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Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

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On 1 April 2013, statutory responsibility for publishing and updating a statement of the need for pharmaceutical services passed to Health and Wellbeing Boards. This statement of need is referred to as a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA). Health and Wellbeing Boards must ensure PNAs for their local area are updated and published by April 2015.

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments are used by the NHS to decide whether to approve applications for new pharmacies in an area and by commissioners to identify local health needs that could be addressed by pharmacy services.

PNAs have a number of purposes:

- Used by the NHS to make decisions on applications to open new pharmacies
- Can support Health and Wellbeing Boards to work with providers to target services where they are needed and limit duplication
- Inform interested parties of the pharmaceutical needs in a local area and enable work to plan, develop and deliver pharmaceutical services for the population
- Inform the commissioning decisions of local authorities, and the NHS including Clinical Commissioning Groups

PNAs include information on:

- Pharmacies in a local area and the services they currently provide
- Other local pharmaceutical services, such as dispensing GP surgeries
- Relevant maps relating to providers of pharmaceutical services in the area
- Services in neighbouring Health and Wellbeing Board areas that might affect the need for services
- Potential gaps in provision and likely future needs

Pan-Lancashire PNA working group

In November 2013 a pan-Lancashire working group was established to jointly lead on the development and production of Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Boards across the three localities of Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. The group meets on a bi-monthly basis against an agreed project plan.

A communication plan has also been produced to ensure that partners including the Local Pharmaceutical Committee, GPs, Healthwatch, patients, consumer and community groups and other groups of interest are kept informed on the development of the PNA and have the opportunity to share their views on the process at regular intervals throughout the year.

The Department of Health has produced an [information pack](#) for local authorities which provides information about the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment and the role of Health and Wellbeing Boards.

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