



*Serving You*

## **Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**20 August 2025**

### **Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028**

Report from: Dr David Whiting, Director of Public Health

Author: Dr Eluned Broom, Public Health Intelligence Manager

#### **Summary**

Health and Wellbeing Boards are under a statutory duty to develop and update their Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) every three years. NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 and the NHS Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, set out the requirements to develop and update PNAs. The previous PNA for Medway was published in October 2022 and an updated PNA must be published by 1 October 2025 – it is scheduled for consideration and approval at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 4 September 2025.

The PNA tells us what pharmaceutical services are currently available and where we are likely to need changes in the future because of demographic or other changes. The provision of NHS pharmacy services is a controlled market. If someone wants to provide NHS pharmaceutical services, they are required to apply to the NHS to be included on a pharmaceutical list and must prove they are able to meet a pharmaceutical need. NHS England (the national body responsible for commissioning pharmaceutical services) relies on PNAs to inform decision making, specifically regarding whether existing pharmaceutical services meet local need. NHS England also uses the PNA to assess applications from applicants who want to modify existing services or deliver new pharmaceutical services within Medway.

This report presents the refreshed PNA for Medway for 2025–2028.

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to submit any comments on the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

- 2.1. The Health Act 2009 introduced a legal requirement for all Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to publish a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) by 1 February 2011. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 subsequently

transferred the responsibility to Health and Wellbeing Boards. The NHS Act (the “2006” Act), amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, sets out the requirements for Health & Wellbeing Boards to develop and update PNAs and gives the Department of Health (DH) powers to make Regulations.

- 2.2. The NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 set out the legislative basis for developing and updating PNAs and can be found at:  
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2013/02/pharmaceutical-services-regulations>.
- 2.3. The budget for the PNA will be funded from the Public Health ring fenced grant.
- 2.4. Approval of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment is a matter for the Health and Wellbeing Board.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. Every Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) in England has a statutory responsibility to publish every three years, and keep up to date, a statement of the need for pharmaceutical services in its area, otherwise referred to as a pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA). Initial assessments were published in April 2015, and subsequent assessments in 2018 and 2022. The 2022 assessment was delayed by 1.5 years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The next PNA is due to be published by 1 October 2025.
- 3.2. If a pharmacy wants to provide pharmaceutical services, they are required to apply to NHS England to be included in the pharmaceutical list for the Health and Wellbeing Board’s area in which they wish to have premises and NHS England refers to the PNA to inform its decision. Their application must offer to meet a need that is set out in the Health and Wellbeing Board’s PNA, or to secure improvements, or better access similarly identified in the PNA.
- 3.3. It was agreed by Public Health DMT that this Needs Assessment be undertaken independently and should therefore be commissioned out. A specialist pharmacist provider has been identified through a competitive tender process. The new provider will update and refresh the current Medway Council PNA within stipulated timescales required by the Board. The final PNA will comply with the latest relevant statutory regulations enabling the Board to fulfil its legal obligations as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- 3.4. A PNA steering group was formed and guided the production of the PNA. The steering group included representatives from the Local Pharmaceutical Committee, Local Medical Committee, Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board, Medway Council (DPH/Consultant), and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 3.5. The PNA is a comprehensive assessment of the current and future pharmaceutical needs of the local population. It describes:

- The health needs of the population
  - Current pharmaceutical services provision and any gaps in that provision
  - Potential new services to meet health needs and help achieve the objectives of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.6. It takes account of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and is a strategic commissioning document which will be used primarily by NHS England in its determination as to whether to approve applications to join the pharmaceutical list under the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013.
- 3.7. There is a statutory requirement to consult certain organisations and members of the public for 60 days to ensure that the PNA accurately represents the need and provision of pharmaceutical services in Medway. The consultation took place from 7 May 2025 to 6 July 2025.
- 3.8. The PNA will also be used to:
- 3.8.1. Ensure that decisions about applications for market entry for pharmaceutical services are based on robust and relevant information.
  - 3.8.2. Inform commissioning plans about pharmaceutical services that could be provided by community pharmacists and other providers to meet local need—these services can be commissioned by local authorities, NHS England and Integrated Care Boards.
  - 3.8.3. Support commissioning of high-quality pharmaceutical services including locally enhanced services.
  - 3.8.4. Ensure that pharmaceutical and medicines optimisation services are commissioned to reflect the health needs and ambitions outlined within the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
  - 3.8.5. Facilitate opportunities for pharmacists to make a significant contribution to the health of the population of Medway.

#### 4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. All necessary steps have been followed in the development of the PNA including governance, analysis of health and demographic data, public and contractor engagement, pharmaceutical services information, analysis of provision, review and sign off. Consultation, and final review and sign off (of which this is part of).
- 4.2. The provision of access to pharmaceutical services differs across Medway, however, within the context of scope of the PNA, there are no defined gaps in this provision.
- 4.3. The provision of pharmaceutical services across Medway will be reviewed periodically between now and the next PNA to ensure provision of pharmaceutical services across Medway as the population changes.

## 5. Risk management

- 5.1. Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Future legal challenge	If NHS England receives a legal challenge to the services they commission based on the PNA, the local authority could also be part of that legal challenge.	The process met the requirements of the legislation and ensured that the PNA is a robust document.	DIII
Late delivery of the PNA	The PNA is due to be refreshed by October 2022. This implies a reasonably tight timeline, and the deadline could be missed if there are difficulties during production.	An experienced team, including a specialist pharmacist, has been contracted to support the update of the PNA. Careful project management is being used to monitor progress	DIII

For risk rating, please refer to the following table (please **retain** table in final report):

<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact:</b>
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

## 6. Consultation

- 6.1. Insight from members of the public and from pharmacists was sought in the preparation of the draft PNA. A formal 60-day consultation on the completed draft PNA took place from 7 May 2025 to 6 July 2025 and a summary of feedback and changes resulting from the consultation have been included in the drafted final version of the PNA in Appendix 1. Members of both the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to comment during the 60-day consultation period.

- 6.2. Please note that the consultation comments and responses were reviewed at the most recent steering group meeting.

## 7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. Medway Council is committed to achieving net zero carbon by 2050. To achieve this, the Council has published its own Climate Change Action Plan. However, reducing emissions is not limited to the Council and as part of Scope 3 (third party) emissions, the Council encourages all suppliers to take a similar approach. The commissioned provider for the new PNA has a Climate Change Action Plan.

## 8. Financial implications

- 8.1. There are no financial implications to Medway Council arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

## 9. Legal implications

- 9.1. Local authorities through their Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) are under a statutory duty to develop and update their PNA every 3 years. NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 and the NHS Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, set out the requirements to develop and update PNAs.
- 9.2. Medway Council's last published PNA covered the period 2022 to 2025. Medway Council is required to publish its updated PNA by October 2025 to avoid breaching its statutory duty.

### Lead officer contact

Dr Eluned Broom, Public Health Intelligence Manager  
Address: Gun Wharf, Dock Rd, Chatham, ME4 4TR  
Email: [eluned.broom@medway.gov.uk](mailto:eluned.broom@medway.gov.uk)

### Appendices

Appendix 1 – Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment  
Background papers

None