



Community Pharmacy Essex Newsletter

Date:21/07/2025

This newsletter is sent as required and contains useful information for community pharmacy owners in Essex.

In this update; Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework Survey Closes 31st July 2025; All Change for Essex ICBs; Committee Member Intro; Pharmacy Leadership: Join the Conversation; Pharmacies: Social Media!; Off-Site Provision for the Hypertension; Independent Prescribing; Understanding Health Improvement Level 2 award; Save the Date; News you may have missed

Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) article here

As a pharmacy contractor, staying on top of your NHS contractual requirements is part of the job. That's why taking the time now to complete the **Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) screening questionnaire**, before the deadline closes is essential: It has been a contractual requirement to complete the questionnaire since late 2020.

What is CPAF – and why does it matter?

The CPAF is an **annual contract monitoring tool** used by NHS England to check that we are meeting our requirements under the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF). Please note that you only have to achieve **level 2** for compliance: You **do not** need to achieve level 3 as this simply shows that you are exceeding the contract requirements without additional remuneration.



Where can you find the CPAF survey?

You should have received a **link to the CPAF screening questionnaire via NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA)**. It will have gone to the shared NHSmail account for your pharmacy, to help:

- Searched "CPAF" in your premises NHSmail inbox
- Looked for the **email from NHSBSA** with the subject line that includes "CPAF Screening Questionnaire"
- Clicked the unique survey link from there

Can't find your CPAF link? Don't panic.

If you've searched your NHSmail and still can't find the survey, you should **contact NHSBSA directly** at: nhsbsa.pharmacysupport@nhs.net

If you **fail to complete the CPAF questionnaire**, your pharmacy may be **selected for a full CPAF questionnaire, and possible contract monitoring visit**.

The deadline for submitting the CPAF screening questionnaire is: **Thursday, July 31st, 2025**, however we do not recommend leaving it to the deadline as systems have been known to fail.

Please remember to save or take a screenshot of your submission or confirmation email for reference.

East of England ICB reconfiguration

You may have seen in the press that Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) are required to reduce their running costs by an average of 50% this financial year. In our region the ICBs have reviewed their footprints to be able to achieve this through efficiencies and shared resources, and there will be a single Essex ICB from April 2026.

Community Pharmacy Essex has been a single Essex entity throughout, and we welcome the opportunity to work with a single ICB.



We are still working through the details of what this will mean for the local NHS, although seen in conjunction with the NHS 10 year plan there are several opportunities for community pharmacy services to support prevention and care in neighbourhoods, closer to patients' homes: We are already in discussion with those involved in the ICB transformation and have presented proposals for new community pharmacy services, in addition to encouraging better system-wide use of current contractual advanced services.

We will share further information with you as it becomes available. Meanwhile, please be mindful if you have any direct communications with ICB staff: this is an uncertain time for many of those currently employed by the ICBs, and a large number of redundancies are expected.

Social Media Presence

Did you know that **Community Pharmacy Essex** is now active on **LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook**?

Find us on all platforms at: @CommunityPharmacyEssex

We'll be sharing content that supports your work, highlights important services, and celebrates the great things happening in pharmacies across Essex. Give us a follow, like, or share—we'd love to see you there!

Off-Site Provision for the Hypertension Advanced Service

We've received a few queries recently regarding off-site provision of the Hypertension Advanced Service. and its off-site provision. We have worked with local ICBs to try and make this a straightforward process, but despite their best efforts it does currently have to go through a regional process. The application form and supporting documentation are on our website at

[Community Pharmacy Hypertension Advanced Service Off Site Provision](#)

You need to submit your request at least **four weeks** before the date you need approval.

We sincerely hope that the arrangements will be reviewed and simplified following the ICBs' restructuring, in order to meet local population health needs.

Independent Prescribing

NHS England Workforce Training and Education have released details of the **funded independent prescribing courses for 2025–2026**.

These courses are available right up until March 2026, with many universities offering different start dates throughout the year.

Further information is available on the [NHS England website](#).

Understanding Health Improvement Level2 award: Are you meeting contract requirements?

Many of you are focussing on your Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPAF) survey, and will have come across this statement in Q13, level 2:

“The pharmacy has an appointed health and wellbeing leader from the pharmacy team (who has completed the relevant training). If no health and wellbeing leader is in place, the pharmacy is actively training or recruiting staff to ensure one is in place within 6 months”

The “relevant training” is the Royal Society for Public Health Understanding Health Improvement Level 2 award, and we are pleased to say that the discounted offer through **Buttercups Training** that we negotiated earlier this year has been extended for a further three months.

If you found yourself hesitating over *honestly* answering question 13 level 2 on the CPAF survey, or if you want to develop your team further to improve your income from wellbeing services, please contact us at office@cpesx.org.uk for more information and to enrol at the discounted rate.

PCN Leads



We were thrilled to bring together our incredible MSE PCN/INT (Primary Care Network/Integrated Neighbourhood Team) Leads for their quarterly day of development and learning.

The day was filled with energy, shared experiences and a presentation from the ICB's Ali Birch, head of Connected Pathways.

One of the standout features was our **workshop that focused on navigating difficult conversations with other healthcare professionals (GPs, Practice Managers and Clinical Directors)**. Whether it was managing emotionally charged discussions, challenging misinformation, offering constructive feedback, or addressing sensitive issues with empathy, the sessions gave everyone a toolkit to take back to their teams.

The workshops weren't just about theory — they sparked real, practical dialogue, encouraging attendees to reflect on their own communication styles, support one another. It was such a valuable space to practice scenarios that often feel uncomfortable.

Beyond the workshops, the day offered collaboration, idea sharing, and a collective look ahead at how community pharmacy can further integrate into the PCNs and Neighbourhood teams.



News you may have missed

Changes to Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Service Eligibility Reminder

Contractors are reminded that there have been changes in the eligibility criteria for free LFD tests since June 2025, and many patient groups that had previously been eligible for NHS-funded test kits will now need to purchase kits if they wish to test.

NHSBSA will NOT reimburse contractors for any tests, or pay service fee, for people who do not meet the new eligibility criteria.

For more details, click [here](#).

Shape the Future of Pharmacy Leadership: Join the Conversation

The UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board is inviting pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and wider pharmacy team members from across the UK to contribute to the next steps in the discussions about the future of pharmacy professional leadership

You can find out more about the Board's work, at: [Independent UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board to strengthen collaboration | Join the Conversation \(scwcsu.nhs.uk\)](#)

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