

Improving the Public's Health through Community Pharmacies

Ten Steps to Success

These ten steps will act as a guide for running a successful community pharmacy-based public health service that is tailored to meet the needs of service users.

PharmacyHealthLink (PHLink) has produced this guide for PCT pharmacists and other PCT staff as a result of information obtained from a range of community pharmacy-based services that were identified during the writing of our joint RPSGB / PHLink evidence base reports – The Contribution of Community Pharmacy to Improving the Public's Health. The full reports are available from our website at: www.pharmacyhealthlink.org.uk.

1. Know your audience

- Conduct a 'health needs assessment' amongst regular users of the pharmacy and local residents.
- Try to use existing 'templates' and 'frameworks'. Contact the main pharmacy associations to see if they have any relevant support material.
- Work with your local NHS, community and pharmacy leaders. For example, community pharmacy facilitators as well as key people in primary care organisations, pharmacy development groups, local pharmaceutical committees, and the local public health and health promotion departments.



2. Acknowledge the wider influences on health

- These include income and education as well as lifestyle issues, such as smoking and diet.
- Work in partnership with a range of groups that can influence people outside pharmacy, for example, primary care premises, schools and workplaces.

3. Promote the unique selling points

- Initiate and design projects that reflect and utilise pharmacy's unique position and contribution to the community.
- Define the 'added value' of community pharmacy; e.g. highlight increased access to healthy - as well as ill people.
- Describe benefits of consultations being conducted in an informal environment.
- Determine how community pharmacy involvement can help deliver local targets and other NHS performance measures (see later).

4. Try to obtain funding which is sustainable long-term

- Tap into national agendas and select a topic area that is already a NHS or a local priority.
- Make clear in funding proposals how the project will contribute to local and national targets.
- Consider alternative sources of funding to 'kick-start' the project.

5. Build a network of like-minded supporters

- Contact other pharmacies to identify areas of common interest.
- Enlist the support of local organisations and other bodies such as voluntary groups
- Discuss and agree terms of how the proposal might work, including funding arrangements, with all interested stakeholders.



- Arrange fees to reward sustainable practices, long-term commitment and high standards of service provision.
- Hold a local event to explain the project / proposal to interested community pharmacists and other interested staff.
- Identify, support and promote local 'project champions', such as MPs.

6. Provide training for all staff

- Ensure that all staff taking part in the project receive training.
- Use nationally recognised standards and guidance where possible, but adapt training to your local needs.
- Establish whether local protocols, e.g. use of patient group directions, need to be followed and by which staff members. Provide specific training for them if necessary.
- Ensure that your key communication messages are consistent.
- Provide appropriate training on communication skills and use 'role play' scenarios to help deal with sensitive health issues.

7. Focus on the needs of service users

- Involve service users in the design of services wherever possible – this can often be done with the support of local voluntary organisations.
- Ensure that all staff are knowledgeable about the service and can provide helpful advice in a professional and non-judgemental manner.
- Think about when the service might be accessed and by which target groups.
- Try to ensure that the most knowledgeable or highly trained staff are available at busy times.
- Ensure that pharmacies can provide a private consultation area where conversations cannot be overheard by others, and ensure that requirements for confidentiality and record-keeping are well publicised.
- Also make sure that arrangements for 'out of hours' services and 'sign-posting' information are clearly visible.
- Provide convenient ways for users to feedback their experiences of the service and suggestions for how it might be improved.



8. Evaluate the service

- Build record-keeping and other ways of collecting meaningful information about the project into the original service design.
- Make outcome measures clear from the start. These should reflect national and local targets where possible.
- Allocate funds to the evaluation process (normally 15% of total project budget).
- Consider using independent evaluators. This may be done in collaboration with a local university or other research centre.

9. Keep stakeholders and the public informed of progress

- Offer to hold a local event to publicise the results of your evaluation to professional stakeholders, e.g. NHS managers, local GPs, other pharmacists.
- Provide information updates on the service to users.
- Use local media proactively to promote the service to the right target audience.

10. Maintain regular dialogue

- Maintain good communication! It is crucial to the success of any service that you communicate with all the players.

PharmacyHealthLink

1 Lambeth High Street

London, SE1 7JN

Tel: 020 7572 2265

Fax: 020 7582 4985

www.pharmacyhealthlink.org.uk

pharmacyhealthlink@rpsgb.org

Registered Charity No 1021335

Registered Company No 2768032

PharmacyHealthLink March 2007

