Evaluation of the Patient Experience with the NHS Wales Community Pharmacy Common Ailments Service

Dear colleague,

NHS Wales has long recognised patient experience as a quality and safety measure for services provided. To date, a small number of PREMs have been captured for community pharmacy services through questions (such as 'what would you have done if the service was not available today') that form part of the relevant consultation form within the Choose Pharmacy module. These have been used by health boards and the Welsh Government to ensure services meets the evolving needs of all people in Wales and facilitating consistent quality engagement and 'always-on' reporting mechanism.

Through the 2025-26 Winter Incentive Scheme that formed part of the 2024-24 Sustainability Payment agreement, pharmacists providing the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service (CCPS) are required to support a feasibility study to evaluate the effectiveness of gathering PREMS for the Common Ailment Service through direct patient engagement. The study will commence on 1 October 2025 and end on 31 March 2026. All patients accessing the Common Ailments Service during the study period should be invited to complete a short, anonymous electronic survey available in both English and Welsh. Participation is entirely voluntary and may be completed by the patient or their carer.

During this time, the existing patient experience measures will continue to be captured through Choose Pharmacy. However, if the study is successful and found to be scalable, the Welsh Government has committed to reviewing the need for PREMs questions within Choose Pharmacy modules. Cardiff University, working in partnership with Digital Health and Care Wales and the Welsh Government will lead and evaluate the study.

Actions required

1. All patients accessing the Common Ailment Service between 1 October 2025 and 31 March 2026 must be provided with brief information about the study during their consultation and encouraged to provide feedback on their experience. Pharmacists must document that information has been provided by annotating the 'Additional Information' text box within the CAS patient consultation record with the code '*PREMS*'.
2. Pharmacists and pharmacy staff must display the A5 posters provided (see 'resources' below) within the consultation room and may also display in other areas of the pharmacy (e.g. the pharmacy waiting area, pharmacy counter).
3. Pharmacists must provide patients (or their carers) with the QR code to access the survey, either by referring to the code on the A5 poster or by providing a QR code credit card leaflet (see 'resources' below) for the patient to take home. The QR code credit card leaflet should be handed to the patient when it is the intention of the patient to complete the survey after the have left the pharmacy. This can be delegated to pharmacy team members provided that are able to provide the patient with the relevant information.

    To note: If patients accessing the service are 15 years of age or below, the pharmacist will suggest that the survey is completed by their carer or parent. If a patient aged 16 or older asks for a consultation and the pharmacist decided that they are competent to do so, then they will be asked to complete the survey. For those who are judged as not Fraser competent, or in any other case where a patient has been accompanied by a carer because they lack capacity, the carer will be asked to complete the survey. In all cases,

carers will be asked to complete the form on behalf of patients rather than with their own views (this is clearly explained in the survey).

4. All members of the pharmacy team should be aware of the study. Pharmacy teams are **not expected** to complete the survey with patients but must **actively promote** the survey and encourage patients/carers to provide their feedback on the service to inform its development. Patients should be encouraged to complete the survey after every consultation.

Please note the study only applies to the Common Ailments Service, patients accessing other pharmacy services should not be included in the activities set out above.

Resources included with this letter are:

- Three A5 **laminated copies** with brief information about the study (in English and Welsh), including a QR code that must be displayed in the pharmacy.
- **Credit card** sized handouts with the title of the study and the QR code (in English and Welsh) - these should be available for patients/carers in the consultation room and handed out to patients where required.

Please ensure that these resources are available to **all** members of the pharmacy team, to provide to patients/carers, as needed.

Please ensure that all pharmacists delivering the Common Ailments Service are aware of the requirements set out in this letter.

Thank you for your continued support in delivering the Common Ailments Service and participating in evaluation studies. If you have any questions relating the evaluation, please contact the study lead (details below).

Yours sincerely

Efi & David

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