

Registered pharmacy inspection report

Pharmacy Name: Boots, 34-38 Fore Street, BRIDGWATER, Somerset,
TA6 3NG

Pharmacy reference: 1036298

Type of pharmacy: Community

Date of inspection: 24/06/2024

Pharmacy context

The pharmacy is in the town centre of Bridgwater. It sells over-the-counter medicines and dispenses NHS and private prescriptions. The pharmacy team offers advice to people about minor illnesses and long-term conditions. The pharmacy offers a range of services including flu vaccinations, the NHS New Medicine Service (NMS), the NHS Hypertension Case Finding Service and the Pharmacy First Service. The pharmacy provides medication and to drug users and provides clean needles to them through a locally commissioned needle exchange service. The pharmacy provides medicines in multi-compartment compliance packs to a small number of people to help them remember to take them at the right time. The pharmacy offers a delivery service.

Overall inspection outcome

✓ Standards met

Required Action: None

Follow this link to [find out what the inspections possible outcomes mean](#)

Summary of notable practice for each principle

Principle	Principle finding	Exception standard reference	Notable practice	Why
1. Governance	Standards met	1.2	Good practice	The pharmacy team diligently review and learn from any mistakes they make to improve the safety of the services they offer. The pharmacy team then work together to make changes to help to prevent mistakes from happening again.
2. Staff	Standards met	2.5	Good practice	The pharmacy team works well together by engaging in regular conversations to identify how improvements can be made in the pharmacy.
3. Premises	Standards met	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Services, including medicines management	Standards met	N/A	N/A	N/A
5. Equipment and facilities	Standards met	N/A	N/A	N/A

Principle 1 - Governance ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy provides its services safely and effectively. It has good systems in place to identify and manage the risks associated with its services. The pharmacy team diligently review and learn from any mistakes they make to improve the safety of the services they offer. The pharmacy team then work together to make changes to help to prevent mistakes from happening again. The pharmacy has written procedures in place to help ensure that its team members work safely. And these procedures are reviewed and updated regularly. The pharmacy asks people for their feedback on its services and responds appropriately. It has the required insurance in place to cover its services. And it keeps all the records required by law. The pharmacy keeps people's private information safe. Pharmacy team members know how to protect the safety of vulnerable people.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had good processes in place to identify, manage and reduce its risks. It had standard operating procedures (SOPs) which reflected the way the team worked. Each team member had an online learning account which held a record of the SOPs that had been read. The SOPs were reviewed regularly by both the superintendent pharmacist and the pharmacy team. Each SOP had a short quiz at the end to test the understanding of the team member. The pharmacy team could describe the activities that could not be undertaken in the absence of the responsible pharmacist (RP). Team members had clear lines of accountabilities and were clear on their job role. The pharmacy had risk assessments in place to cover its activities. And it had a written business continuity plan.

Pharmacy team members diligently recorded any mistakes they made which were picked up during the final accuracy check, known as near misses, on an online reporting system. Dispensing errors that reached the patient were reported in a more detailed way using the same online reporting tool. Team members considered why the mistake had happened and learned from their mistakes. When errors occurred, the pharmacy team discussed them and made changes to prevent them from happening again. A pharmacy technician, who was the nominated patient safety champion, completed a detailed review of errors each month. They created an action plan which was shared with the team. Progress of the action plan was monitored frequently. The patient safety champion asked members of the pharmacy for their input into the review to drive improvement. For example, a team member had identified that they were less confident about selling certain analgesics over the counter without the involvement of the pharmacist. So the team had discussed this and supported the development of their colleague to ensure sales were made safely. The pharmacy team had also taken recently taken action to improve the process of reconciling owing medicines. They ensured that the person owed medicines was regularly updated to ensure they received the medicines they needed in a timely manner.

The pharmacy received regular training materials from the superintendent pharmacist's office which shared learning on incidents that had happened in other pharmacies. Members of the pharmacy team attended regular conference calls and meetings with other nearby branches of the chain where they discussed incidents and learnings as a group.

The pharmacy had a documented procedure in place for handling complaints or feedback from people. There was information for people displayed in the retail area about how to provide the pharmacy with feedback. Any complaints were passed straight to the pharmacist or the manager to deal with. The

manager made sure to pass any compliments received to the team. Public liability and professional indemnity insurance was in place.

The pharmacy kept a record of who had acted as the responsible pharmacist (RP) each day. The correct RP notice was prominently displayed. Controlled drug (CD) registers were in order. Balance checks were completed regularly and any discrepancies were promptly rectified. A random balance check was accurate. Patient returned CDs were recorded in a separate register. The pharmacy kept records of private prescriptions on a register on the patient medication record (PMR) system and contained all legally required details. The pharmacy did not usually make emergency supplies of medicines, instead referring people to the NHS 111 online emergency prescription service. The manager gave examples of how the pharmacy team had helped people access and use the service. The pharmacy kept records of the receipt and supplies of unlicensed medicines ('specials'). Certificates of conformity were stored with all required details completed.

All team members completed yearly training on information governance and general data protection regulations. Patient data and confidential waste were dealt with in a secure manner to protect privacy and no confidential information was visible from customer areas. A privacy policy and a fair data use statement were displayed in the retail area. Team members ensured that they used their own NHS smart cards. Verbal consent was obtained before summary care records were accessed and a record of access was made on the person's PMR.

All staff were trained to an appropriate level on safeguarding. The pharmacist and the pharmacy technician had completed the Centre for Postgraduate Pharmacy Education (CPPE) level 2 safeguarding training. And all other members of the pharmacy team had completed appropriate training on safeguarding. Local contacts for the referral of concerns were available. Team members were aware of signs of concerns requiring escalation and knew what action to take.

Principle 2 - Staffing ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy employs a team of people who work effectively in their roles. Pharmacy team members complete regular learning to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. All team members have completed, or are in the process of completing, appropriate training courses. The pharmacy team works well together by engaging in regular conversations to identify how improvements can be made in the pharmacy. And they understand how to raise concerns at work.

Inspector's evidence

The RP was an employed pharmacist who worked in the pharmacy regularly. There was also a pharmacy technician and three pharmacy advisors working on the day of the inspection. A further three part-time pharmacy advisors were not working that day. One pharmacy advisor was a trainee and had recently started a dispensing course. They were given time to learn at work and felt well supported by their mentor. All other team members were fully trained and had completed an approved training course relevant to their role.

The pharmacy team were coping with the workload well and dispensing was up to date. The pharmacy team felt very well supported by the manager, the area manager and the company head office. It was clear that they worked well together and supported each other. They had regular 'huddles' to share information with each other. The team were encouraged to discuss concerns and give feedback to the manager and area manager, both of whom they found to be receptive to ideas and suggestions. The team felt able to make suggestions for change to improve efficiency and safety. Team members were aware of the internal escalation process for concerns and a whistleblowing policy was in place.

Team members were seen to give appropriate advice to people in the pharmacy. And they referred to the RP for further clarification when needed. Team members knew what tasks could not be completed if the RP was not in the pharmacy.

Team members were given time during working hours to continue to develop and learn. They accessed a variety of different learning resources. Recent learning had included reading new SOPs and learning about new NHS services. The team encouraged each other to learn and helped each other. Each team member had regular appraisals where they could discuss their progress. The company was supportive of development opportunities.

The pharmacy team were set some performance targets. They found them manageable and they did not let targets affect their professional judgement. They ensured all services provided were appropriate for the person requesting them.

Principle 3 - Premises ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy provides a safe, secure and professional environment for people to receive healthcare. The pharmacy has a soundproofed room where people can have private conversations with members of the pharmacy team. The pharmacy is adequately secured to prevent unauthorised access.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy was part of a large retail shop that was spread over two floors. Only certain areas of the shop were registered as pharmacy premises. They included the dispensary, the healthcare area, the consultation room, an office and a space on the top floor which was used to dispense multi-compartment compliance aids.

The healthcare area of pharmacy was well-presented and clean. The pharmacy team had created engaging displays to promote services provided in the pharmacy, including blood pressure testing. The healthcare counter was clear of clutter and there were health-related leaflets on display. There were seats available for people to use while they waited. There was a barrier at the end of the healthcare counter to ensure that people could not enter the dispensary without permission. The dispensary was an adequate size and well organised. There was plenty of work bench space. Stock was stored neatly on shelves around the perimeter of the dispensary. The fixtures and fittings were well maintained. The pharmacy had a consultation room that was clearly advertised. It was large enough to accommodate several people and would easily fit wheelchairs and prams. It was soundproofed to allow conversations to take place in private. It was generally locked when not in use and no medicines or personal information were stored in the room. Prescriptions awaiting collection were stored using a retrieval system and confidential information was not visible to waiting customers. Lighting was appropriate and the temperature was satisfactory for the provision of healthcare and the storage of medicines.

Principle 4 - Services ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy supplied medicines to people safely. And it ensures it gives appropriate advice to people to make sure they use medicines correctly. The pharmacy team make sure that people with different needs can access its various services. Team members take steps to identify people prescribed high-risk medicines to ensure that they are given additional information. The pharmacy obtains its medicines from reputable suppliers. It stores them securely and makes regular checks to ensure that they are still suitable for supply. The pharmacy accepts unwanted medicines and disposes of them appropriately.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had step-free access and was wheelchair accessible. It had an automatic door. Plentiful parking was available nearby. The pharmacy provided additional support for people with disabilities, such as producing large print labels. A range of health-related posters and leaflets were displayed. Team members explained that if a person requested a service not offered by the pharmacy at the time, they referred them to other nearby pharmacies or providers, calling ahead to ensure the service could be provided there. Up-to-date signposting resources and details of local support agencies were accessed online.

The pharmacy had a clear flow to ensure prescriptions were dispensed safely. Team members used baskets to store dispensed prescriptions and medicines to prevent transfer between patients as well as to organise the workload. The pharmacy used an automated dispensing system to dispense a proportion of its prescriptions where medicines were dispensed and checked electronically. Safeguards in the system mean that any incorrectly scanned medicines were rejected and the prescription could not be completed until the correct medicine was scanned.

Coloured alert cards were used to highlight prescriptions containing fridge items and CDs in schedules 2 and 3. There were also coloured cards to highlight prescriptions containing high-risk medicines including lithium, warfarin and methotrexate. This prompted the pharmacist to have a conversation with the person receiving them to ensure they had had blood tests recently and give additional advice as needed. The pharmacist often made records of this advice on the PMR. The RP said that they routinely spoke to the parent or guardian or children receiving medicines to ensure they knew the correct dose and to give additional information.

The pharmacy dispensed medicines into multi-compartment compliance aids to help people remember to take their medicines at the correct time. Each person requesting compliance aids was assessed for suitability. The workload was organised and well planned. A sample of compliance aids was inspected. Each compliance aid was clearly labelled and contained a description of the tablets included so that they could be easily identified. Patient information leaflets (PILs) were supplied each month. 'When required' medicines were dispensed in boxes and team members were aware of what could and could not be placed in trays. A record of any changes made was kept on a patient information sheet, which was available for the pharmacist during the clinical checking process.

The pharmacy offered a range of additional services including flu vaccinations. The pharmacist had completed the required training to administer vaccinations safely. The pharmacy supplied opioid

replacement medicines to people, some of whom were supervised taking their medication. The RP liaised with the drug and alcohol team and the person's key worker in the event of any concerns or issues. The pharmacy offered the NHS New Medicines Service. The RP contacted people prescribed new medicines to check how they were getting on and to offer any advice needed. The pharmacy was actively providing the new NHS Pharmacy First service. The team had supportive information available to support the safe delivery of this service, including current versions of the national patient group directions. And there were checklists available to support team members in triaging people attending for the service.

The pharmacy delivered medicines to people's homes using employed drivers. The drivers made a record of each delivery using an online system. If people were not home, the medicines were returned to the pharmacy and team members contacted the person to rearrange delivery.

The pharmacy team was aware of the risks associated with people becoming pregnant whilst taking sodium valproate and topiramate and the need for a Pregnancy Prevention Programme (PPP). The pharmacy team took care not to apply labels over the warning cards on the boxes of valproate products when dispensing. They were aware of the new requirement to only dispense valproate in original packs to ensure people receiving it could see the warning about the risks of becoming pregnant whilst taking it. The RP had regular conversations with the people at risk who were prescribed valproate to ensure they were on adequate contraception. And generally, records were made on the PMR.

The dispensary stock was arranged alphabetically on shelves. It was well organised. Date checking was undertaken regularly and records were kept. Spot checks revealed no date-expired medicines or mixed batches. Prescriptions containing omissions were appropriately managed and the prescription was kept with the balance until it was collected. Stock was obtained from reputable sources. Records of recalls and alerts were actioned promptly. Relevant alerts were printed and stored with any quarantined stock.

CDs were stored in accordance with legal requirements in approved cabinets. A denaturing kit was available so that any CDs awaiting destruction could be processed. Date-expired and patient-returned CDs were clearly marked and segregated in the cabinet. The pharmacy had a separate register for patient-returned CDs and destroyed them promptly in the presence of a witness. The dispensary fridges were clean, tidy and well organised and records of temperatures were maintained. The maximum and minimum temperatures were within the required range.

Principle 5 - Equipment and facilities ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy has the appropriate equipment and facilities to provide its services. It keeps these clean, tidy and well-maintained. The pharmacy uses its equipment in a way that protects people's confidential information.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had up-to-date written reference resources available including the British National Formulary (BNF). Team members had access to the internet to support them in obtaining current information. The pharmacy's computer system was password protected. And information displayed on computer monitors was suitably protected from unauthorised view.

The pharmacy had clean equipment available for counting and measuring medicines. It highlighted equipment for measuring and counting higher-risk medicines. This helped to reduce any risk of cross contamination.

A range of consumables and equipment to support the services provided by the pharmacy was available within the consultation room. Electrical equipment was visibly free of wear and tear and in good working order. The sinks and fridges in the dispensary were clean and well-maintained.

What do the summary findings for each principle mean?

Finding	Meaning
✓ Excellent practice	The pharmacy demonstrates innovation in the way it delivers pharmacy services which benefit the health needs of the local community, as well as performing well against the standards.
✓ Good practice	The pharmacy performs well against most of the standards and can demonstrate positive outcomes for patients from the way it delivers pharmacy services.
✓ Standards met	The pharmacy meets all the standards.
Standards not all met	The pharmacy has not met one or more standards.