be able to access one or more of the pharmacies in the locality to access the required pharmaceutical services. The HWB is satisfied that the existing pharmacies are accustomed to dealing with this increase in demand and plan accordingly each year.

The HWB has noted the dispensing service provided by some of the GP practices to their eligible patients, and that for these residents there is no need to access a pharmacy for the dispensing service.

The HWB has noted that there may be some residents in the locality, both now and within the lifetime of the document, who may not:

- have access to private transport at such times when they need to access pharmaceutical services,
- be able to use public transport, or
- be able to walk to a pharmacy.

However, the HWB has noted that:

- there are four DSPs in its area, with over 400 elsewhere in the country all of whom are required to deliver all essential services remotely which includes delivering dispensed medicines free of charge,
- the Covid-19 pandemic has substantially increased the use and acceptance of remote consultations within primary care and pharmacies are required to facilitate remote access (via the telephone or online) to pharmaceutical services by their terms of service, thereby removing the need for some people to visit a pharmacy, and
- some pharmacies offer a private delivery service (for which a fee may be charged). The HWB is therefore satisfied that there are no current gaps in the provision of necessary services.

**8.8 Improvements or better access: gaps in provision** The HWB has noted that of the 23 pharmacies:

- all have signed up to, and are providing, the Pharmacy First service,
- 22 provide the new medicine service
- 21 have signed up and are providing the hypertension case-finding service,
- 22 provided influenza vaccinations in 2023/24,
- 17 have signed up to provide the contraception service, with five having provided it,
- 12 provide the lateral flow device supply service,
- four have signed up to provide the smoking cessation service,
- five pharmacies are commissioned to provide the palliative care drugs service, and
- three pharmacies are commissioned to provide Covid-19 vaccinations.

None of the pharmacies provide appliance use reviews and only one provides the stoma appliance customisation service. It is not known how many, if any, of them dispense prescriptions for appliances.

However, it is noted that one of the reasons why prescriptions are dispensed outside of the locality is because they have been sent to a dispensing appliance contractor. Patients will therefore be able to access these two services via those contractors. In addition, stoma nurses employed by dispensing appliance contractors will provide the services at the patient's home and the stoma care department at the hospitals may provide similar services.

The HWB is satisfied that the number of pharmacies that sign up to provide the contraception service will increase as this service becomes embedded and awareness of it increases.

It has noted that demand for the smoking cessation service is generated by referrals from the hospital and foundation trusts, which are currently not happening due to alternative services that are in place. It is satisfied that should referrals start to be made then the pharmacies will respond accordingly and sign up to provide this service.