



## Service Level Agreement 2025/26

### Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network Service (In hours service)

Developed by	Community Pharmacy Development Team Primary Care Contracts Team Palliative Care Lead Pharmacist
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	Document Revision Control
Version 1	+ Remuneration Uplift
Version 2	+ Contractor Responsibilities + Attendance at network meetings

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## **Service Level Agreement**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Service Level Agreement (SLA) acts as a contract between NHS Lothian and the contractor and commits the contractor to provide the services as defined by a NHS Lothian Palliative Care Network service to patients in Lothian.
- 1.2 The service must be delivered in accordance with General Pharmaceutical Council ([GPhC](#)) Professional Standards and Guidance in Good Pharmacy Practice.
- 1.3 This service is in addition to the statutory requirement of a community pharmacist to provide general pharmaceutical services as outlined in the terms of service for community pharmacists under the National Health Service (General Pharmaceutical Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 as amended, and patients and their carers will continue to access their usual community pharmacy to obtain prescriptions.

### **2 Background to service**

2.1 The National Council for Hospices, the Specialist Palliative Care Services and the Scottish Partnership Agency for Cancer and Palliative Care and the Scottish Partnership Agency for Cancer and Palliative care have adopted the following definitions:

- General Palliative Care: care delivery with a palliative approach is a core skill that every health care professional, in whatever setting, should possess if dealing with patients with incurable progressive disease.
- Specialist Palliative Care: care delivered by a multi-professional team. The team works collaboratively with those providing a palliative approach and deals with more complex problems to ensure that patient and family needs are met.

2.2 In 1999 the Scottish Executive Department of Health issued guidance under NHS MEL(1999)78 : Community Pharmacy: Model Schemes for Pharmaceutical Care and NHS (Primary Care) Act 1997 with the purpose being two fold:

- To ensure continuity of supply of agreed palliative care medicines and devices for drug delivery
- To create a network of palliative care community pharmacies to provide advice and information to patients, carers, GPs, nurses and other community pharmacies.

### **3 Service aims**

- 3.1 To provide a pharmaceutical care service to palliative care patients in Lothian. This will include advice, information and supply to ensure palliative patients receive urgent medicines within the timescale required.
- 3.2 To supply essential medicines and devices for drug delivery to patients requiring palliative care.
- 3.3 To create a network of specialist community pharmacies which will provide information and advice on pharmaceutical aspects of palliative care to patients, carers, GP's, nurses and other community pharmacies.
- 3.4 To promote integrated team working with the local hospices and palliative care teams.

### **4 Service outline and standard**

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTRACTOR**

- 4.1.1 Must sign the SLA agreement and return the contract agreement to [loth.communitypharmacy.contract@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.communitypharmacy.contract@nhs.scot)
- 4.1.2 Is responsible for ensuring that staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of and operate within the service specification and ensure all staff are trained in the operation of the service.
- 4.1.3 Ensure Service Provider is released to attend network meetings
- 4.1.4 Ensure that they have procedures in place to identify and manage the risks involved in providing and managing prescribing pharmacy services as detailed in GPhC Guidance [In practice: Guidance for pharmacist prescribers \(pharmacyregulation.org\)](https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/in-practice-guidance-for-pharmacist-prescribers)
- 4.1.5 Have procedures in place to ensure the whole pharmacy team provide safe & effective care and pharmacy services as detailed in the GPhC Guidance for contractors; [Guidance to ensure a safe and effective pharmacy team](#)
- 4.1.6 Notify NHS Lothian Primary Care Contracts Team (PCCT) of any change in contracted opening hours or any other relevant changes that may affect the service.
- 4.1.7 Will notify the NHS Lothian Primary Care contracts Team of any changes in circumstances whereby they can no longer deliver the service.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PHARMACY TEAM**

- 4.2.1 It is essential that specified palliative care stock list in Annex 1 is held at all times. If you are unable to access stock the Palliative Lead should be contacted to advise (section 8 contact details)
- 4.2.2 Attend scheduled network meetings. If unavailable, the Palliative Lead should be notified in advance with a minimum of 14 days-notice.

- 4.2.3 Ensure that there is a continuity of pharmaceutical palliative care advice from their pharmacy.
- 4.2.4 Work in partnership with local GP's, District Nurses, MacMillan Nurses and the area Specialist Palliative Care Pharmacists.
- 4.2.5 Ensure documentation is maintained and recorded according to local protocols.
- 4.2.6 Maintain knowledge relevant to providing the service and undertake further training in palliative care if required. This and the obligations of others are detailed in section 5.
- 4.2.7 Maintain good communication between stakeholders thus ensuring that information about the scheme is widely distributed.
- 4.2.8 Obtain/maintain up to date knowledge relevant to providing pharmaceutical care for the palliative patient, the pharmacist must undertake relevant training and attend the three Palliative Care Network meetings offered annually.
- 4.2.9 Ensure appropriate Standard Operating Procedures are in place to ensure all pharmacy staff understand the service and referral process.
- 4.2.10 Participate in any audit co-ordinated by NHS Lothian.
- 4.2.11 Have a named pharmacist for each Network pharmacy and inform PCCT/ lead pharmacist for palliative care network when the named pharmacist at the site changes or the named pharmacist will not be working from that site for a period longer than one month. PCCT/ lead pharmacist for palliative care network should also be informed if the named pharmacist works from the premises less than 3 days per week.
- 4.2.12 If on change of ownership a new owner chooses to opt out of the Network, they will be required to return a full set of stock for transfer to the pharmacy that takes its place in the Network or be invoiced by NHS Lothian for the full set of stock. Any resource materials should also be returned.

#### **4.2 Both Parties agree that:**

- 4.3.1 The service will be reviewed annually. Any alterations, revisions, or additions to this agreement, jointly agreed, will be recorded by way of a formal amendment of this SLA.
- 4.2.2 12 weeks' notice is required to terminate this SLA either by NHS Lothian or the contractor.
- 4.2.3 This agreement may be terminated with 12 weeks' notice on either side if it can be established that either side is in default on substantive issues within the agreement and that such an issue cannot be remedied within an agreed period.

## **5 Training requirement**

- 5.1 All staff members involved in the delivery of pharmaceutical services should have undertaken appropriate training.
- 5.2 It is essential that the community pharmacist involved in the provision of the service should undertake the current [Turas Learn](#) distance learning package on Palliative Care.
- 5.3 It is desirable that the community pharmacy contractor and staff involved in delivering the service should participate in any local training initiatives identified by NHS Lothian.
- 5.4 The community pharmacy contractor will ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of and operate within local guidelines

## **6 Monitoring & evaluation**

- 6.1 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) should be available for all staff to access and should be reviewed every two years or sooner if there are any changes to practice. An example SOP is included in Annex 3
- 6.2 Pharmacists, Pharmacy Technicians, and support staff involved in the provision of the service should undertake and retain evidence of relevant CPD/ training.
- 6.3 The process of monitoring and evaluation takes place through the three Network meetings held annually (education/training sessions) and is combined with peer review.
- 6.4 Provision of the service will be monitored and audited regularly by NHS Lothian.

## **7 Claims and payment**

- 7.1 Community pharmacy contractors will receive a quarterly service participation fee as agreed locally with Community Pharmacy Lothian.
- 7.2 Community pharmacy contractors will receive a payment to allow attendance at Network training sessions as agreed locally with Community Pharmacy Lothian.
- 7.3 Payments are made quarterly in advance except for Network meeting attendance fee and mileage claims which will be made on receipt of relevant claim forms.

#### 7.4 Current fees are detailed below:

	Payment	Frequency of payment
Network participation fee	£210	Quarterly
Attendance at network meeting	£190	On attendance

#### Lothian Palliative Care Community Pharmacy Networks In Hours Costs

	Payment	Frequency of payment
Mileage	£0.45/mile	Monthly
Set up fee*	£600 approximately	One off payment covering stock list drugs
Expired stock drugs	Invoice price	Paid on receipt of invoice. Costs of less than £10 will not be reimbursed

\*Each network pharmacy is to stock the drugs and quantities as listed on the agreed Palliative Care Medicine Stock List. Either a set-up fee of up to £600 will be reimbursed on receipt of invoices or a full set of stock transferred from another Network pharmacy.

- 7.5 Each Network pharmacy is to order the drugs and quantities as listed on the agreed Palliative Care Medicine Stock List from their usual suppliers. An initial minimum shelf life of 12 months is recommended. Costs will be reimbursed by NHS Lothian on receipt of invoices. Annex 1 lists the stock drugs.
- 7.6 Reimbursement for the replacement of expired stock list medicines and for the purchase of any new drugs should any changes be made to the stock list will be made on receipt of a copy of the purchase invoice. Claims for stock costing less than £10 cannot be processed individually but items can be submitted together during the financial year to bring the total to £10 or more.
- 7.7 Claims for expenses must be submitted using the forms provided at the end of each calendar month and will not be honoured beyond 3 months.

## 8 Contact Details

### **Palliative Care Pharmacists:**

Fiona Milne, Principle Pharmacist, Fairmile Marie Curie centre, Frogston Road West, Edinburgh, EH10 7DR. Tel: 0131 470 2201 mobile: 07525 387519

Email: [Fiona.milne@nhs.scot](mailto:Fiona.milne@nhs.scot)

Rachel Wilkins, Pharmacist, NHS Lothian, Pharmacy Dept, St Johns Hospital, Livingston.

E-mail: [rachel.wilkins@nhs.scot](mailto:rachel.wilkins@nhs.scot)

Meghann Lafferty, Pharmacist, NHS Lothian, Pharmacy Dept, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh (working hours Mon, Tues,Thur, Fri 8.45am-5pm) E-mail : [meghann.lafferty@nhs.scot](mailto:meghann.lafferty@nhs.scot)

NHS Lothian, Pharmacy Dept, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh (working hours Wednesday 8.45-5pm) Tel : 0131 537 2243

### **Other contacts:**

Lead Pharmacist, NHS Lothian Community Pharmacy Development, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 5HF

Tel: 0131 537 6625 Email: [loth.cpd@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.cpd@nhs.scot)

Primary Care Contracts, NHS Lothian, Waverley Gate, Edinburgh

Email: [loth.communitypharmacycontracts@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.communitypharmacycontracts@nhs.scot)

Haley Harris, Associate Clinical Director, Lothian Unscheduled Care Service, Astley Ainslie Hospital, 145 Grange Loan, Edinburgh. Email: [hayley.harris@nhs.scot](mailto:hayley.harris@nhs.scot)

Debbie Alexander, Lead Pharmacist - Controlled Drug Governance Team (CDGT), Waverley Gate, Edinburgh [debbie.alexander4@nhs.scot](mailto:debbie.alexander4@nhs.scot)

Pam Chisholm, Lead pharmacist, Lothian Palliative Care Network, Pharmacy Department, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 5HF 0131 537 6994 [pam.chisholm@nhs.scot](mailto:pam.chisholm@nhs.scot)

### **Appendix**

Please note – Appendix 1 and 2 are links to electronic documents

**Appendix 1** – [Pan-Lothian Palliative Medicine Stock List: June 2023](#)

**Appendix 2** – [Lothian Palliative Care Community Pharmacy Network claim form](#)

**Appendix 3** - **Standard Operating Procedure**

## APPENDIX 3

### Standard Operating Procedure - In Hours Access to the Lothian Palliative Care Network

Patients or their carers will continue to use their usual community pharmacy to obtain prescriptions. The community pharmacies participating in the scheme will only be accessed in the following situations:

- During normal working hours, when the patient's usual community pharmacy cannot supply palliative care drug(s) within the timescale required.
- When the patient's usual community pharmacy is closed.

#### Supply within normal working hours

1. The GP, other members of the palliative care team or community pharmacist contacts the pharmacist at one of the network pharmacies and informs the pharmacist that they will be receiving a prescription for a drug(s) from the palliative care list.
2. Where possible the patient's relative/carer will take the prescription to the pharmacy and pick up the drugs. When this is not possible alternative arrangements will be made to deliver the prescription to the pharmacy and deliver the drugs to the patient. A telephone order or emailed prescription is not acceptable.
3. The pharmacist will provide advice to the patient/carer when appropriate regarding the drugs supplied
4. NHS Lothian may require details of the interaction to be recorded using the Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network Advice Request & Drug Supply Record form for audit purposes.
5. The pharmacist will liaise with the patient's usual community pharmacy where possible to provide the following information:
  - Drugs supplied
  - Any ongoing problems
  - Advice given
  - Likely future requirements

#### Advice within normal working hours

1. The GP, other members of the Palliative care team or community pharmacist contacts the pharmacist at one of the network pharmacies to ask advice about the prescribing and or supply of a palliative care drug.
2. The network pharmacist will advise using the Scottish Palliative Care Guidelines as a reference guide