

## **November 2017**

### Testing the temperature for pharmacy needs in Kent

How often do you use your local pharmacy? Does your town need more? These are some of the questions being put to Kent residents in a new consultation.

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments (PNAs) are used by commissioners such as Kent County Council and local NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to identify local health needs that could be addressed by these services, and by NHS England to decide whether to approve applications for new pharmacies in an area.

Residents and health professionals are being asked for their views in a brief questionnaire. KCC Deputy Director of Public Health, Allison Duggal said: "We have a statutory responsibility to look at the need for pharmaceutical services in Kent and the essential services they currently provide, including dispensing, providing support and advice on health and medicines, collection of medicine waste and supporting public health campaigns. We'd like to encourage as many people as possible to take part in this consultation so we can shape the future of pharmaceutical services in the county."

The important role that pharmacists can play is highlighted in the NHS England 'Stay Well This Winter' campaign which KCC supports, urging people feeling under the weather this winter to avoid A&E, and to instead consider visiting their local pharmacy for quick, early advice. This is especially important over the winter months – when people are more likely to become ill or feel poorly.

Going to the pharmacy early will give you access to medication and advice on common ailments, but they can also:

provide expert advice to manage long term conditions and let you know if you need to see your GP or make a hospital appointment;

Give you advice on how to care for an elderly relative or friend who has a bad cough, trouble breathing, cold or sore throat.

The consultation runs [from 15 November until 22 January 2018](https://www.kent.gov.uk/pharmaceuticalneeds) and is available at [www.kent.gov.uk/pharmaceuticalneeds](https://www.kent.gov.uk/pharmaceuticalneeds)

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