



## **Summary of key changes to Public Health pharmacy services 2026-27**

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### **Actions for the Public Health pharmacy services directly commissioned by Durham County Council:**

**January 2026:** Consider the contract variation letter and accompanying service specifications. If the pharmacy provides the needle exchange and/or the supervised consumption service, please particularly also consider the provision of the naloxone (Prenoxad) supply service.

**February 2026:** Consider the training requirements in the service specifications (Note: Unchanged from 2025-26).

**March 2026:** Sign and return the contract variation letter by Friday 27 March 2026.

#### **General points:**

**Regional stop smoking PGD service:** If the pharmacy hasn't already done so, please sign up to provide this important service which is commissioned by PSNE on behalf of local authorities in the North-East.

**CDDFT commissioned community pharmacy provision of EOHC service:** As a reminder this service will be decommissioned from 31 January 2026.

**Durham County Council staff flu vaccination 2026-27:** The council will again be commissioning a council staff flu vaccination service for 2026-27 for council employees (including council-maintained schools). A further contract variation letter will follow over the summer.

## **Public Health pharmacy services directly commissioned by Durham County Council**

### **Public Health pharmacy contract**

#### **What's new?**

- The contract variation letter should be signed and returned to confirm acceptance of the service specifications and an indication of which services the pharmacy intends to deliver in 2026-27 by a deadline of 27 March 2026.<sup>1</sup>
- From 2026-27, the commissioning team will contact a small number of pharmacies / head offices each year to ask for copies of pharmacy insurance policies as assurance for the level of cover that the pharmacy has already signed up to as part of the current Public Health pharmacy service contract Terms and Conditions 2022-25 which is:
  - *Employer's Liability Insurance = £5 million.*
  - *Public Liability Insurance = £5 million.*
  - *Professional Indemnity Insurance = £1 million.*

#### **What stays the same?**

- Public Health pharmacy services are reviewed on an annual basis.
- All pharmacies have signed up to the Public Health pharmacy service contract which covers the period 2022-25.

<sup>1</sup> Email: [AHS.Commissioning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:AHS.Commissioning@durham.gov.uk).

Lead officer: Karen Kennedy, Commissioning Officer. Email: [karen.kennedy@durham.gov.uk](mailto:karen.kennedy@durham.gov.uk)

- Two annual extensions are built into this contract, hence contractors will be asked to again sign a contract variation letter for the final extension period of 1 April 2026 -31 March 27 to provide the below services:
  1. Alcohol brief intervention service
  2. Supervised consumption service
  3. Naloxone (Prenoxad) supply service
  4. NRT e-voucher service
- All communication from the commissioning team will continue to be via email to either the appropriate head office contact or the pharmacy shared NHS mailbox.

### The naloxone (Prenoxad) supply service

#### What's new?

- Potent synthetic opioids, such as nitazenes and illicit fentanyl, are sometimes added to or substituted for heroin. They are also added to or substituted for other drugs or openly sold as synthetic opioids. Drugs of this type are becoming more common and are typically many times stronger than heroin therefore carry a much higher risk of overdose.<sup>2</sup>
- With the increasing use of potent synthetic opioids being implicated in opioid drug related deaths, it is vitally important that naloxone becomes available from as many locations as possible. Therefore, please consider this important service for 2026-27.
- Email the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service at [cddars.clinicaladmin@spectrum-cic.nhs.uk](mailto:cddars.clinicaladmin@spectrum-cic.nhs.uk) to arrange an onsite support visit to show pharmacy staff how to interact with clients and to provide the necessary practical materials (Note: The mandated online training must be completed first).
- In December 2024, legislation enabling pharmacy professionals to supply take-home naloxone without a prescription came into force. This is in addition to the previous exemptions in the Human Medicines Regulations which allow drug treatment services (e.g. a pharmacy providing supervised consumption of opioid substitute medication) to supply take-home naloxone without a prescription for the purposes of saving a life in an emergency.<sup>3</sup>
- Add a dated blank pharmacy label to each Prenoxad supply.

#### What stays the same?

- The service lead can continue to be a registered pharmacy technician, and any trained member of the pharmacy team can issue Prenoxad.
- All mandated training is online and should be refreshed every 2 years. Non-mandated training continues to be available on the LPC website at <https://cpdands.org.uk/drug-and-alcohol/> which describes how to interact with clients and how to run a successful service.
- The PharmOutcomes template has minimal data recording requirements, similar to the needle exchange service.
- The supply fee is £8 ex VAT.

### Supervised consumption service

#### What's new?

- From 1 April 2026, the fee per supervision increases to £3.00 ex VAT for a methadone supervision and £4.00 ex VAT for a buprenorphine sublingual supervision.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/deaths-linked-to-potent-synthetic-opioids> ;  
<https://codurhamrecovery.co.uk/advice/nitazenes/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supplying-take-home-naloxone-without-a-prescription>



### What stays the same?

- The mandatory training requirement for the lead pharmacist continues to be completion of the CPPE DoC for supervised consumption of prescribed medicines every 2 years. Non-mandated training materials continue to be available at <https://cpdands.org.uk/drug-and-alcohol/>.
- Registered pharmacy technicians can continue to provide the supervised consumption service.
- Additional fees continue to be:
  - £8 ex VAT for accepting a new client (classed as 'new' to the pharmacy after a period of 3 months).
  - £4 ex VAT for completion of the *Supervised Consumption - Missed 3 or more dose notification* PharmOutcomes template to inform the Recovery Service that a client has missed 3 or more consecutive days of medication.
- As part of contingency planning, pharmacies are required to:
  1. Inform the local Recovery Centre in the event of a pharmacy service disruption so that arrangements can be made with clients.
  2. Ask all clients for their current telephone numbers once a month to aid with contacting clients during any periods of service disruption.
  3. Inform the Recovery Centre if the pharmacy is reaching its capacity for a safe client list to see if any arrangements can be made to mitigate this.

### NRT e-voucher scheme

#### What's new?

- From 1 April 2026, the service fees will increase to:
  - Acceptance fee for each 2-weekly e-voucher of £3.50 ex VAT.
  - Dispensing fee for each NRT product of £1.50 ex VAT.

#### What stays the same?

- Currently, the NRT formulary remains the same.
- Two NRT products (i.e. combination therapy) are provided to clients free of charge.
- Pharmacy staff are not required to undergo named training to meet this specification.
- The Stop Smoking Service will continue to issue NRT e-voucher codes for a 2-week supply of NRT which should be supplied in full by the pharmacy each time via PharmOutcomes.
- NRT quantities supplied must continue to be entered as the total number of individual units (e.g. mls or patches or cartridges) and NOT the number of packs (e.g. 1 bottle or 1 pack).
- The pharmacy can continue to alter the choice of NRT product without a new e-voucher.

### Alcohol brief intervention service

#### What stays the same?

- The service, service declaration on PharmOutcomes, training requirements and remuneration for the service remain the same (£7.50 ex VAT for a full AUDIT).
- The mandated Annual Update Briefing continues to be available on the LPC website at <https://cpdands.org.uk/drug-and-alcohol/>.
- Continue to consider this service as a valuable addition to other pharmacy services e.g. the NHS Blood Pressure Check Service, the New Medicine Service or the Pharmacy Contraception Service.
- For pharmacies wishing to provide this service, complete the required training and then contact Sandra Waters (email: [sandra.waters@nhs.net](mailto:sandra.waters@nhs.net)) for an onsite visit and service materials.



## **Contacts for public health pharmacy services commissioned on behalf of Durham County Council**

To discuss recruitment, contract sign-up, payment, and all service implications:

### **Sexual health services**

County Durham services are commissioned by the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT).

As a reminder, the CDDFT commissioned community pharmacy provision of EOHC service will be decommissioned from 31 January 2026 (see briefing on LPC website at <https://cpdands.org.uk/sexual-health/>).

Contact: Sandra Waters, Sexual Health Improvement Project Officer, Sexual Health Service.

Email: [sandra.waters@nhs.net](mailto:sandra.waters@nhs.net)

Website: <https://www.cddft.nhs.uk/services/sexual-health>

### **Level 2 stop smoking service**

This County Durham service is commissioned by ABL Health Ltd.

Contact: Dawn Devereux, Stop smoking Practitioner/Level 2 service Lead– Smokefree County Durham.

Email: [DDevereux@ablhealth.co.uk](mailto:DDevereux@ablhealth.co.uk) (or [Smokefreelife.countydurham@nhs.net](mailto:Smokefreelife.countydurham@nhs.net))

Website: [www.smokefreecountydurham.co.uk/](http://www.smokefreecountydurham.co.uk/)

### **Needle exchange**

This County Durham service is commissioned by Waythrough (part of the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service).

Contact: Katie Fowler, Harm Reduction and Rough Sleeper Lead Practitioner, County Durham Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service

Email: [katie.fowler@waythrough.org.uk](mailto:katie.fowler@waythrough.org.uk) (or [cddars.clinicaladmin@spectrum-cic.nhs.uk](mailto:cddars.clinicaladmin@spectrum-cic.nhs.uk))

Website: <https://codurhamrecovery.co.uk/>

### **Regional stop smoking PGD service**

This North-East regional service is commissioned by PSNE.

Contact: Ann Gunning, Head of Services and Support, Community Pharmacy North of Tyne

Email: [ann.gunning@northoftynelpc.com](mailto:ann.gunning@northoftynelpc.com) (or <https://www.psne.co.uk/contact-us.html>)

Website: <https://www.psne.co.uk/varenicline-pgd-service.html>.