

Community Pharmacy provision across BOB

Background

1. Community pharmacy makes up one of the four pillars of the primary care system in England, along with general practice, optical services and dentistry. It provides dispensing and selling of medicines as well as other NHS and publicly funded services including hypertension finding, new medicines review and the new Pharmacy First service.
2. Community pharmacy operates on a contractor model similar to other primary care providers. This means community pharmacies are usually independent businesses contracted by the NHS to provide certain services for local populations. Community pharmacy is funded through a complex mix of income streams. The Drug Tariff sets out the remuneration and reimbursement that pharmacies can expect from the NHS as part of their contract work under the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework¹. On top of this, many will receive additional income from both NHS and non-NHS sources.
3. In July 2022, BOB ICB assumed the delegated responsibility for commissioning pharmaceutical services.
4. Across BOB there are 252 community pharmacies of which 7 are distance selling pharmacies, 15 pharmacies are offering over 72hrs of opening hours with one offering 100hrs of opening time.

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNAs)

5. Since April 2013, every Health and Wellbeing Board in England has a statutory duty to publish and keep up-to-date a statement of the needs for pharmaceutical services for the population in its area.
6. These PNAs² are used by Integrated Care Boards to make decisions on which NHS-funded services need to be provided by local community pharmacies. They may also be used by bodies involved in commissioning local health services to identify gaps in relation to local priorities.

¹ [NHS England » Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework 2019-2024](#)

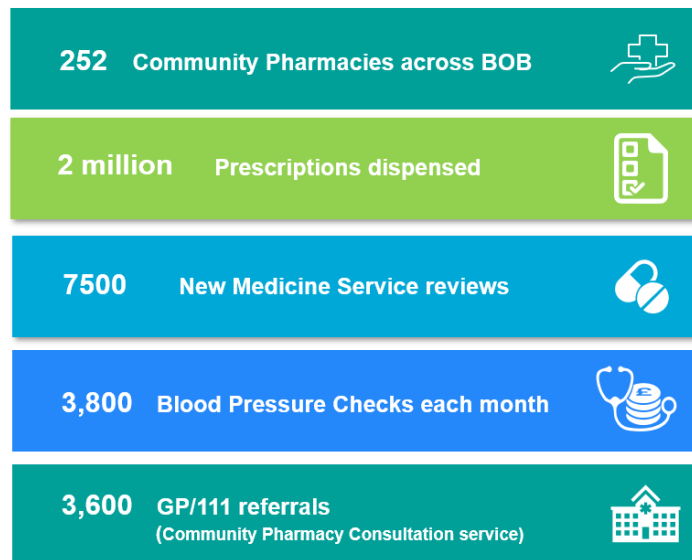
² See Appendix 1

The Changing face of community pharmacy

7. In January 2023, LloydsPharmacy announced it would withdraw pharmacy services from all Sainsbury's supermarkets with many of its other community pharmacies sold to new owners. This has contributed to approximately 20% of BOB pharmacies having new owners.
8. As a result BOB ICB has now seen an increase in the number of independent owner/small chains as well as distance selling pharmacies that works exclusively at a distance from patients. DSPs includes mail order and internet pharmacies that remotely manage patients medicine logistics and distribution.
9. Whilst Community Pharmacies are still the core provider of dispensing prescriptions we are now seeing more face to face clinical services delivered by community pharmacy including a hypertension screening service, new medicines service and a oral contraceptive service. More recently we have seen the launch on 30 January 2024 of the Pharmacy First service whereby community pharmacy can see, and if appropriate, treat 7 common conditions with antibiotics so supporting access to primary care services and relieving pressures on GPs.

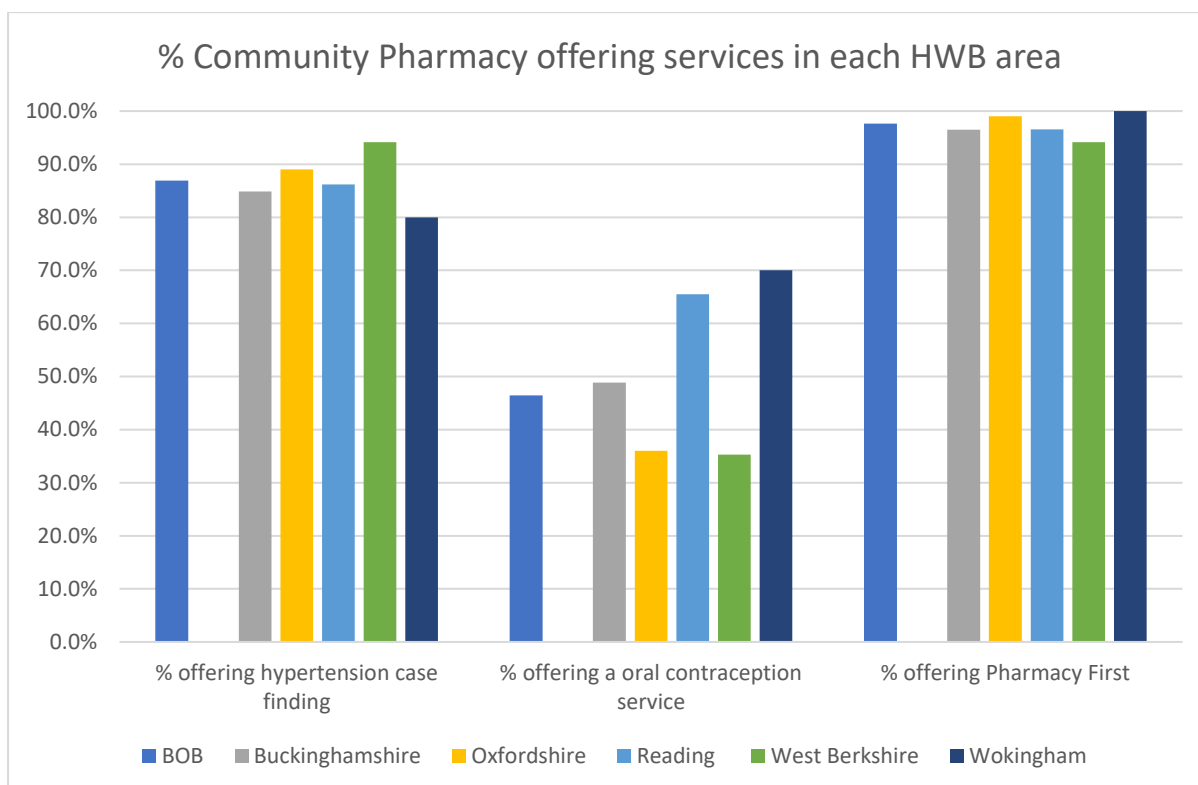
Service Provision across BOB

10. BOB Community Pharmacy delivers the following³ on a monthly basis



11. There remains good access to these services with sign up to deliver the Pharmacy First service with only two high street pharmacies choosing not to deliver the service and the other remaining pharmacies being those that are distance selling within BOB. The public can find out which pharmacies are providing what services by using the NHS service finder. [Find services near you - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
12. Community Pharmacy has also played an important role in both the flu and the COVID vaccination programme offering additional access local to these services.

³ Correct on 1 February 2024



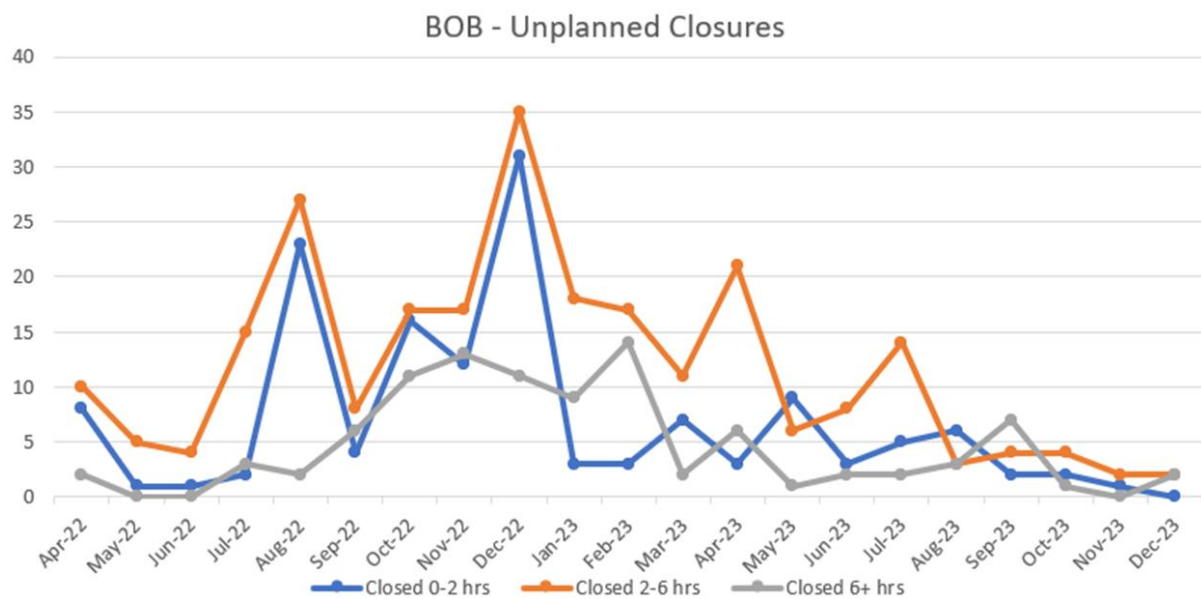
This information is correct on 1 February 2024

Pharmacy closures

13. Across BOB we have seen the closure of 11 pharmacies since April 23 with two pharmacies opening during this time.
14. Where a contractor wishes to withdraw from a pharmaceutical list they are required to give notice to the ICB:
 - pharmacies with 40 core opening hours – at least three months
 - pharmacies with 100 core opening hours – at least six months
 - pharmacies with more than 40 core opening hours where a direction is in place – at least three months
 - dispensing appliance contractors – at least three months
15. Following notification of closure of a pharmacy, Health and Wellbeing Boards will consider if they need to review their Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment and identify if there is any gap identified. Application to join the pharmaceutical list is controlled through the NHS Pharmaceutical Regulations.
16. The ICB working alongside the Local Pharmaceutical Committee also assesses the local impact of closing a pharmacy linking with other local community pharmacies to ensure that they can absorb dispensing numbers as well as provide other services. This can often strengthen remaining community pharmacies making them more financially viable.

Unplanned closures

17. Changes in the regulations in July 23 have made it a requirement for NHS community pharmacy owners to have a business continuity plan for the temporary suspension of a service due to illness or other reason beyond their control. Since winter 2022 the numbers of unplanned closures have dropped considerably with only exceptional circumstances such as sickness of a locum or flooding incidents being the cause of unplanned closures.



Reduction of pharmacy opening hours

18. Between 2005 and 2012, a number of pharmacies were included in a pharmaceutical list where they agreed to provide services for 100 hours per week, rather than the usual 40 core opening hours. With effect from 25 May 2023 such pharmacies were able to apply to reduce their total number of core opening hours.
19. In order for any application to be approved by the ICB, 4 requirements need to be met
- at least 72 core opening hours,
 - core opening hours between 17.00 and 21.00 Monday to Saturday,
 - core opening hours on a Sunday between 11.00 and 16.00
 - the same total number of core opening hours on a Sunday
20. BOB ICB has received applications from 15 out of 16 100 hours pharmacies to reduce their hours. Those granted met all four requirements and reduced early morning (6am) and late evening 9.00pm to Midnight hours where population needs for pharmaceutical services were very low. This has made pharmacies more financially viable by reducing staffing commitments in these hours. Since it has been in operation BOB ICB has not received any complaints about access to pharmacy during these hours.

Workforce

21. The Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey is an annual survey that strengthens the visibility of pharmacy workforce data within the community pharmacy sector. The 2023 survey closed on 17 December with key findings expected soon⁴
22. The 2022 survey should that across BOB there was 727 pharmacists (headcount) (439 WTE) which was up from the 2021 survey of 690 pharmacists (headcounts) but the whole recruitment and retention is a key issue facing all primary care staff. Initiatives are being developed including working closer with the School of Pharmacy at Reading University to try and deliver more foundation opportunities to newly graduated pharmacies across BOB.

Next Steps

23. The **Draft BOB Primary Care strategy**⁵ will present unique opportunities for community pharmacy and embeds community pharmacy as a core pillar in primary care.
24. We will also see the strengthening and embedding of the Pharmacy First Service to provide better access to the public for the seven common conditions either through walk ins or referrals from 111 or the local GP. A public facing communication campaign is expected to be launched soon.
25. As part of this we will see **digital improvements** with community pharmacies able to link electronically to practices and GPs able to make Pharmacy First electronic referrals to Community Pharmacy which will enable better communication.
26. We will also continue to work to increase the use of the **NHS app** encouraging those able to order repeat prescriptions on-line as well as using the NHS app to track the progress of the repeat prescriptions.

Julie Dandridge
Head of Pharmacy Optometry and Dentistry
Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board
February 2024

⁴ [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey | Health Education England \(hee.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/primary-care/community-pharmacy-workforce-survey)

⁵ [Primary Care Strategy | http://yourvoicebob-icb.uk.engagementhq.com](http://yourvoicebob-icb.uk.engagementhq.com)

Appendix 1

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment		
PNA	Published on	Link to Published PNA
Buckinghamshire	1st October 2022	Buckinghamshire PNA 2022-2025
Oxfordshire	1st April 2022	Oxfordshire PNA 2022-2025
Reading	1st October 2022	Reading PNA 2022-2025
West Berkshire	1st October 2022	West Berkshire PNA 2022-2025
Wokingham	1st October 2022	Wokingham PNA 2022-2025

Appendix 2 – Pharmacy closures

Buckinghamshire Health and Well being Board

ODS Code (F-Code)	ICS (STP)	Date Closed	Contract Type	Pharmacy Trading Name	Address 1	Address 3	Address 4	Post Code
FFW03	BOB	31/05/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Oxford Road	High Wycombe	Buckinghamshire	HP11 2DN
FAC69	BOB	31/05/2023	Community	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Lake End Road	Taplow	Buckinghamshire	SL6 0QH
FKL13	BOB	13/06/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Maxwell Road	Beaconsfield	Buckinghamshire	HP9 1QH

Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board

ODS Code (F-Code)	ICS (STP)	Date Closed	Contract Type	Pharmacy Trading Name	Address 1	Address 3	Address 4	Post Code
FWW50	BOB	14/05/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Oxford Road	Kidlington	Oxfordshire	OX5 2PE
FLL49	BOB	30/05/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Central Drive	Didcot	Oxfordshire	OX11 7ND
FAR03	BOB	10/06/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Pioneer Square	Bicester	Oxfordshire	OX26 6FA
FM953	BOB	13/06/2023	Community	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	642 Oxford Road	Banbury	Oxfordshire	OX16 9XA
FR885	BOB	13/06/2023	100 Hours	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Witan Way	Witney	Oxfordshire	OX28 4FF
FWC93	BOB	23/12/2023	100 Hours	Ahmeys Pharmacy	2 Market Square	Bicester	Oxfordshire	OX26 6AA
FA290	BOB	23/03/2024	Community	Boots UK Ltd	Thame Health Centre	Thame	Oxfordshire	OX9 3JZ
FRM62	BOB	29/03/2024	100 Hours (Amended)	Cowley Pharmacy	258 Cowley Road	Oxford	Oxfordshire	OX4 1UH

West Berkshire Health and wellbeing Board

ODS Code (F-Code)	ICS (STP)	Date Closed	Contract Type	Pharmacy Trading Name	Address 1	Address 3	Address 4	Post Code
FEJ88	BOB	22/04/2023	Community	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Savacentre, Bath Road	Reading	Berkshire	RG31 7SA
FVP85	BOB	22/04/2023	Community	Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury)	Hectors Way	Newbury	Berkshire	RG14 5AB
FN512	BOB	16/09/2023	Community	Superdrug Pharmacy	81-82 Northbrook Street	Newbury	Berkshire	RG14 1AE
FE788	BOB	17/02/2024	Community	Boots UK Ltd	Thatcham Health Centre	Thatcham	Berkshire	RG18 3HD

Reading Health and Wellbeing Board

ODS Code (F-Code)	ICS (STP)	Date Closed	Contract Type	Pharmacy Trading Name	Address 1	Address 3	Address 4	Post Code
FDE03	BOB	30/04/2023	Community	Lloyds Pharmacy	High Street	Reading	Berkshire	RG8 9AT
FPG88	BOB	20/08/2023	100 Hours	Tesco Pharmacy	Tesco Extra	Reading	Berkshire	RG1 8DF