

Registered pharmacy inspection report

Pharmacy Name: Pearl Chemist, 103 High Road, Byfleet, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 7QX

Pharmacy reference: 1036858

Type of pharmacy: Community

Date of inspection: 09/07/2024

Pharmacy context

This NHS community pharmacy is set in Byfleet village and has recently changed hands. The pharmacy opens six days a week. It sells medicines over the counter. It dispenses people's prescriptions. And it delivers medicines to people who have difficulty in leaving their homes. The pharmacy supplies multi-compartment compliance packs (compliance packs) to a few people who need help managing their medicines. It delivers the NHS Pharmacy First service to help people who have a minor illness or need an urgent supply of a medicine. And people can visit the pharmacy to get their flu jab or have their blood pressure checked.

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	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Staff	Standards met	2.4	Good practice	Members of the pharmacy team work well together and have a work culture of openness, honesty and learning.
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 manages its risks appropriately. It has written instructions to help its team members work safely. It keeps the records it needs to by law. It has the insurance it needs to protect people if things do go wrong. And people can share their experiences of using the pharmacy and its services to help it do things better. People who work in the pharmacy usually log and review the mistakes they make to try to stop the same sort of things happening again. They can explain what they do, what they are responsible for and when they might seek help. They generally keep people's private information safe. And they understand their role in protecting vulnerable people.

Inspector's evidence

People who worked at the pharmacy understood what they should do if the pharmacy needed to close. They also knew what to do to make sure people could access the care they needed if the pharmacy could not open. The pharmacy had a notice that told people who the responsible pharmacist (RP) was at that time. It had standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the services it provided. And these were reviewed by a team at the pharmacy's head office. But it could do more to make sure the responsibilities of the pharmacy team were clearly described in its SOPs. Members of the pharmacy team were required to read and sign the SOPs relevant to their roles to show they understood them and agreed to follow them. And they knew what they could and couldn't do, what they were responsible for and when they might seek help. A team member explained that they couldn't hand out prescriptions or sell medicines if a pharmacist wasn't present. And they would refer repeated requests for the same or similar products, such as medicines liable to abuse, misuse or overuse, to a pharmacist.

The pharmacy assembled a few compliance packs on its premises. But most of its repeat prescriptions were assembled off-site at one of the company's hub pharmacies. And this meant the pharmacy team could spend more time talking to people about their medicines and deliver other services. The pharmacy had processes to deal with the dispensing mistakes that were found before reaching a person (near misses) and those which weren't (dispensing errors). The pharmacy team discussed, reviewed and usually recorded the mistakes it made to learn from them, and help stop the same sort of things happening again. And, for example, it separated a medicine used to treat high blood pressure and an antidepressant that looked alike and whose names sounded alike from one another on the shelves to help reduce the chances of the wrong one being picked.

The pharmacy had a complaints procedure. People could share their views and make suggestions about how the pharmacy could do things better. They had left online reviews about their experiences of using the pharmacy and its services. And, for example, the pharmacy team tried to order a person's preferred make of a prescription medicine when it was asked to do so. The pharmacy had appropriate insurance arrangements in place, including professional indemnity, for the services it provided. It kept appropriate records to show which pharmacist was the RP and when. It had an adequately maintained electronic controlled drug (CD) register. And the stock levels recorded in the register were checked regularly. The pharmacy hadn't supplied any unlicensed medicinal products since the new owner took over. The pharmacy team was required to record the emergency supplies it made and the private prescriptions it supplied on its computer. But the details of the prescriber were incomplete in a few of the private prescription records seen. The RP gave an assurance these records would be maintained as they should be.

People using the pharmacy couldn't see other people's personal information. The company that owned the pharmacy was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. The pharmacy had policies on information governance and safeguarding. And it had arrangements to make sure confidential information was stored and disposed of securely. But people's details weren't always crossed out or removed from the unwanted medicines returned to it before being disposed of. Members of the pharmacy team were required to complete training on data protection and safeguarding. They knew what to do or who they would make aware if they had a concern about the safety of a child or a vulnerable person. And the pharmacy's consulting room could be used by someone if they felt they were in danger.

Principle 2 - Staffing ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy has enough people in its team to deliver safe and effective care. Members of the pharmacy team work well together and have a work culture of openness, honesty and learning. And they use their judgement to make decisions about what is right for the people they care for. The pharmacy team is comfortable about giving feedback on how to improve the pharmacy's services. And it knows how to raise a concern if it has one.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy team consisted of a manager, two part-time pharmacists, two dispensing assistants and a medicines counter assistant. The pharmacy depended upon its team, locum pharmacists and colleagues from one of the company's other pharmacies to cover absences and provide support. The people working at the pharmacy during the inspection included the manager, the RP and two dispensing assistants. The RP was one of the pharmacy's regular pharmacists. And they supervised and oversaw the supply of medicines and advice given by the pharmacy team. The manager was responsible for leading the pharmacy and its team. And they were a trained dispensing assistant.

A team member described the questions they would ask when making over-the-counter recommendations. They explained that they would refer requests for treatments for animals, babies or young children, people who were pregnant or breastfeeding and people with long-term health conditions to a pharmacist. Members of the pharmacy team were required to do accredited training relevant to their roles after completing a probationary period if they hadn't done so already. But evidence of a team member's training with the previous owner wasn't available at the time of the inspection. And another team member was having trouble in trying to continue the accredited training they had started with their previous employer. The manager gave an assurance that these training matters would be resolved.

Team members could discuss their development needs with their manager when the pharmacy wasn't busy. And they could complete training to keep their knowledge up to date or attend online meetings with teams from other pharmacies to share learning. The pharmacy had a culture that encouraged its team members to be open and honest about the mistakes they made so they could do things better. This meant it could improve the safety of the services it offered. Members of the pharmacy team didn't feel that any targets or incentives stopped them from making decisions that kept people safe. They worked well together. They helped each other make sure people were seen to as quickly as possible and prescriptions were dispensed safely. And they were up to date with their workload. Team members knew the pharmacy had a whistleblowing policy and who they should raise a concern with if they had one. They were comfortable about making suggestions on how to improve the pharmacy and its services. And, for example, the pharmacy now had more team members following feedback to the new owner.

Principle 3 - Premises ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy provides a suitable environment to deliver its services from. And people can receive services in private when they need to.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy was air-conditioned, bright and secure. And its public-facing area was appropriately presented. The pharmacy had a counter, a dispensary, a kitchenette, a retail area, a stockroom and a toilet. And it had just enough storage and workspace for its current workload. But its fixtures in the areas that people couldn't see were dated. And some remedial work was needed to repair its ceiling and a small leak at the rear of the dispensary. The pharmacy had a consulting room for the services it offered that required one or if someone needed to speak to a team member in private. And this was locked when not in use to make sure the things in it were kept secure. The pharmacy had some sinks and a supply of hot and cold water. And its team was responsible for keeping its premises clean and tidy.

Principle 4 - Services ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy provides services that people can access easily. Its working practices are generally safe and effective. And it delivers medicines to people's homes and keeps records to show that it has delivered the right medicine to the right person. The pharmacy gets its medicines from reputable sources. And it stores them appropriately and securely. Members of the pharmacy team are friendly and helpful. They usually dispose of people's unwanted medicines properly. And they largely carry out checks to make sure the pharmacy's medicines are safe and fit for purpose.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had an automatic door. Its entrance was level with the outside pavement. And these things made it easier for people who had trouble climbing stairs enter the building. The pharmacy had a notice that told people when it was open. And it had a seating area for people to use when they wanted to wait. The pharmacy team asked people who were prescribed a new medicine if they wanted to speak to the pharmacist about it. The pharmacy dealt with NHS Pharmacy First referrals. People benefited from this service as they could access the advice and medication they needed when they needed to. And this helped to reduce pressure on local GP surgeries to deal with people's urgent requests for medicines or treatments for some minor illnesses. Members of the pharmacy team were friendly and helpful. And they took the time to listen to people. So, they could help and advise them, and signpost them to another provider if a service wasn't available at the pharmacy.

The pharmacy offered a local delivery service to people who couldn't attend its premises in person. And it kept an electronic record to show the right medicine was delivered to the right person. The pharmacy provided winter flu jabs. And its team was already thinking about how to prepare for the upcoming season. The pharmacy used a disposable and tamper-evident system for people who received their medicines in compliance packs. And its team assessed whether a person needed a compliance pack. The team members responsible for making up people's prescriptions tried to keep the dispensing workstations tidy. They used plastic containers to separate each person's prescription and medication. They referred to prescriptions when labelling and picking medicines. They initialled each dispensing label. They routinely provided patient information leaflets with the medicines they dispensed. And assembled prescriptions were not handed out until they were checked by the RP who also initialled the dispensing label. The pharmacy used clear bags for dispensed CDs and refrigerated lines to allow the pharmacy team member handing over the medication and the person collecting the prescription to see what was being supplied and query any items. The pharmacy used reminder stickers or notes to alert its team when these items needed to be added or if extra counselling was needed. And assembled CD prescriptions awaiting collection were usually marked with the date the 28-day legal limit would be reached to help make sure supplies were made lawfully.

Members of the pharmacy team knew that women or girls able to have children mustn't take a valproate unless there was a pregnancy prevention programme in place. They knew that people in this at-risk group who were prescribed a valproate needed to be counselled on its contraindications. They were aware of the rules on dispensing valproate-containing medicines in the manufacturer's original full pack. And they had the resources they needed when they dispensed a valproate.

The pharmacy used recognised wholesalers to obtain its pharmaceutical stock. And it kept most of its

medicines and medical devices within their original manufacturer's packaging. Members of the pharmacy team marked the containers of liquid medicines with the date they opened them. They checked the expiry dates of medicines as they dispensed them and at regular intervals which they recorded to show they had done so. The pharmacy stored its stock, which needed to be refrigerated, at an appropriate temperature. It stored its CDs, which weren't exempt from safe custody requirements, securely. And its team were required to record the destruction of the CDs that people returned to it. The pharmacy had procedures for handling the unwanted medicines people brought back to it. And these were kept separate from the pharmacy's stock and were placed in a pharmaceutical waste bin. But a patient-returned cytotoxic medicine was found in a waste bin not intended for hazardous medicines. The pharmacy had a process for dealing with the alerts and recalls about medicines and medical devices issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). And the manager described the actions the team took when the pharmacy received an MHRA medicines recall. But the pharmacy team could do more to record what actions it took.

Principle 5 - Equipment and facilities ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy generally has the equipment and the facilities it needs to provide its services safely. And its team makes sure the equipment it uses is clean and suitable for what it's being used for.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had some glass measures to measure out liquids. And it had equipment for counting loose tablets and capsules too. Members of the pharmacy team cleaned the equipment they used to measure out or count medicines before they used it. The pharmacy team had access to up-to-date reference sources. And it could contact the National Pharmacy Association to ask for information and guidance. The pharmacy had a medical refrigerator to store pharmaceutical stock requiring refrigeration. And its team checked and recorded the refrigerator's maximum and minimum temperatures on the days the pharmacy was open. The pharmacy had suitable equipment for the Pharmacy First service as well as for measuring a person's blood pressure. And this equipment appeared to be well maintained. The pharmacy restricted access to its computers and patient medication record system. And only authorised team members could use them when they put in their password. The pharmacy positioned its computer screens so they could only be seen by a member of the pharmacy team. And its team members made sure their NHS smartcards were stored securely when they weren't working.

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.