

# NHS Lanarkshire

## Service Level Agreement

<b>SLA Reference</b>	<b>Harm Reduction: Injection Equipment Provision (IEP)</b>
<b>Version</b>	1
<b>Effective Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2026 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2028
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<b>Approved By</b>	Harm Reduction Service Lead

Revision Chronology		
Version Number	Effective Date	Reason for Change

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## **Introduction**

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) acts as a contract between NHS Lanarkshire and the pharmacy contractor and commits the contractor to provide the services as defined by, and using documents provided in, this Service Level Agreement. Should there be any variations made to the contract, the pharmacy contractor will have the right to agree to any variations or withdraw from the contract.

Any intellectual property rights belonging to either Party before the Agreement remains with that Party

A three-month notice period must be provided if either party wishes to terminate this contract. Where a breach in terms of the SLA has occurred the 3 months' notice period may not apply.

This agreement is for the period 1st April 2026 – 31st March 2028, however, remains valid and must be adhered to as per the agreement whilst under review

### **1. Background to service**

Provision of injecting equipment (previously known as needle exchange) was introduced in Scotland in response to an outbreak of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) in the 1980s and proved effective in reducing transmission of this blood borne virus (BBV). Although HIV remains an issue in some areas, HCV (Hepatitis C Virus) is now the more prevalent BBV (Blood-Borne Virus).

The majority of new diagnoses of HCV present in people who inject drugs. People who inject drugs are also prone to a number of wider health risks including but not limited to; overdose, bacterial infection, injecting site injuries and deep vein thrombosis. Injecting equipment providers (IEPs) are therefore critical in reducing both injecting and other related harms.

### **2. Service Aims**

The service aims to provide:

- Non-judgemental access to injecting equipment and paraphernalia for people who inject drugs
- Facility for collection and disposal of used equipment. (It is a requirement of all IEP community pharmacies to have a process for disposing sharps)
- Basic safer injecting and harm reduction advice including overdose awareness
- Onward signposting and referral as required e.g. for blood borne virus testing and to specialist services, GP, A&E etc.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

#### The Specialist Substance Misuse Service will:

Advise Pharmacy Contractors of any relevant updates/changes to service delivery

Facilitate & support access to training for pharmacy staff

Review and update service support materials, reflecting on national & local guidance

Provide practical advice during normal working hours Mon-Fri excluding public holidays)

Process payment claims made via NEO by the 9<sup>th</sup> of the month

#### The Pharmacy Contractor will:

Sign and return the SLA agreement prior to service implementation

Will notify NHS Lanarkshire of any changes in circumstances whereby they can no longer deliver the service effectively or safely

Take full responsibility for ensuring staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of and operate within the service specification

Take full responsibility for ensuring staff involved in the provision of service are trained in the operation of the service as outlined in subsection 4

Remain accountable for delivery of their professional responsibilities and standards

Ensure the site has enough skilled and qualified staff to provide a safe and effective pharmacy service as detailed in the [GPhC Guidance for contractors: Guidance to ensure a safe and effective pharmacy team](#)

Ensure where appropriate, appropriate indemnity insurance is in place for premises/staff delivering service

Provide premises that protect the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of patients and the public who receive pharmacy services

Ensure service is available to service users throughout opening hours. This may require requesting service users to call back if the service provider is currently unavailable however the service should not be restrictive to set hours within the day

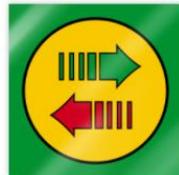
Ensure staff hold and are competent to deliver x2 naloxone kits for use in an emergency situation as per [national specification](#)

The pharmacy contractor will identify a nominated person(s) responsible for delivering the service and where applicable ensure Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are in place to ensure service is delivered as stipulated in the SLA

The service provider must ensure that all staff are aware of the correct procedure and action to be taken in the event of a needle stick injury. If there is no service policy, it is suggested staff follow the [national policy](#).

In the unlikely event of a blood spill within the pharmacy, it is suggested staff follow national [Public Health Scotland guidance](#)

Should clearly advertise that the pharmacy operates a “needle exchange” service. The “needle exchange” window sticker should be displayed.



### **The nominated person(s) responsible for delivering the service will:**

Provide a user-friendly, non-judgemental, patient-centred and confidential service

All needles, syringes, sharps bins and other paraphernalia supplied under the pharmacy Harm Reduction scheme must be accessed from the approved supplier and product list as specified by NHS Lanarkshire. This should include water for injection and foil in addition to injecting equipment, paraphernalia and sharps bins. Equipment will be provided free of charge to both service provider and client.

Clients should be provided with the volume and type of equipment appropriate to the frequency of injection and type of substance(s) used. There is no upper limit on the amount of equipment that may be supplied.

Pharmacy staff should provide safer injecting and harm reduction advice specific to the patient's requirements. This includes:

- Using a new set of injecting equipment and paraphernalia for every injection
- Using the smallest needle size appropriate to the injecting site and substance used
- Awareness of the different types of substances used and tailoring harm reduction advice accordingly (e.g. need for citric acid / Vitamin C with opioids but not with steroids)
- Importance of cleaning and rotating the injecting site
- How to use the different items of paraphernalia e.g. addition of citric acid in small amounts, risks associated with non-sterile water sources
- Reducing risk of overdose. Responding to overdose and administering naloxone.
- The need for regular BBV testing and providing, or linking clients in, with testing services

- Advice on returning equipment and associated danger to self and wider public of not returning, publically disposing equipment.
- Consult the patient/carer or family member of the signs and symptoms of overdose; [Signs & Symptoms of an overdose](#).

Pharmacies operating a Harm Reduction service will be provided with appropriate waste containers free of charge by NHS Lanarkshire (normally a 60 litre special waste bin) to receive all used equipment. NHS Lanarkshire will make arrangements for the uplift and disposal of full containers.

Clients should be encouraged to return used needles and syringes in the sealed sharps bin supplied. If they return with loose injecting equipment they should either be given an individual sharps bin to dispose of the equipment or, if unavailable, asked to place the equipment directly into the 60 Litre bin. To minimise the risk of needle stick injury this bin should then be sealed and set aside for uplift thereafter. **Pharmacy staff should never handle loose returned injecting equipment.**

The service provider is responsible for entering all IEP transactions onto the approved IT system (currently neo360®). **Direct entry of data into neo360® at point of exchange is required** to ensure maximal data accuracy. This may be undertaken by use of PC, laptop or tablet at the point of exchange.

Transactions should be recorded using a client identifier that is both anonymous and unique. This should consist of the first initial of the forename and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> initials of the surname followed by the date of birth in the format ABCdd/mm/yyyy.

- E.g. John Smith born 1<sup>st</sup> January 1990 would have the identifier JST01/01/1990.
- For patients who have surnames of less than four characters a star should be used for the third letter e.g. John Hay 12/12/95 would have the identifier JH\*12/12/1995.

Clients should be encouraged to utilise the same identifier at each attendance in order to provide an accurate estimate of the unique number of clients attending services in Lanarkshire and more widely in Scotland. They should be reassured that this information cannot be used to identify them.

Deliver Emergency Naloxone as per [National Specification](#) to patients suspected of opioid overdose. See Subsection 4 - Pharmacy Naloxone Service

Approved information leaflets on safer injecting, harm reduction and blood borne virus transmission should be made freely available to clients. These are available from NHS Lanarkshire Harm Reduction Team.

## 4. Training requirements

The nominated person(s) responsible for service delivery should complete the following NES training prior to service delivery, **you do not have to repeat modules if already completed as part of another service delivery**:

- Pharmacy Naloxone Service; [Drug Related Deaths in Scotland](#)
- Pharmacy Naloxone Service; [Identifying an Overdose](#)
- Pharmacy Naloxone Service; [Naloxone and its administration](#)

(If navigating from TURAS Learn: Learn Home > Pharmacy CPD resources > Pharmacy services & Essential learning > Community Pharmacy > Community Pharmacy Emergency Naloxone Holding Service)

Face to face training can be available from the Harm Reduction Team. As a minimum **Safer Injecting is recommended for completion by all staff involved in service provision**. Contact Marc Simpson: [marc.simpson@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:marc.simpson@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk) to discuss training needs.

## 5. Claims and payment

Payment will be made in arrears on submission of the monthly claim via the NEO 360 system. Any claims submitted after 9<sup>th</sup> of the subsequent month will be paid the following month.

A three tiered remuneration fee will be paid. These fees will be paid on a monthly basis based on the anticipation of how many IEP exchanges would be expected in each pharmacy. Any over/under payments will be addressed at year end. Pro-rata fees will be applicable to any contractor that joins the service in year. The service fees are VAT exempt.

### **Category A:**

- For pharmacies providing < 500 transactions per annum.

### **Category B:**

- For pharmacies providing between 500 and 1400 transactions per annum

### **Category C:**

- For pharmacies providing > 1400 transactions

Contractors are responsible for monitoring fees paid and have a 3-month window to raise any concerns regarding a missing payment from the month it should have been paid. Any claim queries raised after this time will be deemed as an historical claim and will only be considered by the Pharmacy Performance and Governance Group for payment.

Service liability for the contractor will remain capped at the service fee associated with the Community Pharmacy Harm Reduction service. Service liability does not extend to medicines obtained in error, this will remain the contractor's responsibility.

General business costs such as insurance, servicing finance, banking charges, business administration, payment tracking etc. are reflected in national arrangements for community pharmaceutical services and as such do not form part of local arrangements/ service level agreements.

## **6. Monitoring & evaluation**

Both the Health Board and the pharmacy contractor will be independent Data Controllers for personal data processed for quality assurance, performance management, and contract management. It is a requirement of the service that appropriate records are kept and maintained by the pharmacy contractor, to enable verification of service provision and training undertaken by staff. These records may be used for information for internal and external audit and evaluation purposes.

NHS Lanarkshire regularly monitors service provision across all contractors. Data is submitted on an annual basis for service review & evaluation.

Where requested, participating pharmacies will be required to participate in service evaluation and audit. The Pharmacy Contractor will be given 28 days' notice.

Post-payment verification checks will be undertaken in line with the process established and agreed via National Services Scotland. Pharmacy Contractors participating in the service should support this exercise by providing information if requested.

## **7. Confidentiality**

All parties will maintain patient confidentiality and comply with all relevant GDPR regulations. The [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) \(EU\) 2016/679](#) and [Data Protection Act 2018](#) came into force on 25 May 2018. All organisations that process personal data are required to comply with the requirements of this legislation. This means that personal information will be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner.
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes.
- Only collected so far as required for our lawful purposes.
- As accurate and up to date as possible.
- Retained for a reasonable period, in accordance with retention policies.
- Processed in a manner which ensures an appropriate level of security.

## **8. The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019**

The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 (“the 2019 Act”) places requirements on the Health Board stating that: “In planning and securing the provision of healthcare from another person under a contract agreement must have regard to

- a) The guiding principles for health and care staffing; and
- b) The need for the person from whom the provision of health care is to be secured to have appropriate staffing levels in place.”

The Pharmacy Contractor will ensure that they have taken into consideration provisions set out in the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 so that the level of support available to operate the service is in line with the aims of the Act and that sufficient staff are available to safely and effectively provide the service.

## **9. Contacts**

Currently this contract is delivered by NHS Lanarkshire. Queries should be directed by email to Harm Reduction:

**Telephone: 01698 753657 ,**  
**Email: [harmreductionteam@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:harmreductionteam@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)**

## **10. References**

Injection Equipment Provision in Scotland: [Good Practice Guidance](#)