

Date

NHS England South East

York House

Sent by email to:

18 - 20 Massetts Road

Horley

Local Pharmacies and Head Offices

Kent Local Pharmaceutical Committee

Kent Local Medical Committee

Local Dispensing GP's

Kent Health & Wellbeing Board

Kent Healthwatch

Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Local MP

West Kent CCG

Kent County Council

Dear Sir/Madam,

Surrey RH6 7DE

Re: Controlled locality determination regarding pharmacy services in Wouldham Kent

NHS England is responsible for commissioning NHS community pharmacy services and for ensuring that pharmaceutical services are accessible to local people.

Regulation 36 of the national NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, allows NHS England to determine if any local area should be designated as a 'controlled locality', in regards to the provision of pharmaceutical services.

Controlled localities are those that have been determined to be 'rural in character' by NHS England. No definition of rural is given in the national regulations, however a rural area is normally characterised by having a limited range of local services.

The national rules that apply to the dispensing of medicines in controlled localities differ to the regulations that apply in urban areas, in order to ensure that people living in these areas have appropriate access to services. While many community pharmacies now provide a free collection and delivery service (under which they will collect a prescription from a patient's GP surgery and then deliver the dispensed medication to their home), in rural areas that are designated as 'controlled localities', GP practices are permitted to dispense medicines to their patients directly, providing that their patients do not live within a 1 mile radius (1.6km) of any community pharmacy, or would otherwise have significant difficulty obtaining their medicines from a pharmacy.

NHS England has received an application for a community pharmacy in the St Peters, Wouldham area, which has prompted the need to review the rurality status of the area, as required under the regulations for applications that relate to areas that may have undergone significant development in recent years. NHS England needs to determine whether the Wouldham area in Kent, should be re-designated as a non-controlled locality (please see the attached maps which show the area we need to consider).

We always consider a range of factors (as they pertain at the time) when determining whether or not an area is rural and should be designated as a non-controlled locality. These include, but are not limited to:

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- environmental factors such as the balance between different types of land use
- employment patterns (bearing in mind that those who live in rural areas may not work there)
- the size of the community and distance between settlements
- the overall population density
- transportation – the availability or otherwise of public transport and the frequency of such provision, including access to services such as shopping facilities
- the provision of other facilities, such as recreational and entertainment facilities.

Before we make a final determination, we would be interested to receive any views that you might have on this.

Should you wish to make any written representations on this matter please send them to me within 30 days of the date of this letter. You should note that any comments submitted will be shared with other interested parties, and may also be shared under the Freedom of Information Act, as requested.

We anticipate making the final determination regarding the status of Wouldham and surrounding area by the end of

I will advise you of the outcome, but should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my colleagues:

- Amanda Marshall at amanda.marshall@nhs.net
- Linda Barnard at lindabarnard@nhs.net

Yours faithfully

Stephen Ingram
Head of Primary Care
NHS England South East

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