

Pharmacy and medicines optimisation services

NHS Midlands and Lancashire (ML) provides a wide range of pharmacy and medicines optimisation services supporting the NHS and wider organisations.

Our work extends nationally and across a wide range of sector organisations including NHS England, integrated care systems, local authorities, primary care, NHS trusts and third sector. We have a core team of over 60 clinical staff.

In addition to the core team, we operate a large pharmacy staff bank with a wide range of experience that can be deployed for projects where required.

We work closely with a wider supply chain to deliver skills in other areas such as engagement & surveys, evaluation programmes, advanced business intelligence support and information governance as well as access to nursing, public health and other clinical staff.

We operate a hub-and-spoke model to ensure that we achieve high quality, at-scale delivery of our products, supported by recognised industry techniques of process management, continuous improvement, and quality assurance.

We have a track record of over 10 years delivery in pharmacy and medicines optimisation support.

We are an NHS organisation with the role to develop and share best practice and deliver best value across the NHS.

Our services

Our services include:



**Integrated
Care Systems
support**



**Primary Care Networks
and clinical medicines
optimisation services**



**Partnership
and programme
support**



1. Integrated Care Systems support

We support several NHS Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in the Midlands and North-West with strategic and operational support to improve the use of medicines across interfaces.

Our ICB services enable ICB pharmacy teams to focus on strategy and transformation while we provide the transactional and back office support and bring best practice and innovation to you. We deliver an expert partnership that understands and resolves some of the pressures facing ICB leads.



Integrated Medicines Optimisation Group

The development of an Integrated Medicines Optimisation Group (IMOG) is unprecedented territory, and with the support of NHS ML, the complex challenges were proactively targeted.

“Successful focus, task and finish groups set up by NHS ML managed multiple stakeholder relations and communications to support the progress of the IMOG formation.”

Hemant Patel, Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB)



Our services include:

- Developing the ICB medicines strategy, which can include public and clinician engagement & surveys, best practice research and strategy writing for ICBs
- Developing and providing the governance and organisational approach to medicines management
- Evidence-based formulary, new products and medicines review, using both primary and secondary sources
- Horizon scanning for new medicines and NICE impact
- Medicines policy development and implementation
- Planning and delivering measurable prescribing improvement for QIPP
- Governance and administration for Non-Medical Prescribing codes and managing annual self-declarations
- A wide range of medicines related data and business intelligence
- Support for medicines safety officers including Medicines Safety Assurance Tool (MSAT®) for ICBs, medicines safety officers, trusts and GP practices, safety investigations and assurance support
- Controlled drugs (CD) support services, including data support and a range of CD accountable officer support services
- Developing and delivering tools to influence prescribing, such as clinical audits, prescribing detail aids, medicines training, and best use of clinical system software
- Digital clinical safety risk management, supporting organisations with DCB 0129 and DCB 0160
- Producing medicines prescribing advice newsletters and managing clinical prescribing messages on GP clinical systems using prescribing decision support tools such as ScriptSwitch and Optimise Rx

- Commissioning support to help manage community pharmacy services, such as smoking cessation and palliative care services
- Contracting and commissioning community pharmacy system software, for example, PharmOutcomes®, to transact pharmacy services
- Developing and implementing Patient Group Directions
- Statutory Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments for local authorities
- High-cost drug validation and scrutiny of non-payment-by-results (PBR) trust drug-related invoices, Blueteq® and clinical policies
- End-to-end management of pharmaceutical rebate schemes, working with finance and medicines leads to optimise gains.



Formulary Harmonisation Cheshire and Merseyside

Colleagues working on the harmonisation of two historic formularies within Cheshire and Merseyside have undertaken significant work in terms of planning, system consideration, engagement, and delivery of work to date. The team have been flexible in their approach, welcomed feedback with a focus and commitment to get the job done and deliver the best outcomes for patients, clinicians, and the system. The task has not been simple but the commitment, teamwork, and leadership within the team has been excellent.

*Susanne Lynch, Chief
Pharmacist, Cheshire and
Merseyside ICB*



Non-Medical Prescribing

We really enjoyed working on this piece of work with the NHS ML team. There was a sense of partnership at every turn and the team truly valued everyone's contributions, ideas, and suggestions. The team possess great technical skills which has allowed much of the process to be automated, reducing workload for both teams. NHS ML have been a pleasure to work with – always open to discussing process improvements, very responsive and quick to respond to emails and asks. We collaborated well together and have managed the project efficiently throughout the setup phase, the pilot, and improvement events. Despite being two separate organisations we both had the vision and drive to deliver this project to bring about improvements in quality of prescribing and patient safety. In fact, I look forward to our next opportunity so we can collaborate again – thank you!”

*Jatinder Saimbi, Senior Medicines Optimisation Pharmacist, Lancashire and
South Cumbria ICB*



2. Primary Care Networks and clinical medicines optimisation services

We provide professionally registered NHS clinical staff to support general practices implement clinical prescribing support services. These include registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians with clinical and independent prescribing skills, supported by our wider team to deliver best practice locally.

We also deliver NHS governance and procurement to engage private sector organisations to deliver medicines support locally to offer capacity and delivery to the NHS.

Services can be provided locally or remotely supported by the relevant information governance and data sharing agreements.



Inhaler prescribing

The workplan based on identifying duplicate inhaler was one of the best audits I have come across in a long while. It picked on a very common error that GPs make especially when issuing meds. We take inhalers very casually and usually don't think much in issuing inhalers or restarting one. It was interesting to note how patients develop side effects from the combination use which all went away on stopping use. Good job team. Well done. Has certainly changed my practice as GP.

Dr A. Ashfaq, GP

Our range of practice-based services include:

- At-scale Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) services for general practices
- Support for Care Quality Commission (CQC) safety assurance
- Clinical medication review services
- Productive reviews of repeat prescribing systems
- Medicines systems in care homes including our 100-point audit for nurse quality leads in care homes and ICBs.



We are an appointed delivery partner with NHS England to provide the National GP Improvement Programme which is part of Primary Care Access Programme.

We also won an HSJ Patient Safety Award in 2023 for our [innovation to reduce inhaler prescribing errors](#).



3. Partnership and programme support

We provide bespoke programme support delivered by project-trained pharmacists and pharmacy technicians with the skills and ability to work with local and national departments to design and deliver innovative outputs.

This has been a growing area of work since 2016 which includes consultancy, project delivery and national support for NHS England and a range of other clients. This work usually involves partnership working with wider departments.

Examples include:

- Bespoke economic assessment of all NICE guidance for the Isle of Man
- Developing community pharmacy payment systems for Gibraltar Health Authority
- Implementing medicines governance support for Sue Rydar charity
- Partnership working with Health Innovation Networks (formerly known as AHSNs) to deliver at-scale uptake of electronic repeat dispensing (eRD).



Learning Disability and Autism: Creating a community of practice

Excellent project management (PM) coordinating all activities in a timely and professional manner. It became obvious throughout the work that the NHS ML team grew a deeper understanding and passion for the work. They put heart and soul into the work believing in the values and principles required to work in this area of practice. It was evident that the team used this deeper awareness to drive an enhanced performance, exceeding expectations of the commissioning team. They provided additional technical skills and expertise to support beyond the PM role. This included building resources onto Futures NHS as well as recording blogs in addition to webinars. The work completed with a highly professional report that was well structured and captured multiple learnings and themed recommendations. This was beyond my expectations.

Dave Gerrard, Health Improvement Pharmacy Lead - Learning Disability and Autism, NHS England

Our national support work includes:

- Pharmacy Integration Fund – lead for the NHS national support programme since 2015
- Evaluating and piloting new community pharmacy services such as Community Pharmacist Consultation Service, Community Pharmacy blood pressure check service, Supporting Early diagnosis of Cancer service and the Pharmacy Contraception Service
- Implementation of national services such as smoking cessation referrals from NHS trusts
- Formative evaluation of the national Independent Prescribing Pathfinder Programme
- Development of national toolkit and surveys to support biosimilars uptake as part of the Medicines Value Programme
- Public and professional national consultations in conjunction with NHS ML Communications and Engagement Team and The Strategy Unit
- Supporting the national digital pharmacy transformation programme leads
- Health and justice regional support in North West
- [Overprescribing review for learning disability \(STOMP\)](#) – HSJ Patient Safety Awards 2023 Winner.



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