



UPDATE: Summary briefing: The pharmacy naloxone (Prenoxad) supply service

Claire Jones, Public Health Pharmacy Adviser. December 2024. claire.jones2@durham.gov.uk

The aim of this briefing is to describe the importance of the pharmacy naloxone (Prenoxad) supply service in County Durham, and how this service has been remodelled to make it a much quicker intervention for pharmacies also providing the supervised consumption and/or needle exchange services.

Why is this service so important in County Durham?

- Opioid-related deaths make up the largest proportion of drug-related deaths across the UK, with an average of 40 deaths per week.
- Opioids were involved in 73% of drug misuse deaths registered in England in 2022, and the North-East of England continues to have the highest rate of drug misuse deaths.
- Naloxone can almost immediately and temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, and therefore prevent drug-related deaths by reversing breathing difficulties.
- Naloxone supply is therefore a critical intervention, particularly with the increasing use of potent synthetic opioids.¹

What is the legislation?

Naloxone injection (Prenoxad) is a POM, however following legislative changes:

In 2015: It can be supplied without a prescription by persons engaged in the provision of drug treatment services (e.g. on behalf of a local authority) for the purposes of saving life in an emergency.²

In 2024: In December 2024, legislation enabling pharmacy professionals to supply take-home naloxone came into force.³ This is in addition to the 2015 exemptions in the Human Medicines Regulations which allow drug treatment services to supply take-home naloxone without a prescription to people who need it.

In County Durham **this commissioned service will pay a supply fee of £8 exVAT (plus drug cost) for each supply made**, and any trained member of the pharmacy team can make these supplies.

This service has been remodelled to make it a much quicker intervention (with minimal data recording requirements) based on the lessons learnt from successful pharmacy services elsewhere.

¹ <https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103236>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/widening-the-availability-of-naloxone/widening-the-availability-of-naloxone>

³ <https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/news/legislation-enabling-pharmacy-professionals-to-supply-take-home-naloxone-comes-into-force>; <https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/news/pharmacists-and-pharmacy-technicians-to-be-able-to-supply-naloxone-without-a-prescription>



To provide this important service

(SLA at <https://www.cpnec.org.uk/county-durham-services-2/>)

Staff

- The service lead can either be a pharmacist or a registered pharmacy technician.
- Any trained member of the pharmacy team can supply Prenoxad.

Training

- All mandated training is online.

Resources

- The pharmacy should stock Prenoxad injection with a minimum stock level of two.
- The pharmacy should have supplies or signpost to the *Prenoxad Injection Clients Guide*.⁴

Providing the service

- This should be considered as an add-on service for pharmacies providing the supervised consumption and/or the needle exchange service.
- The person receiving the supply of Prenoxad should be a County Durham resident, aged 18 and over, and either be the individual currently, or with a history of, using opioids; or be a carer, family member, or friend liable to be on hand in case of overdose.
- The PharmOutcomes claims template has minimal data recording requirements described in Appendix 2 of the SLA.

Getting started

Claim the one-off set-up fee on PharmOutcomes which includes the initial cost of the minimum stock level of two Prenoxad injections.

Once the online mandated training is complete, view the non-mandated 30-minute training video at <https://www.cpnec.org.uk/drug-and-alcohol/> from Dr Jenny Scott, who has been involved in pharmacy supply services elsewhere.⁵ This video describes how to run a successful pharmacy supply service.

Consider the top tips for supply in Appendix 1 of the SLA.

Email the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service at cddars.clinicaladmin@spectrum-cic.nhs.uk if the pharmacy would value a visit from a Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service Ambassador, who will advise on how best to approach making Prenoxad supplies.

⁴ <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/3054/rmms>

⁵ <https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/opinion/how-we-became-the-top-naloxone-supplying-pharmacy-in-the-country>
<https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/news/community-pharmacy-pilot-provides-hundreds-of-take-home-naloxone-kits-in-one-year>