

# Community pharmacies: promoting health and wellbeing

Information for the public

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[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

## Making the most of local pharmacies to protect our health

Most of us live within easy reach of a pharmacy but many people don't know about the full range of services on offer. As well as giving advice about medicines, community pharmacies can provide information and support on how to keep fit and healthy. They can also deal with a range of health issues, help with new and existing health conditions and recognise when someone needs referring on for further help.

In addition, pharmacy staff often live locally, so they understand the issues people living in the area face. You don't usually need an appointment to talk to someone and you can find a pharmacy open nearby until late.

We want this guideline to help everyone, including those with special needs, get the most from this service by making sure local pharmacies:

- promote their services so that people know about everything they offer
- provide standard services so that people get the same support, where possible, no matter which pharmacy they visit
- encourage people to use them as a first point of call for minor problems and health advice or support, instead of their GP or hospital
- provide information in a range of ways that meets people's needs
- offer a range of advice and support, whether it's help to stop smoking, manage weight or keep well, even when they have a long-term condition such as diabetes
- can refer people quickly and easily to other services, like GPs, social care or mental health.

## Where can I find out more?

[NHS Choices](#) has more information about how your local pharmacy can help and where they can be found.

You can also find information on NHS Choices about the different ways to promote your own health and wellbeing. For example, advice on stopping smoking, looking after your mental health or managing your weight.

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with a range of people. This includes people who specialise in public health, those who work in community pharmacies and advocates for people who use the services. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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