

Kanari Pharmacy Enter & View Report

Part of a series of Enter & View visits to Community Pharmacies in



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1. Visit Background

1.1 What is Enter & View

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake 'Enter and View' visits.

Mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the visits enable trained Healthwatch staff and volunteers (Authorised Representatives) to visit health and care services – such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation.

During the visits, we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families, and carers. We also engage with management and staff. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlines what has worked well, and gives recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our website.

2.1 Safeguarding

Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with safeguarding policies. If at any time an Authorised Representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

3.1 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date(s) set out. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

4.1 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham would like to thank the staff and customers at the Kanari Pharmacy for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank our Authorised Representatives, who assisted us in conducting the visit and putting together this report.

The Authorised Representatives spoke to patients and staff. Suggestions have been made on how to improve the service and good practice has been highlighted.



"[I visit the pharmacy] once a month because they are much easier to access than my GP and they are equally knowledgeable."



2. Focus of the Visit

On the 9th of May 2023, NHS England published their delivery plan for recovering access to primary care. The main purpose of this plan is to help patients access the help they need from primary care more quickly and more easily.

Community pharmacies are playing a key role in the recovery plan: since April this year, community pharmacists have been able to issue repeat prescriptions for oral contraception without the need for patients to see their GP. By the end of the year, subject to evaluation of the programme, pharmacists will also be able to issue a new prescription for oral contraceptive pill.

In addition to the contraceptive services, Blood pressure checks and Smoking Cessation Services can now also be provided by Pharmacy Technicians, and patients can be referred to community pharmacies for consultations on minor illnesses and urgent medicine supplies.

In light of these service changes, Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham initiated visits to community pharmacies within the borough to explore how these new pharmacy services have so far been experienced by the local residents and pharmacy staff.

Our visits focused primarily on finding out how people feel about visiting a pharmacy instead of seeing their GP, how easily they can access a local pharmacy, and their overall experience of pharmacy services.

From staff, we wanted to find out how they feel about providing these additional services, and if there is anything that could be improved to better support them with the additional workload.

3. Visit Details

Visit Details			
Service Visited	Kanari Pharmacy, 682-684 Fulham Rd., London SW6 5SA		
Manager	Jitendra Malde		
Date & Time of Visit	13 th October 2023, 1-3pm		
Status of Visit	Announced		
Authorised Representatives	Mari Tiitinen, David Crawley, Yee Phyo		
Lead Representative	Mari Tiitinen		

4. Executive Summary

This section of the report details the key findings from our observations and the patient and staff feedback collected during our visit.

Observations

What has worked well

- The general environment of the pharmacy appeared clean and bright.
- It was easy to locate with a large sign displaying the name of the pharmacy, and the sign was easy to see when walking towards the pharmacy.
- There is just enough room for wheelchair and mobility scooter users to navigate to the pharmacy counter which is located at the back of the pharmacy.
- The staff were friendly and helpful, and on several occasions during our visit, the sales assistants were on the shop floor helping customers.
- There is a separate consultation room which is used for vaccinations, minor ailments, medicine reviews, and blood pressure monitoring.

What has not worked so well

- There is no step free access to the pharmacy. During our visit we observed a patient with a mobility scooter trying to access the pharmacy: they had to request a staff member to install a portable ramp, but the staff member did not know where the ramp was kept.
- In another instance, a patient with a walking stick had difficulty entering the pharmacy due to the front door being quite heavy. An AR held the door open so that the patient could enter.
- In general, the information displayed at the pharmacy is focused on selling beauty products rather than providing information about pharmacy services and NHS services.

Patient Feedback

What has worked well

- Generally, patients told us that they were seen immediately or within a few minutes.
- Most patients told us that their query was resolved immediately.
- Most patients positively commented on the general environment saying that it was clean.
- The comments about staff were positive in sentiment with patients describing staff members as lovely, excellent, knowledgeable, and helpful.
- In terms of communication with staff members, patients told us that they felt listened to and were comfortable asking questions.

What has not worked so well

- One person told us that the communication in-person is good, but getting through on the phone can be difficult during busy times.
- A patient with a walking stick told us that it was difficult for them to enter the pharmacy.
- None of the patients who we spoke with mentioned being encouraged to provide feedback.

Staff Feedback

What has worked well

- In general, staff felt positive about the expansion of pharmacy services, in particular regarding the oral contraceptive service which means patients do not have to visit their GP for a repeat prescription but instead can come directly to the pharmacy.
- We were told that the staff members come from different ethnic backgrounds and speak several languages including Hindi, Urdu, Afghan, Albanian, Polish, and Greek.
- The staff told us that for people with sensory impairments, more time is reserved to assist these patients and that, for example, staff can write things down for those with hearing impairments.

What has not worked so well

 When asked about any issues with the new services, a few of the staff members we spoke with mentioned that some GPs are not using the official online platform to refer patients to the pharmacy. The staff explained that GPs are meant to send Minor Ailment GP Referrals to the pharmacy via an online platform after which the pharmacy makes an appointment with the client to assess their condition. However, not all referrals are happening through the official channels, which means the pharmacy will not be reimbursed for these consultations.

- We were advised that GPs quite often prescribe medicines that are not in stock which can lead to patients visiting several pharmacies to obtain the prescribed medicine. This can be very frustrating for patients as they will then have to go back to their GP to obtain a new prescription.
- Parking restrictions are also a source of frustration as the pharmacy is located on the main street and does not have off-street parking. During vaccination campaigns, people can travel far for their vaccination appointment only to find out there is no parking.

5. Full Findings

This section of the report presents detailed information on our observations and patient and staff feedback collected during our visit.

During the visit we collected responses from 10 patients and 4 staff members.

We would like to thank the staff and management for their time and for their warm welcome and cooperation.

Observations

During our visit, our team of Authorised Representatives (ARs) made observations on Accessibility, General Environment and Facilities, and Safety.

Accessibility

 Pharmacy is located on Fulham Road which is a busy main road, and is close to public transport including Parsons Green tube station and bus stops.

 It was easy to locate with a large sign displaying the name of the pharmacy and the sign is easy to see when walking towards the pharmacy. However, due to an awning, the sign cannot be seen if

standing on the pavement outside the pharmacy.

 There is no step free access to the pharmacy. During our visit we observed a patient with a mobility scooter trying to access the pharmacy: they had to request a staff member to install a portable ramp, but the staff member did not know where the ramp was kept. (The ramp is kept under the shelves near the front door as seen in the picture on the right.)



- In another instance, a patient with a walking stick had difficulty entering the pharmacy due to the front door being quite heavy. An AR held the door open so that the patient could enter.
- There is just enough room for wheelchair and mobility scooter users to navigate to the pharmacy counter which is located at the back of the pharmacy. However, it might be difficult for them to look through some

beauty products because of the narrow space between some of the shelves, and storage boxes on the floor.

General Environment and Facilities

- The general environment of the pharmacy appeared clean and bright.
- There was a continues stream of customers coming into the pharmacy and the environment was therefore quite busy. Our visit took place during the Covid and Flu vaccination campaign and we observed many patients coming to the pharmacy for a vaccination.
- The pharmacy counter is located at the back of the shop with shelves of products being right at the front.
- We observed five chairs scattered around the shop floor for patients who are waiting, although they are located quite far from the pharmacy counter.
- There is a separate consultation room which is used for vaccinations, minor ailments, medicine reviews, and blood pressure monitoring.
- The staff were friendly and helpful, and on several occasions during our visit, the sales assistants were on the shop floor helping customers.
- There is a TV screen that displays information about product offers as well as information on Covid and Flu vaccinations.

 There were some information leaflets available near the front door, mainly about beauty products, i.e. skin care products. There was only one leaflet about NHS Know Diabetes service.

- We did not observe information displayed about the pharmacy services, except on the door to the consultation room that listed the following services: Travel Clinic & Vaccinations, Flu Vaccinations, Medicine Use Review, BP (Blood Pressure) Monitoring, and Minor Ailments
- In general, the information displayed at the pharmacy is focused on selling beauty products rather than providing information about pharmacy and NHS services.



Safety

- We observed some storage boxes on the shop floor in between shelves that could obstruct those with mobility issues. These were, however, taken away by a delivery man during our visit.
- We noticed there was a door to a staircase leading to the basement left open.
- There is a CCTV installed.



Patient Feedback

We spoke with 10 patients during our visit.

This section of the report contains a summary of the feedback received.

Accessibility

- Most people we spoke with had come to the pharmacy on the day to collect their prescription medication. Some were there for a Covid or Flu vaccination or to buy some beauty products.
- Most people had contacted their GP before coming to the pharmacy to request a prescription. One patient had received a letter about a Covid vaccination which is why they had come to the pharmacy, and one person told us they had had to contact both NHS and a private GP to request a prescription.
- Most patients told us that they live within 5-10-minute walking distance from the pharmacy, one patient had travelled 10 minutes by bus, and one had travelled by car.
- In terms of accessibility, one patient with a walking stick told us that it
 was difficult for them to enter the pharmacy. The rest of the patients did
 not have additional accessibility requirements.

Using Pharmacy Services

- Generally, patients told us that they were seen immediately or with a few minutes, but a few patients told us that they had to wait 10-15 minutes for a Covid or Flu vaccination.
- Most patients told us that their query was resolved immediately. One
 patient mentioned stock issues, which meant they had to wait for the
 pharmacy to order the product/medicine and come back another day.
 Another patient told us that they are currently waiting for a better
 mobility aid, as the one offered to them by the pharmacy was too heavy.
 The patient told us that this involved a lot of back and forth with their GP.
- Most people told us they would visit a pharmacy for the following services: for prescriptions, information & advice, flu vaccinations, and minor illnesses such as cold, flu, aches, and pains.
- Fewer people told us that they would visit a pharmacy for contraception and blood pressure checks.
- Most people said they sometimes visit the pharmacy instead of their GP for assistance with their health, but a few people said they do not do that.

General Environment

- Most patients positively commented on the general environment saying that it was clean.
- One person mentioned the pharmacy was slightly cramped near the cashier, and another commented on the pharmacy being too noisy.

Staff

- The comments about staff were positive in sentiment with patients describing staff members as lovely, excellent, knowledgeable, and helpful.
- In terms of communication with staff members, patients told us that they
 felt listened to and comfortable asking questions. One person told us
 that the communication in-person is good, but getting through on the
 phone can be difficult during busy times.

Feedback and Complaints

- Several people told us that they did not know how to make a complaint but also that they have not had to make a complaint.
- None of the patients we spoke with mentioned being encouraged to provide feedback.

Staff Feedback

We spoke with four staff members during our visit: The Owner/Pharmacist, Pharmacist/Dispensing Manager, Over the Counter Medicine Assistant, and Over the Counter Sales Assistant.

This section of the report contains a summary of the feedback received.

New Pharmacy Services

- In general, staff felt positive about the expansion of pharmacy services, in particular regarding the oral contraceptive service which means patients do not have to visit their GP for a repeat prescription but instead can come directly to the pharmacy.
- We were told that the oral contraceptive service has also been positively received by patients because it saves them time by not having to go to their GP first.
- The staff members told us that patients feel confident and prefer to come to the pharmacy for assistance instead of having to book an appointment with a GP.
- If a patient is not happy with the help and/or information they have received, they will be referred back to their GP, although we were told that this is a very rare occurrence.
- We were advised that there has been an increase in patients visiting the pharmacy, which means a third pharmacist has been recruited due to an increased workload.
- When asked about any issues with the new services, a few of the staff members we spoke with mentioned that some GPs are not using the official online platform to refer patients to the pharmacy. The staff explained that GPs are meant to send Minor Ailment GP Referrals to the pharmacy via an online platform after which the pharmacy makes an appointment with the client to assess their condition. However, not all referrals are happening through the official channels, which means the pharmacy will not be reimbursed for these consultations.

Assistance for patients with additional communication requirements

- We were told that the staff members come from different ethnic backgrounds and speak several languages including Hindi, Urdu, Afghan, Albanian, Polish, and Greek.
- We were informed that typically if a patient does not speak any English, they bring someone with them who can speak English. On occasion, other customers have assisted with translation.

- For people in wheelchairs or with a mobility scooter, there is a portable ramp available which is installed at the front door when required.
- The staff told us that for people with sensory impairments, more time is reserved to assist these patients and that, for example, staff can write things down for those with hearing impairments.

Feedback and Complaints

- Patients are not generally encouraged to give feedback but they can leave feedback on the pharmacy's website or other online review platforms like Google. They can also give feedback verbally, and often refer other people to the service through word of mouth.
- Complaints procedure is available on the website, or staff can verbally explain it to patients who want to make a complaint.
- In case of a complaint, they are thoroughly investigated, and a solution is offered. If a patient is not happy, they are given the contact details to the local CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group).¹

Anything else?

- We were advised that GPs quite often prescribe medicines that are not in stock which can lead to patients visiting several pharmacies to obtain the prescribed medicine. This can be very frustrating for patients as they will then have to go back to their GP to obtain a new prescription.
- Parking restrictions are also a source of frustration as the pharmacy is located on the main street and does not have off-street parking. During vaccination campaigns, people can travel far for their vaccination appointment only to find out there is no parking.
- The pharmacy staff told us that sometimes new services are introduced but then cut short after a few years due to a lack of funding. This can leave customers who have used these new services without support.

¹ On 1st of July 2022, Integrated Care Systems were established to replace Clinical Commissioning Groups.

6. Recommendations

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham would like to thank the service for the support in arranging our E&V visit.

Based on the analysis of all feedback obtained, we would like to make the following recommendations.

Accessibility

There is no step free access to the pharmacy, and during our visit, we observed a patient with a mobility scooter requesting a staff member to install a portable ramp. However, the staff member was not aware of where the ramp was stored.

Recommendation 1: Ensuring that all staff members, including those newly recruited are aware of the place where the portable ramp is stored. In addition, it is worth considering a more permanent solution to replace the portable ramp.

Our ARs also observed a patient with a walking stick struggling to enter the pharmacy due to the heavy front door.

Recommendation 2: Installing an automatic door would improve the accessibility to those with walking aids, wheelchairs, and mobility scooters as well as customers with prams and pushchairs.

General Environment and Facilities

In general, the information available in the pharmacy is focused on selling beauty products rather than providing information about pharmacy or NHS services.

Recommendation 3: We believe customers would benefit if more information about the pharmacy and NHS services was available in the form of leaflets, posters, information videos etc. We understand that staff members often provide verbal advice on these services, but it would improve patient education if the information was displayed in written and visual formats as well.

Feedback and Complaints

Staff members told us that customers are not encouraged to provide feedback, although they can do so on the pharmacy's website or on other online review platforms.

Recommendation 4: Encouraging customers to provide feedback would help to inform staff of areas that can be improved, such as the accessibility issues. We would advise to consider ways staff members can be more proactive in obtaining feedback from customers in different formats including verbally, online, and on paper whilst ensuring that this can be done anonymously.

New Pharmacy Services

As with all service changes, there seems to be some areas that can be improved to provide better service to patients while ensuring that the system works equally well for all service providers. One of the things mentioned by the pharmacy staff included ensuring GPs use the official online system when referring patients to pharmacies for consultation on minor ailments.

Recommendation 5: We would recommend that the local Integrated Care System reviews the current system used for the Minor Ailment Referrals to ensure that it is actively used by GPs for all referrals.

We were advised by the pharmacy staff that GPs quite often prescribe medicines that are not in stock which can lead to patients visiting several pharmacies to obtain the prescribed medicine. This can be very frustrating for patients as they will then have to go back to their GP to obtain a new prescription.

Recommendation 6: Ensuring GPs have access to information regarding medication that is stocked by local pharmacies would improve the prescription medication service and avoid patients having to waste their time by visiting multiple pharmacies and having to reorder their prescription.

Response from Kanari Pharmacy:

"Thank you for your report and recommendations. We have nothing to say and have noted your suggestions.

Thank you.

J Malde"

Glossary of Terms

AR Authorised Representative

CCG Clinical Commissioning Group

CQC Care Quality Commission

GP General Practitioner

Enter & View E&V

Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the general public and is shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us.

healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham

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