

Pharmacy First minor ailments scheme

Minor ailments are defined as common, self-limiting or uncomplicated conditions which can be managed without medical intervention. The management of patients with minor self-limiting conditions impacts significantly upon GP and urgent care services' workload. Community Pharmacy services can play an important role in enabling self-care, particularly amongst patients with minor ailments.

Pharmacists are qualified, highly skilled experts in medicines and remedies, with at least 4 years specialist training. They are able to advise on a wide range of minor ailments and conditions, and can offer the privacy of a consultation room if required.

The Pharmacy First minor ailments scheme is an enhancement on the standard service offered by all pharmacies to all patients. In addition to a consultation, advice and sale of over the counter medicines, Pharmacy First offers eligible patients a consultation and supply of required medication, free of charge.

The aim of Pharmacy First is to improve primary care capacity by reducing practice workload in relation to minor ailments and promote self-care through pharmacies.

The CCG launched the Pharmacy First pilot in January 2015, funded through winter monies. The pilot ran for 8 months, covering a small range of minor ailments which present commonly at GP practices and urgent care services and can be safely managed through self-care with patient education, advice and medicine that does not require a prescription.

Patients are eligible for Pharmacy First in Southampton if they:

- are registered with a Southampton City CCG GP
- are eligible for free prescriptions
- have one of conditions covered by the service
- would have otherwise gone to their GP or presented at an urgent care service

As part of the service, patients receive a consultation and are provided with advice and a supply of medicine if required, from an agreed formulary. The cost to the CCG is £4 plus the cost of the medicine provided - a total average cost of around £6.20 per patient.

During the pilot, the service was provided by 12 accredited pharmacies across the city (4 in each locality) for 4 conditions; upper respiratory tract infections (cough, cold, earache), sore throat, paediatric fever and diarrhoea. While initial uptake has been slow (expected, based on feedback from other areas) we have seen an encouraging spread of activity across the city. Upon review of the pilot in June, it was agreed that the CCG would fully commission the service, expanding it to cover more conditions with more pharmacies offering the service.

The new service commenced on 1st September, with an additional 20 conditions. To date, a total of 17 accredited pharmacies are providing the service, with many more due to come on board shortly. By December, we aim to have at least 75% of the pharmacies in Southampton (34 out of 45) providing the service.

There is an ongoing communications programme promoting Pharmacy First. In September, every infant, junior and primary school in the city were provided with information to cascade to parents and a leaflet for every child's book bag. Senior schools were provided with information to put on to their websites. Information and leaflets have been given to Sure Start centres, Family Nurse Practitioners and Health Visitors. We are also targeting the other patient groups who are eligible for free prescriptions, and providing GP practices and urgent care services such as the Minor Injuries Unit with leaflets and posters.

Information about the scheme can be found on the CCG website

<http://www.southamptoncityccg.nhs.uk/search/text-content/pharmacy-first-for-minor-ailments-668>

Conditions covered:

- Upper respiratory tract infection (cough, cold, ear ache)
- Sore throat
- Diarrhoea
- Paediatric fever
- Constipation
- Head lice
- Dyspepsia
- Insect bites and stings
- Mouth ulcers
- Haemorrhoids
- Nappy rash
- Allergic rhinitis/Hay fever
- Vaginal thrush
- Oral thrush adult
- Minor burns and scalds
- Conjunctivitis
- Headache
- Earwax
- Musculoskeletal pain & soft tissue injury
- Paediatric teething
- Athletes' foot
- Cold sores
- Threadworm
- Contact dermatitis

Accredited pharmacies at 17th September:

- Bassil Chemist, Bedford Place (central)
- Bitterne Pharmacy, West End Road (East – 100 hour pharmacy)
- Boots The Chemist Above Bar (central)
- Boots The Chemist Portswood (central)
- Boots The Chemist Shirley (west)
- Day Lewis, Portswood Road (central)
- Day Lewis Chemist Lordswood (west)
- Day Lewis Chemist Sholing (east)
- Highfield Pharmacy, University Road (central)
- Lloyds Pharmacy, Dean Road, Bitterne (east)
- Lloyds Pharmacy, Grove Road, Shirley (west)
- Lloyds Pharmacy, Portsmouth Road, Woolston (east)
- Pharmacy Direct, Commercial Street, Bitterne (east)
- Pharmacy Direct, Shirley Road (west)
- Sangha Pharmacy, Thornhill Park Road (east)
- Telephone House Pharmacy, High Street (central)
- Tesco Pharmacy, Millbrook (west)

Activity to date:

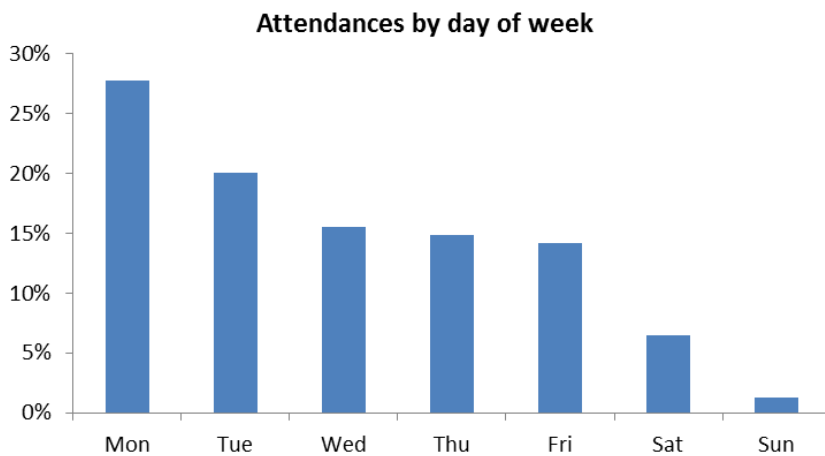
At 17th September, a total of 155 patients have accessed the service. During the pilot period, there was an average of 4 patients per week. This has risen to an average of 10 patients per week since the 1st of September when the expanded service was launched.

Of these 155 patients, only 4 have been advised to go and see their GP, 3 for a routine appointment and 1 as an urgent. Patients who are onwardly referred are provided with a referral slip detailing the reason for this and any advice/medicine provided.

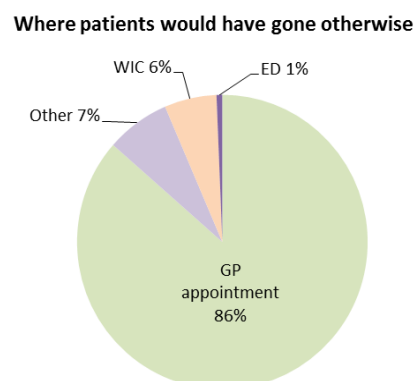
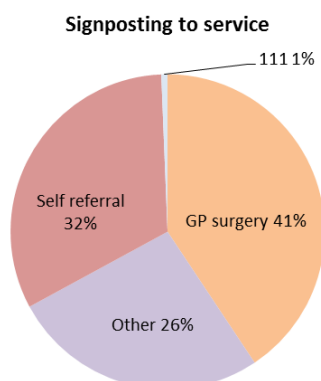
96% of patients using the service have been given advice and a supply of medication from the formulary. The remaining 4% received advice only.

85% of patients are under 16 years of age. The majority of these children have been in attendance, which assures us that the service is not being abused.

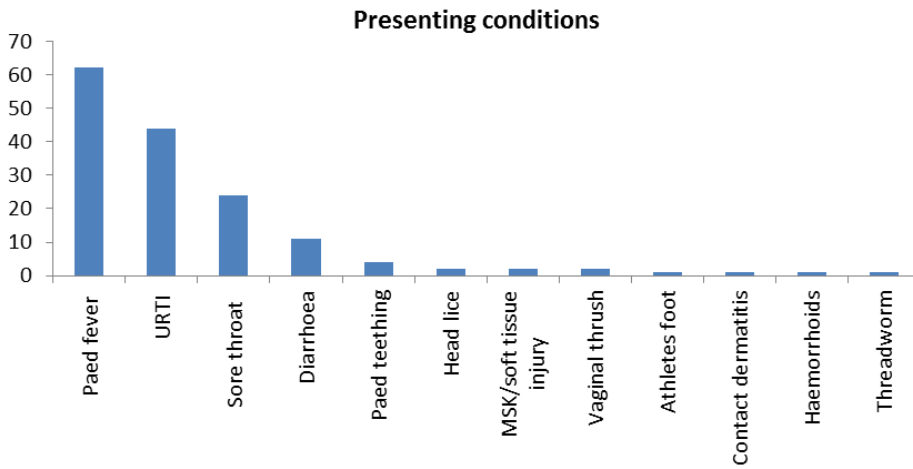
Monday is the most popular day for accessing the service



Initially, most patients were being signposted to the service by their GP surgery. Over time, we have seen more patients finding out about the service through our communications campaign and self-referring, or being signposted by other services/healthcare professionals. The majority of patients say they would have taken a GP appointment had the service not been available.

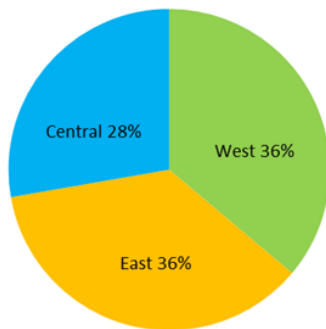


The main presenting conditions are currently paediatric fever, upper respiratory tract infections (URTI – cough, cold, ear ache) and sore throat, which were the original conditions covered. Since the service expanded on 1st September, we have already seen several of the newly covered ailments present.

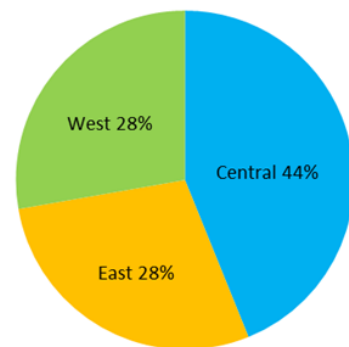


There is a fairly even split of patients from across the city using the service, although more choose to go a pharmacy in town. One of the benefits of this service to patients is the convenience of being able to access a service that is close to home, work, school, GP, etc.

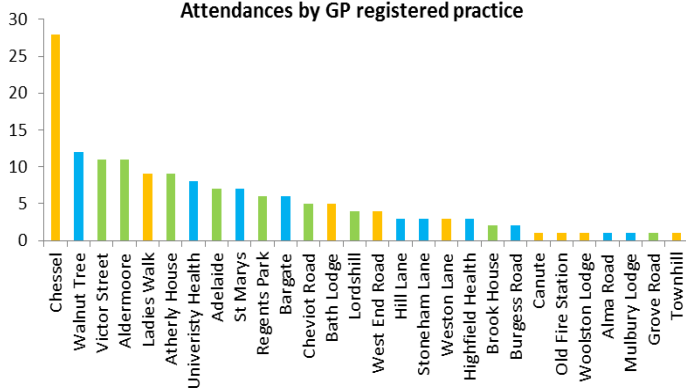
Attendances by GP registered practice locality



Attendances by pharmacy locality



Attendances by GP registered practice



Attendances by pharmacy

