

Registered pharmacy inspection report

Pharmacy Name: MEDIRECT2U, 123 High Street, London, W3 6LY

Pharmacy reference: 9011812

Type of pharmacy: Internet / distance selling

Date of inspection: 03/08/2022

Pharmacy context

This is an internet pharmacy in a basement unit below an internet café. It currently serves people in nearby communities. And it is closed to the public. The pharmacy dispenses NHS prescriptions. And it sells medicines and provides health advice through its website <https://medirect2u.co.uk/> It delivers its medicines to people by face-to-face delivery.

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	N/A	N/A	N/A
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 has adequate procedures to identify risk. It has written procedures to help ensure that it works safely. And it has insurance to cover its services. The pharmacy can keep the records it needs to. It protects people's private information. And it knows how to protect the safety of vulnerable people.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy was closed to the public. And it offered its services over the internet. The most frequent visitors to the pharmacy were delivery drivers from the pharmacy's wholesalers. The pharmacy had opened approximately five months previously but had not started dispensing prescriptions until three months after opening. But while activity was low it was increasing. And the team was in the process of promoting the pharmacy to local people. Pharmacists generally worked alone, and they kept the pharmacy clean. They had access to hand washing facilities and hand sanitiser. And they had access to personal protective equipment in the form of gloves and masks if they needed them.

The pharmacy had an NHS contract. And at the time of the inspection, all the prescriptions it dispensed were NHS electronic prescriptions. It could also dispense private prescriptions. But it had not dispensed any yet. People were required to register their details on the pharmacy's website. And after they gave their consent and their doctor's details, the pharmacy could access their prescriptions. The RP also requested repeat prescriptions for people who wanted him to. People requested their prescriptions through the website or through the pharmacy's smartphone 'app'. Not many people had used the app yet, but the RP hoped that this would increase as the business grew. People could also use the app to track the progress of their prescription and set up reminders to place their repeat requests. The pharmacy delivered people's medicines directly to them. It generally did this on the day after it had received the prescription. And it had occasionally delivered more urgent medicines the same day as it had received the prescription. And so most of its regular customers lived within a reasonable driving distance of the pharmacy. The pharmacy had a system in place for recording its mistakes. But it had not yet had to use it much. The RP agreed that it was important to keep a record of any mistakes he and his fellow pharmacists made. And to review them regularly. He recognised that it was important to learn as much as possible from mistakes. The RP and inspector discussed that records should identify what could be done differently next time to prevent future mistakes and promote continued improvement. The pharmacy had standard operating procedures (SOPs) in place. The RP had placed his RP notice on display showing his name and registration number as required by law.

People could give feedback on the quality of the pharmacy's services. The pharmacy's website provided information on how people could contact the pharmacy if they had a complaint, or if they needed to speak to the SP. The RP also sought feedback through the pharmacy's app. In general, the pharmacy team had received many positive comments from people. It had received positive comments from people who preferred not to have to visit a pharmacy to get their medicines. The pharmacy had responded to feedback on the quality of the pharmacy's promotional leaflet. And it had amended the content to make it clearer and more accurate.

The RP could provide details of the local NHS complaints advocacy service and the Patient Advice and Liaison service (PALS) if necessary. But pharmacists generally dealt with customer concerns at the time. The pharmacy had professional indemnity and public liability arrangements so it could provide

insurance protection for the pharmacy's services and its customers. Those arrangements were in place until 20 March 2023. It is understood that the pharmacy will renew its insurance arrangements for the following year when the current insurance cover is due to expire. The pharmacy kept its records in the way it was meant to. This included its RP record. It had CD registers in place and a system for recording its private prescriptions and its emergency supplies. But it had not yet had to use them. The RP recognised that the pharmacy should ensure that it keeps all of its essential records in the way that it should such as those for recording CDs which had been returned for destruction by people.

The RP understood the need to protect people's confidentiality. And he understood that it was necessary to observe GDPR and data protection laws by ensuring that he and his colleagues kept their knowledge up to date. The pharmacy currently delivered its medicines face-to-face, using a delivery driver. But it also proposed that in future it may decide to post its medicines. And when this happened, it would need to use plain packaging to prevent the contents from being identifiable. Confidential paper waste was shredded. And online systems were encrypted. People did not generally enter the pharmacy, so people's prescription details could be kept secure. The RP had completed appropriate safeguarding training. He knew where to report any concerns. And could access details for the relevant safeguarding authorities online. But he had not had any specific safeguarding concerns to report.

Principle 2 - Staffing ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy has enough staff with the right skills to manage its workload. The pharmacists support one another. And they keep staffing under review to ensure that the quality of the pharmacy's services remains safe and effective.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy team consisted of three pharmacists who shared the provision of services between them. They took it in turns to cover the pharmacy's trading hours. Each one acting as the responsible pharmacist (RP) on their shift. The pharmacists were also directors of the company which owned the pharmacy. And one of the pharmacists was the superintendent (SP). The pharmacists ran the pharmacy independently of the internet café and tended to work alone. But they also helped one another to ensure that they covered all of the pharmacy's shifts. And to ensure that they could complete their tasks. The RP on duty at the time of the inspection felt supported by the other pharmacist directors. But he could manage the pharmacy's activity on his own. And he was up to date with the workload. This included attending to people's queries and requests on the pharmacy's smartphone app or online. The RP described how they would introduce additional team members as appropriate. They would review the need for additional staff if the workload increased to a stage where it needed more staff to manage it. And maintain the quality of the pharmacy's services. The SP arrived at the pharmacy towards the end of the inspection to take over the next shift. He had produced the pharmacy's SOPs with the help of his colleagues and tailored them to the pharmacy's ways of working. The RP was able to make his own professional decisions in the interest of patients. He could also raise concerns with the company's other directors if he needed to.

Principle 3 - Premises ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy's premises provide a suitable environment for people to receive its services. They are sufficiently, tidy, clean and secure.

Inspector's evidence

The team accessed the pharmacy via a flight of descending stairs to the basement where it was located. There was a door at the top of the stairs to separate it from the internet café above. The basement had two large rooms. One was used as the dispensary. And the other was used for general storage, administrative work and as a staff rest area for pharmacy team members only. Both rooms had lockable doors. And they were well lit. The pharmacy had an area for checking off, assembling, and accuracy checking medicines. And an area for packing medicines for delivery. It also had a computer desk. The pharmacy had shelves above for storing medicines and other items. And an area for storing medicines ready for delivery. The pharmacists kept the pharmacy clean. And stock on shelves was stored tidily. The pharmacy had its own staff facilities. At the time of the inspection room temperatures were appropriate to keep staff comfortable and were suitable for the storage of medicines. The RP and inspector discussed the importance of keeping work surfaces clutter free.

Principle 4 - Services ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy provides its services safely. And it makes them adequately accessible for people. The pharmacy gets its medicines and medical devices from appropriate sources. And it makes the necessary checks to ensure that the pharmacy's medicines and devices are safe to use to protect people's health and wellbeing. The pharmacy stores its medicines properly.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy's website gave its times of operation. And a description of its services. The pharmacy could order people's repeat prescriptions for them. And the majority of people using its services lived within the local area. The pharmacy provided multi-compartment compliance packs for people living at home who needed them. The compliance packs used were disposable and clean. They were labelled with the person's name, the name of the medicine and the time the medicine was to be taken. Compliance packs had also been labelled with a description of each medicine, including colour and shape, to help people to identify them. And patient information leaflets (PILs) were supplied with new medicines and generally with regular repeat medicines. But the labelling directions on compliance packs did not give the required advisory information to help people take their medicines properly. The RP gave people advice on a range of matters. He did this through the pharmacy's online chat facility or by telephone. And he gave appropriate advice to anyone taking high-risk medicines. The pharmacy did not have anyone currently taking sodium valproate. The RP was aware of the precautions he would need to take, and counselling he would give, if it was to be prescribed for someone new. When selling medicines online, the pharmacist asked people for information about their other medicines and their symptoms. And any other questions relevant to what they were requesting. He did this to make sure the medicines would be safe and appropriate for them. And the RP monitored the amount and frequency of requests for pharmacy (P) medicines to make sure people's health was protected.

The pharmacy obtained its medicines and medical devices from suppliers holding the appropriate licences. The team stored its medicines, appropriately and in their original containers. And stock on the shelves was tidy and organised. The RP understood the need to date-check the pharmacy's stocks regularly. And he knew to keep records to help him manage the process effectively. A random sample of stock checked by the inspector was in date. In general, short-dated stock was identified and highlighted. And the RP agreed that he would put any out-of-date and patient returned medicines into dedicated waste containers. The pharmacy stored items in a fridge as appropriate. And it delivered its fridge items in packaging which would keep the medicines at the appropriate temperature. The inspection took place during a period of hot summer weather. And the RP described how the pharmacy delivered its insulin to patients in medical grade cool packs to ensure that they were kept within the required temperature range when out for delivery. The pharmacy monitored its fridge temperatures to ensure that the medication inside was kept within the correct temperature range. The pharmacy had a system for responding to drug recalls and safety alerts. And the RP agreed that it was important to check for any recalled stock every day. The pharmacy had not had any stock affected by recent recalls.

Principle 5 - Equipment and facilities ✓ Standards met

Summary findings

The pharmacy has the equipment and facilities it needs to provide services safely. And it keeps them clean. The pharmacy uses its facilities and equipment to keep people's private information safe.

Inspector's evidence

The pharmacy had the appropriate equipment for counting tablets and capsules and for measuring liquids. The RP had access to a range of up-to-date reference sources. And he had access to PPE, in the form of sanitiser, face masks and gloves, which were appropriate for use in pharmacies.

The pharmacy had one computer terminal. The computer was password protected. And the RP used his own smart card when working on PMRs, so that he could maintain an accurate audit trail. And ensure that access to patient records was appropriate and secure.

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.