

The use of additional services at local pharmacies

Findings from the Healthwatch
Northamptonshire Make Your Voice
Count Survey - Autumn/Winter
2016/17

September
2017





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Background

Between October 2016 and March 2017 Healthwatch Northamptonshire carried out its annual 'Make Your Voice Count' campaign.

169 of the people we spoke to completed a survey telling us about their own or a family member's experiences of local services and their views on how things could be made better. As part of this, we asked people about their opinions and use of additional services at their local pharmacies, besides dispensing and disposal of medication and advice on treatment of minor conditions.

Key findings

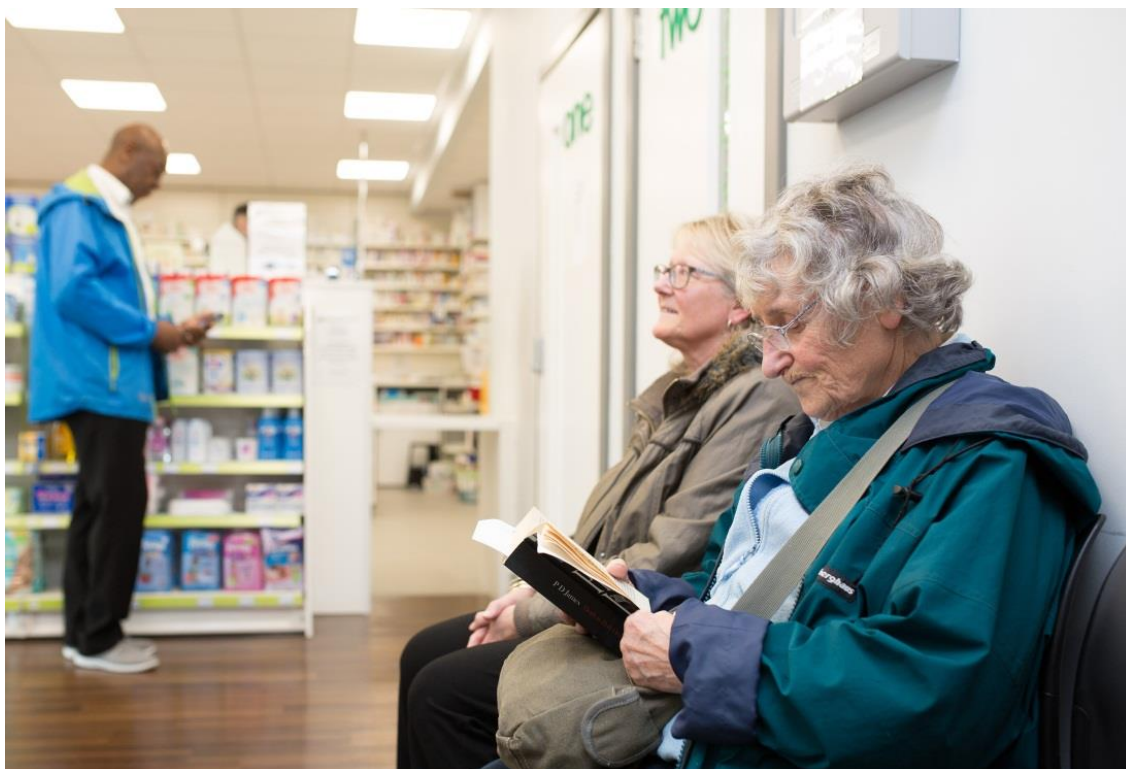
- **More than half** of those we spoke to (100 people, 59%) **had not used any of the additional pharmacy services listed**, rising to 71% of people under the age of 65
- The **most used services** were: **flu vaccination service** (33 people, 20%), **home delivery service** (26 people, 15%), and **Medicine Review Service** (23 people, 14%)
- **Younger people (aged under 35) had used a wider range of services** than older people (aged 65 and over) but **more aged 65 and over had used at least one service** (71%)
- Other additional services that people would welcome at their local pharmacy included advice on **dealing with minor ailments**, **general wellbeing advice**, such as **weight and stress management**, and also **advice on specific conditions** (such as dementia, Parkinson's disease and diabetes)
- **Most people preferred collecting prescription medication over the counter** from their pharmacy (104 people, 67%)





Recommendations

1. Awareness of additional services available at local pharmacies could be raised through advertising, etc., particularly among working age people (59% of people we spoke to had not used any of the additional services listed, rising to 71% of under 65 year olds).
2. More work is needed to deliver services that people feel they would benefit from and provide them with the relevant advice, including minor ailments, general wellbeing and specific conditions (e.g. dementia, Parkinson's disease and diabetes).
3. Pharmacies may need to prioritise ensuring that facilities for the collection of prescriptions medication over the counter are working efficiently given that this was the most preferred method of receiving prescription medication.
4. This survey was conducted on a relatively small number of people and gives a quick 'snapshot' of people's use of services and opinions. We therefore recommended that commissioners and providers carry out a more in depth and wider survey of pharmacy services awareness to inform service development.

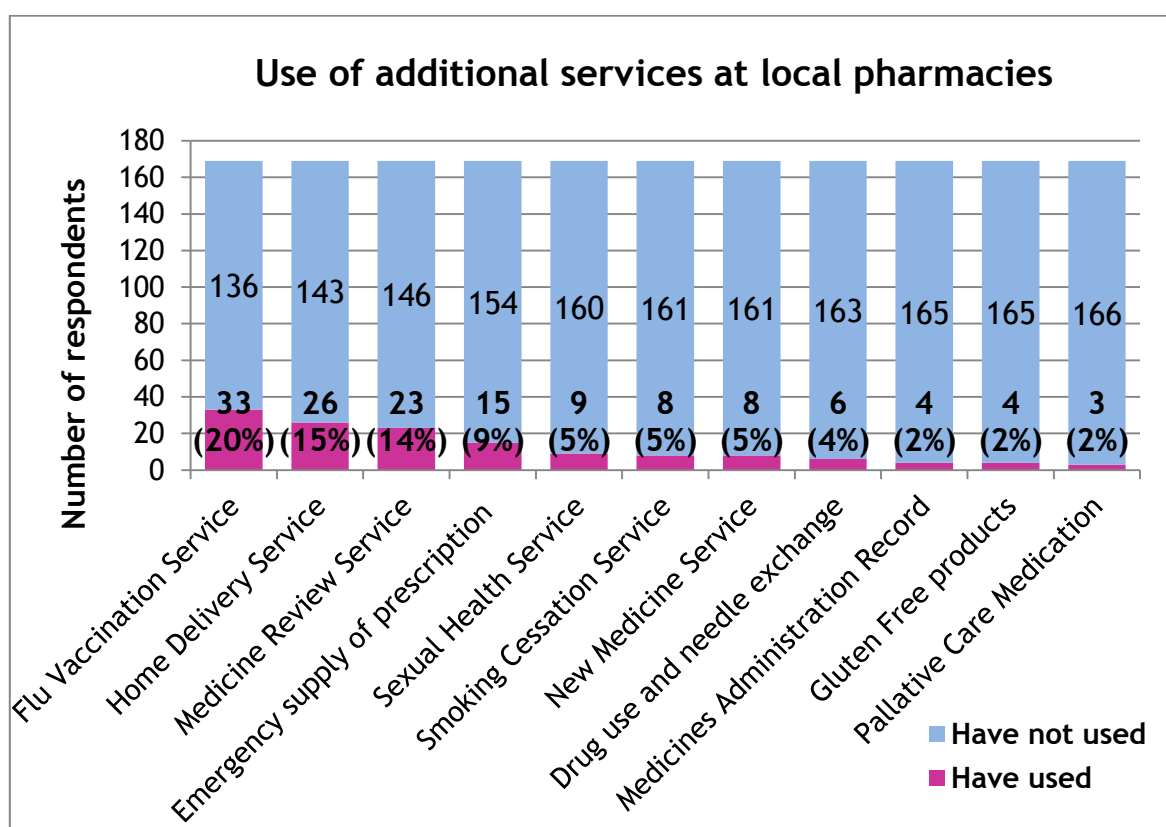




What people told us

Use of additional services

- More than half of those we spoke to (100 people, 59%) had not used any of the additional pharmacy services listed
- The graph below shows us the number of people who have and have not used the additional pharmacy services listed
- The most used services were: **flu vaccination service** (33 people, 20%), **home delivery service** (26 people, 15%), and **Medicine Review Service** (23 people, 14%)

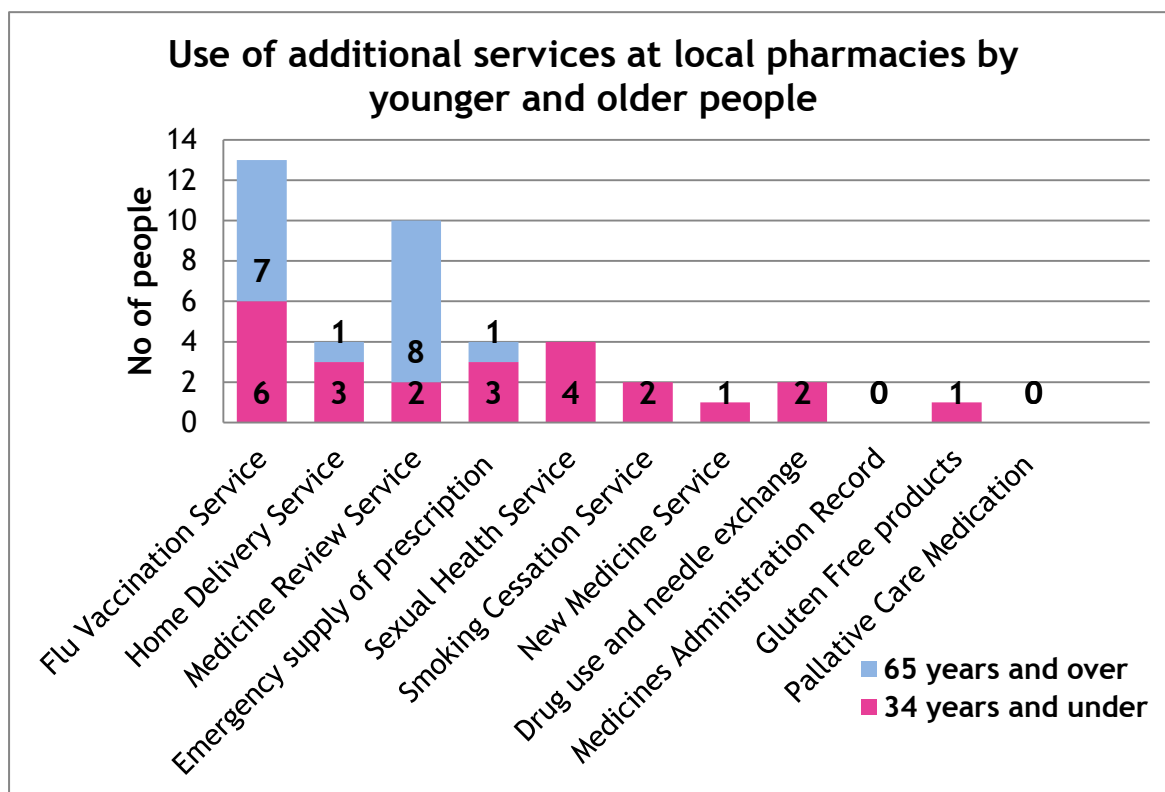


Variation by age

- The graph on the next page shows the difference in the use of additional services at local pharmacies between younger people (34 years and under) and older people (65 years and over)
- A wider range of services were used by younger people (nine of the eleven services) than older people (four of the eleven services)



- Flu vaccinations and sexual health services were the most used services by younger people (six and four out of 38 people respectively)
- Medicine Review Service and flu vaccinations were the most used services by older people (eight and seven out of 28 people respectively)



- Most of those aged 65 and over had used at least one of the listed additional services (20 out of 28 people, 71%). Only 29% (25 out of 87 people) under 65s had used a listed additional service

Age	Number who had used at least one listed service	Total number in age group	Percentage
15-24	2	12	17%
25-34	10	26	38%
35-44	4	18	22%
45-54	7	19	37%
55-64	2	12	17%
65-74	14	17	82%
75-84	4	9	44%
85 and over	2	2	100%



Ideas for other services

- When asked to elaborate on additional services that would be welcome at their local pharmacy, 84 people commented. Many people (28, 33% of answers) felt there was no need for any further services other than those already mentioned. The remaining 61 suggestions included a need for **advice on dealing with minor ailments, health checks and general wellbeing advice**, such as **weight and stress management**, and also advice on specific conditions individuals are living with (such as dementia, Parkinson's disease and diabetes):

Additional services that would be beneficial	Number of mentions	Percentage of question respondents	Percentage of total survey respondents
Minor ailment service	18	21%	11%
Health checks (including blood pressure and cholesterol tests)	12	14%	7%
Weight management	10	12%	6%
Hospital discharge service	5	6%	3%
Emergency appointments/medication	3	4%	2%
Hearing or sight checks	3	4%	2%
Wellbeing advice/stress management	2	2%	1%
Information on managing specific conditions, e.g. dementia	2	2%	1%
More in-depth medical advice (before seeing a GP)	2	2%	1%
Advice on medication	1	1%	1%
Blood tests	1	1%	1%
Quicker repeat prescriptions	1	1%	1%
Natural remedies	1	1%	1%
Disability and mobility support	1	1%	1%
Crisis Team	1	1%	1%
Dietary advice, esp. dairy free	1	1%	1%
Free toiletries	1	1%	1%
None (not needed)/all those mentioned	28	33%	17%



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- Examples of suggestions included:

Minor ailments: “I would welcome improved minor ailment services; to date I have found pharmacies will give advice - especially for colds, rashes.... but I will only approach if department not busy.”

Wellbeing advice: “Wellbeing and lifestyle advice which is not patronising.”

Hospital discharge: “Discharge lounge is awful and increases risk of exposure to repeat infection. Very slow process once told you can go, sometimes wait hours for [discharge] letter and even told to return to collect medication. That incurs more parking fees which are extortionate.”

Advice of long term conditions: “More for lower end dementia and cognitive impaired groups; there does not seem to be much.”

“Maybe information leaflets on managing different illnesses i.e. diabetes, Parkinson’s.”

Two people suggested being able to get more in-depth advice before seeing a GP whereas two said they would rather go to their GP instead:

“More in-depth advice/recommendations rather than being referred to the GP.”

“Going to pharmacy for the first instance as a drop in would be much easier than trying to get appointment at out GP.”

“None of these. I would see a fully qualified Doctor.”

“I think pharmacies do too much right now, which should be managed by GPs”

One person suggested pharmacy services could relieve pressure on hospitals and another that more should be provided by First for Wellbeing¹:

“All of the above- anything to free up the major hospitals.”

“These should also be done by prescribing via First for Wellbeing.”

¹ First for Wellbeing is a Community Interest Company founded by Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Northampton to improve the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of the people of Northamptonshire by offering an integrated health and wellbeing service, www.firstforwellbeing.co.uk.



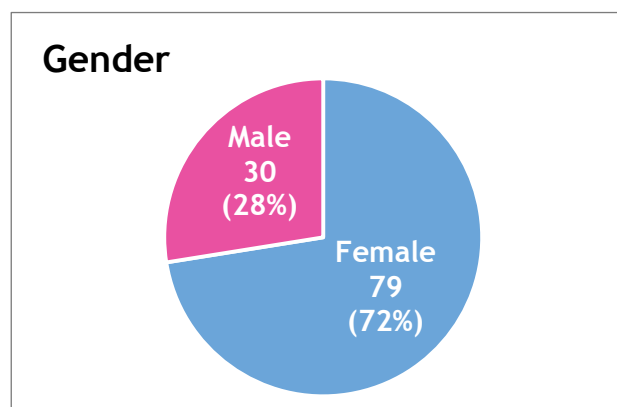
Receiving prescription medication

- The majority of people we spoke to would prefer to receive prescription medication over the counter at their pharmacy (104 people, 67%). Over a quarter would prefer a home delivery service (42 people, 27%). A very small number would prefer to receive their prescription medication by a distance selling pharmacy (8 people, 5%) and one person would prefer it to be “dispensed at the surgery”.

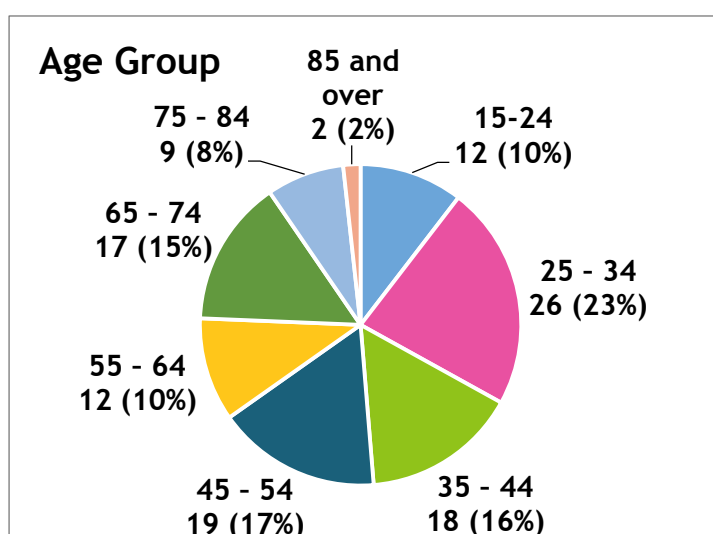


Demographics

- 64% of the people we spoke to answered the question about their gender and nearly three-quarter were female

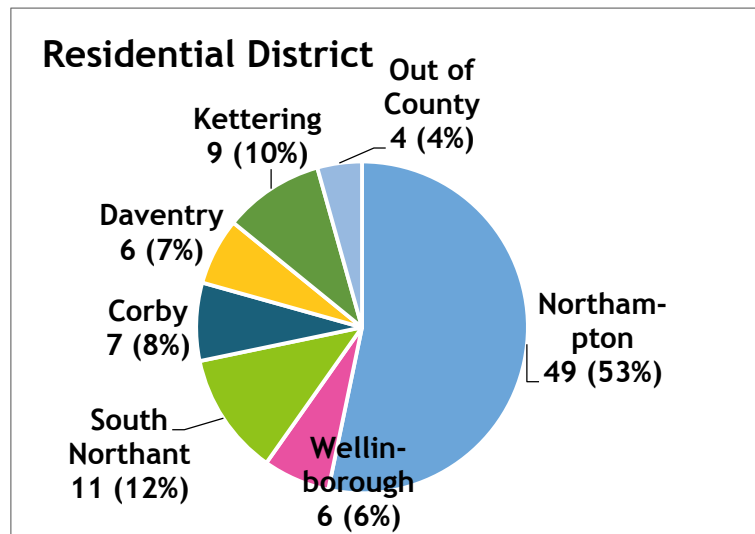


- Those who completed the survey ranged from aged 15-24 to over 85 years old (68% gave their age)
- Over half (63 people, 55%) were between the ages of 25 and 54





- 54% of those who completed the survey provided their residential area. Most of the people we spoke to (53%) lived in Northampton



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Northamptonshire would like to thank Anne-Marie King (Chief Officer Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes Local Pharmaceutical Committee) for working with us to write the pharmacy survey questions and all the members of the public who completed a survey.





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