

The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

In 2008, the Department of Health published a White paper called “Pharmacy in England: Building on strengths – delivering the future”.

This White Paper set out how pharmacists and their teams could contribute to patient care by delivering more personalised pharmaceutical services in the coming years. Pharmacy was just one strand of an overall primary and community care strategy.

The Health Act of 2009 states that Primary Care Trusts have to develop and publish a review of pharmaceutical services provided - a “Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment” (PNA) by February 2011. The current government has confirmed the need for this review.

The PNA must consider:

- The make-up of the population in local areas
- The health of particular people groups such as travellers or electoral wards
- The different kinds of pharmaceutical services that are currently provided by local area

The PNA will identify:

- Pharmaceutical services needed in particular local areas to improve the health of patients living in those areas.
- Local areas where current pharmaceutical services are sufficient or in abundance.
- Whether or not new contracts for pharmaceutical services should be awarded. (Control of market entry)

High quality pharmaceutical services may then be commissioned by the Primary Care Trust in a targeted and fair way.

In drawing together the PNA the Primary Care Trust must consult with a wide range of stakeholders including the general public.