

**ANNUAL REPORT of WALSALL LPC
2022/23**



View from the Chair

Year ended 31 March 2023

Principal Activities

Walsall LPC is a Local Pharmaceutical Committee ("LPC") acting in the role of a local NHS representative organisation.

Our goal is to represent and support the aspirations, priorities and responsibilities of all our Community Pharmacy contractors and support them to deliver nationally and locally determined health outcomes.

The Committee

Walsall LPC is an association whose functions and procedures are set out in our Constitution, Principles and Code of Conduct available to view [on this link](#).

During the year ended 31 March 2023 Walsall LPC had 10 elected and nominated members on the committee as follows:

3 members nominated from CCA companies

1 member nominated by AIMp

6 elected independent member seats (1 vacancy)

And co-opted executive officers: Chair, Treasurer, Governance Officer & Chief Officer

Names and contact details for our members can be found on [Walsall LPC website](#)

All members have continued to adhere to corporate governance principles adopted by the Committee and the code of conduct available to view on the above page.

Overview

2019 had seen the introduction of a new 5-year contract for Community Pharmacy, together with promises to enhance clinical roles within the sector, encourage engagement with other Primary Care professionals (chiefly via Primary Care Networks) and offer the security of flat-rate remuneration over the period of the contract. During the Pandemic DH gave contractors

an advance to help with costs and eventually agreed that after submitting claims to substantiate costs we could keep funds from the advance. This last year due to the financial crisis contractors have had substantial increases in Utility bills ,Staff costs and costs associated with inflation being over 10%. Also, we have had an increase in footfall and calls from customers who are unable to get in touch with GPs. Unfortunately, DH is not recognising the difficulty contractors are having and no additional funding has been forthcoming.

PSNC are asking that PQS workload should be reduced and that for now new services should be put on hold until the working pressures are addressed by DH.

In the past year Walsall pharmacy numbers have reduced down from 72 to 70 (April 2023). The service has been further eroded by reductions in supplementary hours and a number of changes of ownership are in progress,

Walsall Community Pharmacists had shown their enthusiasm for PCNs but due to lack of engagement ,little progress has been made , although LPC PCN leads have worked with local PCNs on Flu vaccination and are currently working on GP CPCS rollout. We currently have 2 vacancies for PCN leads in the following PCNs South1 and South 2.

Community Pharmacy Services

A GP referral service into CPCS has been running for some time and recently NHSE are encouraging increased provision and consistency of this service, with all GP practices adopting the service. This will help free up capacity. GP practices in Walsall use the EMIS Integrated Referral Pathway for GP CPCS. The LPC have been given some funds to help encourage take up at GP Practices, hence the PCN lead for the LPC is liaising with Hema and other CCG colleagues to target low uptake. He will also be including local pharmacies in any work done in the PCNs.

The POD has helped to reduce the workload into pharmacy although had some staffing issues on its call-handling side which lead to long wait times. They have managed to recruit more call handlers and service should be improving. They look after 9 practices (around 70000 patients currently) and we are waiting to review the evaluation of the project which has been recently published.

Local and National focus

Both Chair and Chief Officer regularly attended ZOOM meetings. At **PSNC** national level, LPC members have attended relevant virtual PSNC-organised events to support members in developing pharmacy services and both disseminating and enforcing regulations locally. The PSNC have opted to have 2 PSNC representatives for the midlands under its new structure , the Representative elected for West Midlands is JAS HEER.

Community Pharmacy West Midlands (CPWM) includes LPC colleagues from Staffordshire in the North to Hereford and Worcester in the South. CPWM sometime early in 2023 became

CPM (Community Pharmacy Midlands) with our colleagues from East Midlands being involved in the new committee representing nearly 2000 contractors (20% of Community Pharmacies). Meetings address issues over the wider area and encourage a seamless approach. The provider company (Central Health Services) regularly updates the CPM group. CHS are now an independent company, having repaid the LPC loans loaned to help start up the company.

PSNC/LPC Review

Following publication of the Wright Review, PSNC Review Steering Group undertook a thorough study of the organisations involved in Community Pharmacy and consulted all the various stakeholders.



The RSG contractor vote took place in June 22 and 68.3% voted in favour of the changes recommended. The next process is called TAPR – Transforming Pharmacy Representation Programme.

The 4 Black Country LPC officers (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall & Wolverhampton) decided to consider how best to address both TAPR and the merger of the 4 Black Country CCGs into an Integrated Care Board – which was evolving over a similar timescale. After a meeting and some debate, the decision was taken to merge to a pan-Black Country LPC over a period of 2 years, to be confirmed by a positive contractor vote.

The contractor votes for all 4 LPCs were in favour of the proposal of a merger. Hence the current LPCs will continue till end June 2023 and the newly elected committees (renamed Community Pharmacy Place) will start from 1st July 2023. The new committees will have a maximum membership of 8 members + executive team. For Walsall that means 4 Independents, 3 CCA nominees and 1 AIMp nominated representative. Walsall LPC after 1st July 2023 when the new committee is in place will be called Community Pharmacy Walsall.

Part of the merger is to ensure that all the 4 LPCs have similar finance policies and that levies can be set at the right level. Walsall Contractors over the last year have enjoyed levy holidays for several months and our aim is to reduce the figure collected every month in 2023/24 once new committee is in place.

Working in Walsall

The introduction of PCNs has yet to impact on community pharmacy services. The LPC PCN Lead Daljit is now liaising with the Clinical Lead Group to work together and promote pharmacy services.

Primary Care

We try to ensure community pharmacy are represented at LMC meetings but unfortunately recent meetings have been GP ONLY. Our alternative plan is to invite an LMC rep to attend our meetings and/or send reports.

The PNA for Walsall was completed in the last year and approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board

The LPC are now working on our 2023/24 Business Plan which will include actions to support pharmacy teams in delivery vaccination services and PQS in the coming year. It will also include the plans to start the process to merge the 4 local LPC committees. The plan will be updated every 6 months.



Expanding Working Practices - CPM & ICS

Walsall LPC work collaboratively through CPM to share best practice, maximise influence on NHSE&I and keep up with of progress at national and regional level. The arrangement works well for all parties but decisions continue to be ratified by individual LPCs.

Collaboration allows reduction and/or duplication of effort and as we share the workload and costs of attending the various meetings.

Our work-sharing ethos allows us to cover a wide range of meetings to ensure community pharmacy are represented in all emerging workstreams. Many of these will underpin the Integrated Care structures – Walsall is part of The Black Country ICS as the current CCGs are reorganised. Services will be commissioned at Black Country ICS level in the future and implemented across the ICS. Palliative Care Service is being reviewed currently, whilst other services will be rolled over. Dan Attry is the ICS Head of Community Pharmacy Clinical Services and will be working closely with Hema Patel and LPCs.

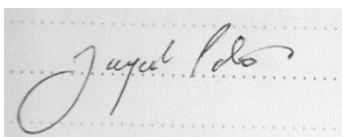
The Walsall LPC website hosted by PSNC (<http://psnc.org.uk/walsall-lpc/>) is continually updated. This includes sections on Services, details of enhanced service SLAs and forms for submission and evaluation. Information regarding NHSE&I personnel, structures and policies are available. We will be posting all future events on the website calendar as well as in newsletters.

Personal Note

I will be taking a back seat and not be applying to be reselected for chair of Walsall LPC. I have been a committee member for over 25 years and with Jas Pannu shadowing my role and eager to “take over the reins”, I will be supporting the merger plans over the next 12 months to ensure a smooth transition.

It has been a great pleasure working at LPC level to ensure that Walsall contractors get the best from all the different bodies involved and that the voices and opinions of Community Pharmacy contractors would be taken into account nationally and locally.

This report was approved by the Walsall LPC on 10th May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background with horizontal dotted lines. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'Jay Patel'.

Jay Patel
Chair of the Committee
30th April 2023

Walsall Local Pharmacy Committee - Chief Officer's Report 2022/23

As the end of the 2022 financial year approached, a recovering nation took stock as we remembered the COVID-19 lockdown imposed two years before. During the pandemic, Community Pharmacy had provided a near normal level of service, care and support to patients and local communities while other primary care practitioners were offering limited contact or were effectively closed to the public. In addition to their core activities, many Community Pharmacists had set up successful vaccination services, giving the public protection from COVID-19 infection but also welcome income.

Walsall South MP Valerie Vaz visited a CP Vaccination site in her constituency:



The effort put into the Community Pharmacy service during the pandemic had taken a toll on the sector. In 2022 the threat to health from COVID-19 had largely subsided but speculation around new variants and long COVID overshadowed efforts to return to “business as usual” - many Community Pharmacy teams reported widespread fatigue, workload pressures and staff shortages. To make matters worse, business costs were spiralling - the UK economy in meltdown as the European energy crisis escalated.

PSNC's 2022 Pharmacy Pressures Survey

The survey of over 5,000 pharmacy premises and 1,000 pharmacy team members took place in 2022, asking community pharmacy contractors and, separately, pharmacy staff, about the effects that the current pressures are having on them and their colleagues.

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The results indicate that 91% of pharmacies are experiencing staff shortages and almost half of contractors are extremely concerned about their pharmacy's finances, with 80% reporting that the costs to run their pharmacies are significantly higher than this time last year. At the same time, nine out of ten pharmacy teams have seen a significant increase in phone calls from patients about prescriptions, and 86% reported a rise in requests for healthcare advice.

PSNC's 2022 Pharmacy Pressures Survey confirmed that the unsustainable pressures on community pharmacies are having a serious impact on pharmacy teams' wellbeing, affecting patient services negatively, and putting businesses at risk.

With pharmacies under this level of workload pressure, PSNC also heard about the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of pharmacy staff. The survey found that:

- 98% of respondents said that workforce shortages are resulting in increased pressure on pharmacy teams;
- 82% said that increased workplace pressures are negatively affecting their mental health and wellbeing; and
- On a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 is not coping at all and 10 is coping perfectly fine, 79% of respondents scored their team as 5 or below.

As a consequence, two-thirds of pharmacies have had to cut back on services or the advice they offer to patients, and 29% have had to reduce their opening hours. These are last resort measures that are limiting pharmacy staff's ability to spend the time with patients that they want to, and making them uncertain of their capacity to take on new services in the future.

Sadly, the 2023 survey headlines showed little improvement.

Pressures Survey confirms rising costs, patient demand and medicine supply issues continue to grip community pharmacy:

- 90% of pharmacies reported that they are unable to spend as much time with their patients;
- 87% said prescriptions now take longer to dispense; and
- Only 34% of respondents said that they felt that they had some capacity to take on new services in future.

Compounding the above, 83% of pharmacies reported a significant increase in medicine supply issues in the past year, leading to extra work and additional stress for staff. Two-thirds of respondents said that medicines supply chain issues are a daily occurrence, with 97% reporting that this led to patient frustration.

PSNC remains very concerned about the pressures and funding constraints within community pharmacy, along with the current economic circumstances putting many community pharmacies' sustainability into question. These pressures are a key focus for PSNC in the ongoing Year 4 CCPF negotiations.

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Walsall Local Pharmaceutical Committee share PSNC's concerns. The challenge of growing economic strains have added to sustained pressures encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent LPC survey of closures/changes of ownership/reduction of hours estimated a net loss of 184 community pharmacy hours per week in the last six months, many contracts available for sale and pharmacies reporting staff burnout.



Readers of this report may ask what LPCs offer contractors at local level. LPCs are composed of representatives Community Pharmacy, people who work in the sector; who own pharmacies (elected independent members) or work within national pharmacy companies (CCA) plus AIMp. We have a co-opted Executive of officers who have all had – or are still having - working experiences in Community Pharmacy.

The committee meet monthly to consider pressing issues with local and national focus. We liaise with NHSEI, CCG colleagues and, as a result of changes in Primary Care structures, with colleagues across the Black Country Integrated Care Board at management level. Changes to meetings initiated during the pandemic continue to enable home working and broaden our reach to include Community Pharmacy and NHSEI colleagues from across West and East Midlands. Officers are invited to a broad spectrum of meetings and focus on representing the views of our Community Pharmacy contractors. All messages from contractors are welcome and answered as quickly as possible.

The use of email to disseminate news was reviewed and reduced during the pandemic to allow contractors to concentrate on the most pressing issues. The intention is to continue to limit circulation of messages and post news on [WLPC website](#). The [PSNC website](#) will, as ever, provide an invaluable resource for Community Pharmacy contractors and LPCs alike.

LPCs remain an integral part of PSNC's engagement process – the local arm of the national body. Decisions taken at PSNC are circulated and/or considered by the committee and more widely in pan-ICS and regional forums.

Transforming Pharmacy Representation - Black Country Integration

As part of the Wright Review, whose recommendations were overwhelmingly supported by contractors, PSNC will be renamed Community Pharmacy England from June 2023. The local

representative committee for Community Pharmacy will be known as Community Pharmacy PLACE, in our case we are based in Walsall Place. Following a positive contractor vote on the membership and constitution of Community Pharmacy Walsall, the committee will consist of:

4 independent elected members

3 CCA & 1 AIMp nominated members

The Executive Team may consist of members or co-opted officers - yet to be determined (Chair, Vice-Chair, Governance Officer, Treasurer and Chief Officer)

The immediate aim of the slimmed-down structure is to control costs while maintaining the level of service as Community Pharmacy transitions from NHSEI to the Black Country Primary Care Board. Our longer-term goal is greater integration with the 4 Black Country LPCs, followed by a merger into Community Pharmacy Black Country, a two-year project.

The **Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2022-2025** was published following ratification at the October meeting of Walsall Health and Well-Being Board. The LPC Chair and Chief Officer had contributed to the document, which is researched and compiled by Public Health Walsall. The PNA is a crucial part of the market entry system and informs commissioning based on patient needs. Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) prepare PNAs to national comparable standards. All market entry applications copied to LPCs and commissioners are judged against the background of the PNA. Our thanks to HealthWatch Walsall for organising a Patient Survey to support the PNA and to CP teams for processing and returning the surveys for assessment.

The **Annual Report** gives me an opportunity to express my personal thanks to each and every member of every Community Pharmacy team in Walsall LPC area. It is a privilege to support such a dedicated group of people.

The NHS have made it clear that more is expected of Community Pharmacy in the future. As additional services are introduced, success will be dependent on our ability to deliver results – which will require your full support and increased funding. GP referrals into Community Pharmacy, Hypertension Case-Finding and Contraceptive Pilot figures continue to rise - it is essential these referrals are processed in a timely fashion to ensure confidence in the pathways. DMS has been a slower burn, partly due to IT mismatch and the complexity of the service. Performance to service specifications will be crucial to retain our profile with NHS commissioners.

Thank you all for your professionalism. Remember the LPC - under the new name CPWalsall from June 2023 - exists to support you.



Jan Nicholls CO, Walsall LPC

30th April 2023

Walsall LPC Governance Officer report 2022/ 2023

Report produced for AGM

Dated 30th April 2023

In our LPC we have set up 3 different working groups that formalise our business plan for the LPC and ensure that we bring value for money for Walsall contractors.

The working groups are:

The Governance group

Services group and

Communication group.

At each meeting the 3 groups give an update on their workstreams and have an open dialogue with the Committee to agree on further actions.

We have set up a fit-for-purpose template to compile an Annual Report for the AGM, so that all officers report back activity over the year with a detailed update on all developments from the Chair.

During this year there has been a lot of work on the proposal for PSNC and LPC structures. We have followed the guidelines to keep all members and contractors informed. There was a fair and open process when it came to voting for the merger of LPC's within the Black Country footprint.

The committee size and member split have been decided for the new Walsall committee to start taking shape in July 2023.

The **Governance** group have completed various tasks on their business plan to ensure we have robust governance processes in place. The various topics that we have discussed and then agreed with the wider committee include:

- To ensure we have the correct capacity and mix of members on the committee

- To ensure that all members have the correct capability and we have the right skill mix to ensure we offer the best service for our contractors.

- To have a robust budgeting process in place, and ensure that all expenses are authorised in line with our expenses policy, which has been recently updated with the PSNC template/guidelines.

We monitor the reserve in the bank account on a monthly basis and where appropriate give a levy free holiday for contractors, which has happened this year. We have used the PSNC guidelines to ensure all our financial processes and records fully meet the PSNC requirements, and any shortfalls will be a part of our action plan which is shared with the wider committee. We use the zero-budgeting template as per the PSNC guidelines.

All members declare their Declaration of Interest at the start of each meeting and completed the Governance paperwork required.

We have kept the same accountant for continuity purposes and give us good value for money. They produce the accounts in line with PSNC template and produce a statement of assurance as recommended by PSNC..

I am not a contractor nor work for any independent or group of pharmacies, so offer an impartial view on all topics discussed at our meetings. I have worked in Community Pharmacy for over 30 years and held various positions from managing pharmacy branches to senior operational roles. All meetings are held with a clear agenda which is circulated in advance and any reading material. I can assure readers that each topic is discussed in details and all members are given an opportunity to put their views across.

As a committee we come to a majority agreement on any subject that requires voting.

We operate an open and candid culture which enables us to get the most out of our meetings.

H Sadhra BPharm
(Walsall LPC Governance Officer)