

Minutes of the meeting of Community Pharmacy Durham and Sunderland (CPD&S) held on 15 January 2026 at Ramside Hall Hotel and Spa, Durham

In attendance:

Emma Morris
Raminder Sihota
Andrea Dickinson
Mukarrom Hussain
Paul Arnett
Joy Cooper
Derek Roberts
Ian Mensforth
Rob Pitt
Geraint Morris
Ann Gunning
Greg Burke

Theramex sponsored the subsistence and room hire associated with this meeting.

LPC/001/2026	Apologies for absence: Lee Middleton, Jamie Rotherham, Sami Hanna (Sami's written report detailed the November CPE meeting, the LPC Conference, and the current status of contract negotiations).
LPC/002/2026	Introduction: Emma introduced the meeting and reminded members of the Nolan Principles and if appropriate, to declare any interests.
LPC/003/2026	Claire Holmes delivered a promotional presentation on behalf of Theramex.
LPC/004/2026	The committee reviewed Sami Hanna's recent attendance at CPDandS meetings. While Sami submitted his apologies for today and was unable to attend in November due to a scheduling conflict with a CPE meeting, members reiterated the importance of his presence. He serves as a vital conduit between CPE, the LPC, and the contractors they represent.. Action: Greg to write to Sami to ask him to make every effort to join CPDandS meetings.
LPC/005/2026	FutureMeds Clinical Research John Croney and Christine Harle presented a proposal for community pharmacy involvement in clinical trial recruitment. FutureMeds operates across several clinical areas, including respiratory, cardiovascular, and metabolic health. The proposed commercial model includes payments for setup, referrals, and successful study enrolments. Members noted that these trials are industry-funded and offer a potential revenue stream for participating pharmacies. Action: Interested members to contact FutureMeds directly. Greg has the contact details.
LPC/006/2026	Nicola Appleby Sexual Health Public Health Lead – Sunderland City Council Nicola updated the group on the Sunderland LARC pilot, noting that it is now unlikely to proceed. Key barriers include the product's lack of licensure for under-18s and the high cost of indemnity insurance.

	<p>There was a discussion about the national EHC advanced service; Nicola expressed concern that the public health team may not be able to readily access the activity data. Emma queried whether the Public Health team has considered commissioning a DEPO service, the local EHC budget could be used to fund such a service. Nicola reported that spend of the local budget is still being considered and that a DEPO could be a better option than LARC. There was a brief discussion about the LARC pilot in Liverpool, the only such community pharmacy pilot in the country.</p> <p>Nicola confirmed that she is very keen for contraceptive services to move more into the community; access to GP appointments is difficult.</p> <p>Nicola described the sexual health partnership which is being established again in Sunderland; CPDandS will be represented.</p> <p>Paul referenced the possibility of a Durham community pharmacy service to treat STIs. Geraint informed Nicola of the Independent Prescriber programme and the possibilities this provides for community pharmacy services.</p> <p>Nicola reported that Sunderland is considering removing the upper age limit on its C Card scheme.</p>
LPC/007/2026	<p>North East North Cumbria community pharmacy commissioning</p> <p>Geraint provided members with the background to this topic. NENC ICBs had been invited to complete a survey (developed by Pete Horrocks) to prioritise their views on commissioning intentions for community pharmacy in 26/27. The meeting completed and submitted the survey.</p> <p>Rob expressed disappointment regarding the frequent assertion that community pharmacy can alleviate GP pressures. He noted that such references overlook the fact that the community pharmacy sector is currently operating at, and often beyond, its maximum capacity.</p> <p>A discussion was held regarding the Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing (IP) scheme in NENC. Paul raised concerns over the lack of a "level playing field," noting that current criteria prevent all pharmacy businesses from participating; this sentiment was echoed by Raminder. Conversely, Geraint suggested that initiating pilots on a smaller scale would likely secure more robust long-term prospects. Paul concluded by noting that the lack of transparency and nature of the current selection process is a concern for contractors.</p>
LPC/008/2026	<p>Minutes of the November meeting</p> <p>The content was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>
LPC/009/2026	<p>Review of the Action Log</p> <p>Members reviewed the content of the log and updated accordingly.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding the rising volume of complaints concerning patient nomination processes. It was noted that this issue is creating significant unrest among contractors and potentially compromising patient care. The committee observed that complaints escalated directly to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) by patients are often prioritised or carry greater weight in the resolution process.</p> <p>Emma provided feedback from the CPE hosted Treasurer's session on 14 January. CPE has developed a finance self-assessment toolkit for LPCs to use.</p> <p>Action: Finance subgroup to look at the CPE resources at its next meeting.</p> <p>Action: The services subgroup will continue to assess the situation regarding ABPM usage. Where appropriate, based on data analysis, current recipients will be asked to return the ABPM for redeployment to an alternative provider.</p>

LPC/010/2026	<p>Governance</p> <p>A link to the strategy/workplan on the CPDandS website was noted. Andrea confirmed that the current skills matrix indicates sufficient coverage across members and officers. It was agreed that the matrix will be reviewed at the March meeting, pending Geraint's response.</p> <p>Action: Geraint to complete the matrix and forward to Andrea. Matrix to be reviewed again at the March CPDandS meeting.</p> <p>Declaration of Interest and Members' Confidentiality forms.</p> <p>Greg reported that he would requesting members/officers to complete the documents again this year, via MS forms. He was asked to ensure that, this time, members/officers can save a copy of their submissions. Action: Greg/All</p>
LPC/011/2026	<p>Neighbourhoods</p> <p>Geraint and Greg provided feedback on the 4 December session held at the Beacon of Light. It was noted that while the Neighbourhood structure currently lacks clarity, the Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief and seek opportunities for engagement as the process evolves.</p>
LPC/012/2026	<p>LPC Boundaries Review</p> <p>Members noted that, in accordance with Governance requirements and the Review Steering Group's recommendations, CPDandS is committed to regular boundary reviews. Geraint reported the upcoming merger of Community Pharmacy North of Tyne and Community Pharmacy North Cumbria, effective 1 April 2026. Following discussion, it was resolved that the current CPDandS boundary remains appropriate. The Committee reaffirmed its policy to conduct regular reviews moving forward.</p> <p>Actions: Include as an item on the March CPDandS agenda and on the next agenda for the Regional LPC.</p> <p>Raminder noted that currently only CPDandS and CPNoT fund Geraint's ICB-level work. This must be addressed by the Regional LPC to ensure costs are shared equitably across all beneficiary LPCs and their contractors.</p> <p>Correspondence: Benchmarking Data Request: Emma updated the Committee on a data request from Asif Alrahi. Members agreed that as the requested information is already publicly available or hosted on the CPDandS website, a bespoke report would not be a cost-effective use of resources. Action: Greg to respond as such to Asif Alrahi.</p> <p>A confidential item in relation to a HR issue raised with a CPDandS member was discussed. Details are recorded separately.</p>
LPC/013/2026	<p>LPC Budget Planning 2026/27</p> <p>Lee had provided electronically details of the CPDandS account balances; they are recorded separately. Members reviewed the indicative CPE levy for 2026/27, noting a projected increase in costs. Emma advised that CPE has yet to clarify how these additional funds will be utilised. Following concerns regarding value for money, the Committee discussed the possibility of renegotiating the annual levy payable to CPE.</p> <p>There was a discussion about Category H.</p> <p>In Lee's email (see above for reference) he provided details of a recommended reserve amount and a possible surplus (details are recorded separately). Members discussed the most appropriate way of utilising the surplus which would</p>

	<p>provide maximum benefit to CPDandS pharmacies. Rob stated that he did not support a levy holiday, most contractors do not know how much they pay in levy and any savings delivered by a levy holiday would be negligible.</p> <p>A daytime training session for pharmacies was suggested. Action: Greg to survey CPDandS pharmacies to gauge interest in a daytime training session. The survey will specifically test the viability of a high-quality venue and catering package combined with backfill funding.</p> <p>The survey could also request suggestions for a suitable topic. An extra, unrelated question, could also be asked i.e. would contractors support a levy holiday?</p> <p>Action: Lee will be organising a finance sub group meeting the next few weeks to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent CPE finance briefing and documents • Options for surplus • 2026 budget planning accounting for proposed CPE levy increases
LPC/014/2026	<p>Easter 2026 Directions</p> <p>The directions had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Action: Feedback to Greg no later than noon on 19 January.</p>
LPC/015/2026	<p>Reports</p> <p>Ann and Greg reported that PSNE Ltd's bid to manage the smoking and sexual health services in Sunderland for the period March 2026 – February 2027 was successful. They are meeting shortly to begin preparatory work.</p> <p>Geraint provided details of the NENC ICB Community Pharmacy Innovation Fund. Pharmacies are invited to bid for pilot funding up to a maximum of £10k. Applicants would have to demonstrate a 2:1 return on investment.</p> <p>Action: Proposals to Geraint by 31 January.</p> <p>Geraint undertook to inform the committee of its available budget for coaches/PCN lead spend. It is a significant amount and needs to be spent by 31 March 2026. Action: Geraint.</p>
LPC/016/2026	<p>Postponed CPDandS engagement event 15 January</p> <p>Members noted that Greg has issued a survey to pharmacies to identify the causes of low attendance at the event. It was agreed that the Committee will review the findings once the data collection is complete. In the interim, it was resolved that the March and May sessions will revert to full-day meetings, with the evening training sessions suspended pending further review. Action: Greg</p>
LPC/017/2026	<p>Administration</p> <p>Meeting updates.</p> <p>PSNE Ltd</p> <p>Greg and Ann had provided an update regarding the SCC PH services earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Paul confirmed that PSNE Ltd has reaffirmed its position on retaining management fees.</p> <p>RLPC</p> <p>No significant update.</p> <p>Executive Team meeting – 5 January</p> <p>Greg had circulated a briefing electronically.</p> <p>Communications</p>

	<p>A subgroup meeting is in the diary for 28th January 2026.</p> <p>Governance A meeting will be convened shortly.</p> <p>Services Ann delivered an update, it covered ABPMs, decisions taken by the services subgroup and the proposal for a Durham Chlamydia test and treat service, utilising the local EHC budget.</p>
LPC/018/2026	<p>Any other business Geraint reiterated the 2 February deadline for sign up to the spring Covid 19 vaccination service.</p>
	<p>Date of next meeting: Thursday 19th March 2026 @ Ramside Hall Hotel. Start time: 09.30</p>