

**TITLE OF REPORT: Notification of Removals from the Pharmaceutical List and
Changes to Pharmacy Opening Hours**

Executive Summary

Since the previous assessment (PNA 2022), Gateshead Council and the Health and Wellbeing Board have been notified of several changes to pharmaceutical provision. Which include 3 changes of ownership, 6 pharmacies reducing hours, 3 closure notices (Lloyds Team Valley, Boots Low Fell, Boots Felling). These changes equate a to a 10% reduction in provision across Gateshead.

Purpose of the Report

1. To notify the Health and Wellbeing Board and consideration of the impact to the Gateshead population regarding a number of changes in pharmacy opening hours across the locality and the planned closures of two pharmacies in October and November 2023 respectively.

How does the report support Gateshead's Health & Wellbeing Strategy?

2. Development and publication of a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) regarding local Pharmaceutical Services is a statutory responsibility of the Health and Wellbeing Board under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. PNAs are reviewed and updated every 3 years and are used as the basis for determining market entry to a pharmaceutical list by NHS England and NHS Improvement now part of the Integrated care system.

Background

3. Northeast and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) now has full delegated responsibilities for the commissioning of community pharmacies across NENC. The HWB statutory responsibilities remain the same, as set out in the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013.¹

4. Services provided as part of this NHS contract include essential services such as dispensing medicines and provision of professional pharmaceutical advice and also a range of optional advanced services. In addition, pharmacies in Gateshead also deliver a number of key locally commissioned services, such as stop smoking services, supervised consumption of treatments for substance misuse clients and emergency

¹ [The National Health Service \(Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services\) Regulations 2013](#)

hormonal contraception. Further information regarding the range of services provided by pharmacies in Gateshead is described in section 7 in the [Gateshead PNA](#) published October 2022.

5. Whereas there is often some small adjustment of community pharmacy provision within the three-year cycle of a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA), already since publication in October 2022, both nationally and locally in Gateshead, there have been significant changes in service provision taking place. This has included well documented national development of Lloyds Pharmacy Limited to withdraw from the pharmaceutical list in respect of several premises and the decision published in the media that Boots are intending to close further pharmacies through consolidating their provision.

6. In addition, new national regulations in May 2023² allowed 100-hour pharmacies, to reduce their contracted hours from 100 hours to 72 core hours.³

Why are these changes happening?

7. There are many reasons being cited regarding the community pharmacy closures and impacts on our local population. Some of the reasons for the current concerns include:

- Operational costs increasing and whether the community pharmacy service is able to remain cost effective.
- Impact of on-line services and shopping with some pharmacies choosing to focus on on-line business rather than having a “high street” presence.
- Staff shortages resulting from staff migration in response to the expansion of pharmacy roles into new service developments such as primary care networks (PCN) and ICB in addition to the more traditional movement between primary, secondary and community pharmacy services.
- Development of the pharmacist role in primary care, in particular regarding utilising their clinical skills more effectively.
- Issues regarding the national funding framework including whether the current NHS contractual process is fit for purpose.
- Issues such as medicine stock supplies have also impacted on pharmacies and their customers.
- Practical issues such as digital connectivity with the healthcare system which are not currently fully joined up.

How is this being addressed?

8. Nationally, the Health and Social Care Committee, Expert Panel have recently (25.7.23) published Expert Panel: Evaluation of the Government’s commitments in the area of pharmacy in England - Health and Social Care Committee⁴

² [The National Health Service \(Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#)

³ [New PLPS regulations tomorrow and an update for 100-hour pharmacies](#)

⁴ Expert Panel: evaluation of the Government’s commitments in the area of pharmacy in England

9. The Community Pharmacy England’s overview is that; In line with the experiences of pharmacy owners, the panel found: “Demand for community pharmacy services has increased significantly with community pharmacies struggling to deliver services within the existing funding model, or even to remain open.”

They also said available funding was “not sufficient to keep pharmacies open”, noting that businesses are struggling financially with increased demand for dispensing, workforce pressures and rising costs due to inflation.

10. Regionally, the North East and North Cumbria ICB have also informed HWBs (19.7.23) that “To best meet the above challenges, we are committed to setting up a Working Group to strengthen the collaborative approach; whilst recognising the different unique functions of each and managing any conflicts of interest that may arise. We will work with you to shape the terms of reference of the group.

Notification of changes

11. In recent months Gateshead has been notified of several changes of ownership, consolidations, changes of hours and notifications regarding closures of community pharmacy provision.

Changes in ownership

12. Nationally Lloyds Pharmacies Ltd are closing their “high street” premises. In Gateshead, the Lloyds Pharmacies in Sainsbury’s closed in April 2023, however the 5 remaining branches have undergone or are anticipated to have changes of ownership:

Location	Change of ownership to	Hours of trading
Harras Bank, Birtley, Chester-le-Street, DH3 2PE	Elmfield Trading Ltd From 19th June 2023	40hour + 7.5 supp hours Hours unchanged 8.30am-6pm Mon- Fri Closed Sat and Sun (Note: Lloyds had previously, in March 2023, reduced early opening from 7.30am to 8.30am)
Wrekenton Pharmacy 1 Springwell Road, Wrekenton, Gateshead, NE9 7JN	N&B Chemist Ltd From 1st June 2023	40hour +5 supp hours Hours unchanged 9am- 6pm Mon- Fri
Rockwood Hill Road, Greenside, Ryton, NE40 4AX	LP SD FIFTY TWO LIMITED Date to be confirmed.	Currently 40hour + 0.5 supp hours Mon- Fri 8.30am-4pm Sat 9am-12noon
	Hours lost:	No loss of hours

Information not yet received regarding:

- Lloyds Pharmacy Limited, Teams Medical Centre, Watson Street, Teams Estate, Gateshead, NE8 2PQ
- Lloyds Pharmacy Limited, Pattinson Drive, Crawcrook, Ryton, NE40 4US

Changes in opening hours

13. Pharmacies that are contracted to provide 40 hours per week may also be open for additional “supplementary hours” which provide the extended service often as early mornings, evenings and weekend opening.

Supplementary hours can be amended by giving NHS England 90 days' notice of the intended change, HWB are informed but not consulted.

'40-hour' pharmacy and current / previous opening hours	Changes – detail and date
Tesco Stores Ltd, 1 Trinity Square, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE8 1AG	Change 28.11.22 Reduction in supplementary hours (from 44 to 38 hours) Weekday and weekend evening closure at 8pm not 9pm
Whitworth Chemist Ltd, Wrekenton Health centre, Springwell Road, Gateshead NE9 7AD	Changed 5.12.22 Reduction of supplementary hours (from 11.5 to 7.5 hours per week) No longer open on Saturday mornings
Bestway National Chemists Limited (T/A Well), 14 Beaconsfield Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 5EU	Changed 19.3.23 Reduction of supplementary hours (from 11.5 to 9 hours per week) Weekdays open at 9am previously 8.30am
Bestway National Chemists Limited (T/A Well), 105 Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 1LR	Changed 19.3.23 Reduction of supplementary hours (from 10.5 to 8 hours per week) Weekdays open at 9am previously 8.30am
Avicenna Retail Ltd Fewster Square Pharmacy 11 Fewster Square, Leam Lane Estate, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 8XQ,	Changed 3.4.23 Reduction of supplementary hours (from 13 to 9 hours per week) Saturday opening 9am-1pm (previously 9a.-5pm)
Hours lost:	19 hours per week (supplementary hours)

Changes in 100 hour provision

14. In response to the national regulations in May 2023 that allowed pharmacies with 100 contracted core hours to reduce these to a minimum of 72 core hours, the one 100 hour pharmacy in Gateshead, 31 Harraton Terrace, Durham Road, Birtley, applied to reduce opening hours to 78hours.

'100-hour' pharmacy and current / previous opening hours	72-hour application made to NHS England
Bestway National Chemists Limited (T/A Well) 31 Harraton Terrace, Durham Road, Birtley,	Changed 10.7.23 Reduction to 78 hours per week Reduced: Mon- Sat: morning from 7am to 9am opening and evening closure from 11pm to 9pm Sunday – unchanged (10am- 4pm)
Hours lost:	22 hours per week

Distance selling pharmacies.

Distance selling pharmacies are required to deliver the full range of essential services, though not to people on a face-to-face basis on the premises of the pharmacy. They will receive prescriptions either via the electronic prescription service or through the post, dispense them at the pharmacy and then either deliver them to the patient or arrange for them to be delivered.

15. The NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 contain an exemption that allows pharmacists to open an NHS pharmacy without having to show that the need for that pharmacy was identified within the PNA, or having to satisfy NHS England that the pharmacy would satisfy the test under Regulation 18 for unforeseen benefits. There were 3 Distance Selling pharmacies in Gateshead at the time of the PNA 2022 publication. Further to this, notification has been received of a further business proposal, although the HWB are currently awaiting confirmation of a decision.

Closures

16. In May 2022, the HWB were notified of the closure of Lloyds Pharmacy Limited, based in Sainsbury's supermarket, Team Valley, which ceased trading on 22nd April 2023 and was removed from the pharmaceutical list for the area of Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board with effect from that date. This closure, in the south locality of Gateshead was deemed not to create a gap in community pharmacy services in Gateshead.

17. The HWB have recently been notified of two further closures:

- a. Boots UK Limited, 479 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 5EX (planned 7.10.23)

- b. Boots UK Limited, Unit 4 Booth Street, Felling, Gateshead NE10 9BF (planned 11.11.23)

18. The loss of these three pharmacies will result (by November 2023) in a loss of

- a. 120 essential hours
- b. 59 supplementary hours per week

19. NHS England provide assurance that they work closely with pharmacy and has been given assurances that all measures have been taken to ensure patients will not be adversely affected by these closures.

Boots UK Ltd, 497 Durham Road – closure planned 7.10.23.

20. Boots at Durham Road, Low Fell is currently contracted to provide a 40-hour service and provide an additional 10.5 supplementary hours. Open weekdays (9am - 5.30pm) and Saturday (9am to 5pm). It is situated in the south locality of Gateshead.

There are other pharmacies within a mile radius of this pharmacy.

- Well Pharmacy, Beaconsfield Rd 0.1mile
- RG Young, Sheriff’s Highway, Old Durham Rd 0.6mile
- Beacon View Pharmacy, Beacon Lough 0.6mile
- K&A Pharmacy, Old Durham Rd 1mile

Local concerns have been raised via Safeguard Incident and Risk Management System (SIRMS) reporting system by the GP practice at Fell Cottage Surgery regarding the impact on patients with this closure.

Boots UK Ltd, Booth Street, Felling, Gateshead closure planned 11.11.23

21. Boots at Booth Street Felling is currently contracted to provide a 40-hour service and also provide an additional 10.5 supplementary hours. Open weekdays (9am - 5.30pm) and Saturday (9am to 5pm). It is in the east locality of Gateshead.

Pharmacies within a mile radius of this pharmacy are;

- Boots, Felling Health centre 0.1mile
- RG Young, Sheriff’s highway, Old Durham Rd 0.9mile
- K&A Pharmacy, Old Durham Rd 1mile

(Maps appendix 2)

22. In addition, correspondence has been sent (15.8.23) directly to Boots UK Ltd on behalf of the elected representatives of Gateshead, by the Leader of the Council, to protest at the proposed closure of the Gateshead branches in Low Fell (Durham Road, NE9 5EX) and Felling (Booth Street, NE10 9BF).

Impact of these changes

23. **Number of pharmacies in Gateshead**

Table 1: Total number of pharmacies in Gateshead

PNA	PNA 2022	Notified changes (including Boots closures in Oct and Nov 2023)
Number of 40-hour pharmacies	42	39
No of 100 hour pharmacies	1 (100hr)	1 (78hr)
Number of distance selling (DSP)	3	3 + 1 pending
Total number of pharmacies	46	43
Total number “walk in” pharmacies	43	40

24. Pharmacies per population

25. Table 2 (below) demonstrates that the impact of the closure on the number of people per pharmacy is such that the central, south, inner west and west localities remain reasonably well served by pharmacy services. (Appendix 2)

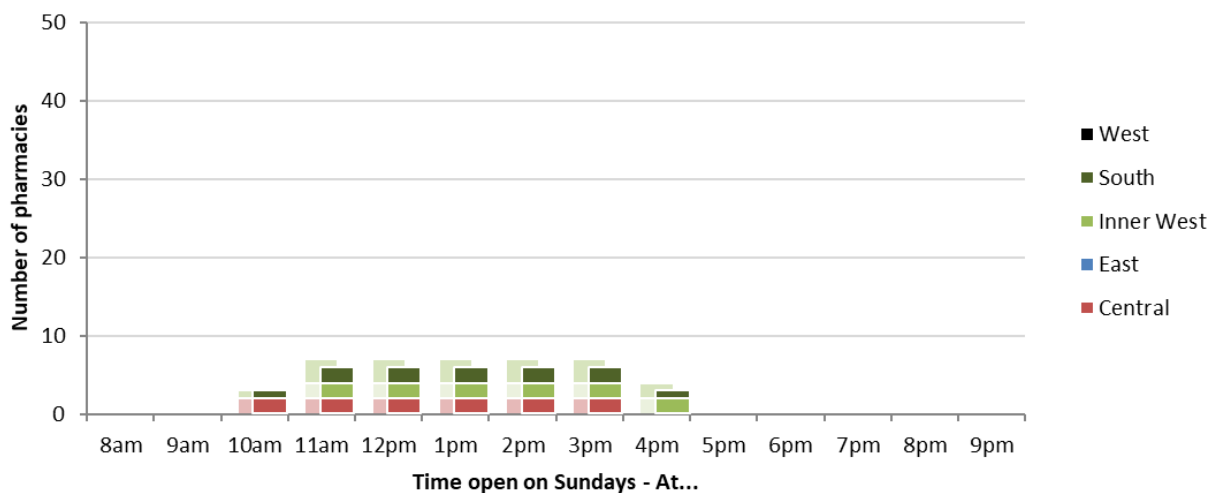
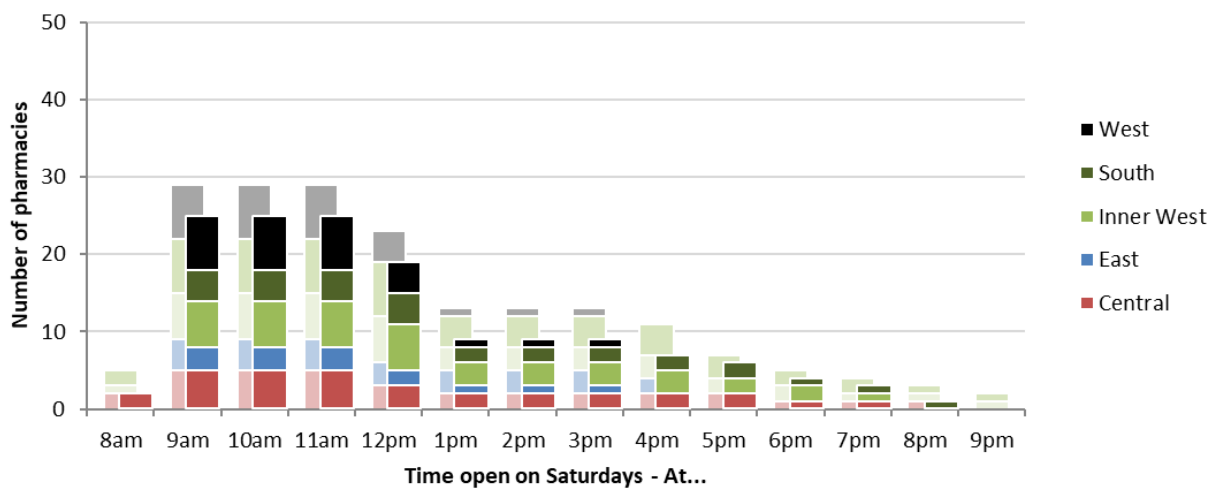
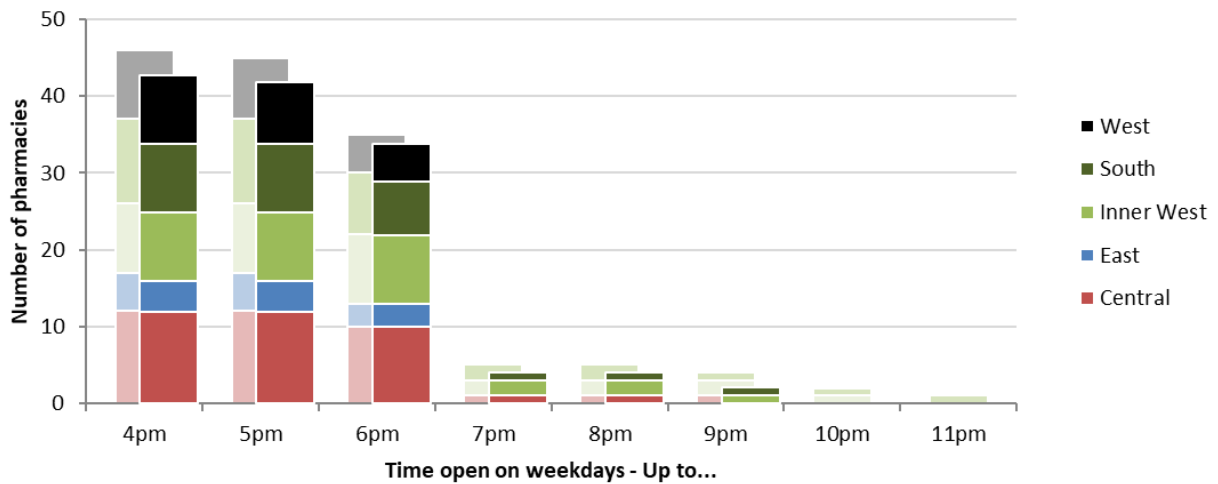
26. However, this is not the case in the East of the borough, which was previously identified as having lower provision (PNA 2022), meaning the closure any pharmacies may have greater impact.

Table 2: Pharmacies, people per pharmacy, and pharmacies per 100,000 population, PNA Oct 2022 compared to current provision taking into account all closures (appendix 1)

	Current...			PNA...		
	Number of Pharmacies	Persons per pharmacy	Pharmacies per 100,000 population	Number of Pharmacies	Persons per pharmacy	Pharmacies per 100,000 population
Central	12	3,209	4.6	12	3,209	4.6
East	4	8,713	1.4	5	6,970	1.7
Inner West	9	3,690	3.0	9	3,690	3.0
South	9	4,944	4.0	11	4,045	4.9
West	9	5,009	4.1	9	5,009	4.1
Gateshead	43	4,561	84.3	46	4,264	90.2

Evening and weekend opening access

27. The impact on the reduction of hours and pharmacy closures will have an impact on the access to services in evenings and weekends. This impact being most noticeable on weekday and Saturday evenings as fewer alternative pharmacies become available (appendix 1)



28. The PNA 2022 identified that access to community pharmacies during the weekdays and weekends was reduced in the evenings and on Sundays which limits the ability to access essential services and advanced services as well as placing more demand on urgent and emergency care services.”

29. Furthermore, the PNA stated that HWB continues to recommend local discussions with the LPC regarding possible support to evening or weekend opening to ensure patients with minor ailments and/or require medication to be dispensed following

consultation with and extended access service, out of hours GP or referral by 111 for emergency medication can access pharmacy support”

30. Therefore, based on current data available the east locality relative to all other localities could be considered as underserved.

31. Concerns regarding the impact of these changes for the local population of Gateshead have been raised and have been voiced across the ICB footprint. The ICB has recently (19.7.23) informed HWBs of the intention to set up a working group to strengthen the collaborative approach.

Proposal

32. The PNA working group will continue to monitor and report to HWBB any changes to provision.

33. In the event of a significant gap emerging, the PNA steering group will be reconvened to discuss appropriate action, which may include a full and comprehensive review of the PNA 2022.

Recommendations

34. The HWBB is asked to approve the addition of this supplementary statement to the PNA 2022

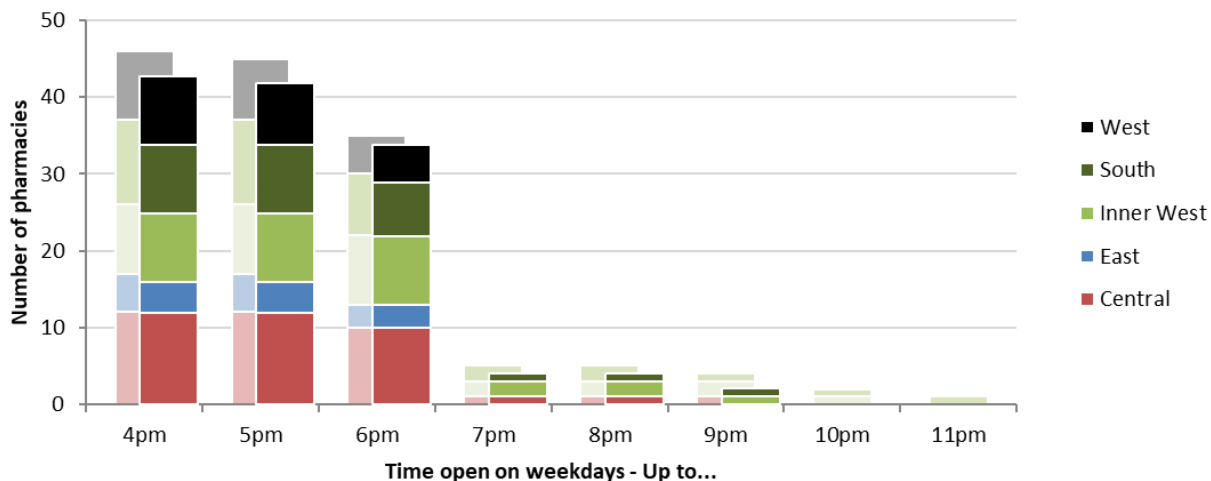
35. The HWBB is asked that Pharmacy provision be discussed and considered by the ICP North.

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edwardomalley@gateshead.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Pharmacy changes since PNA published (current situation shown in bars at the front of charts)

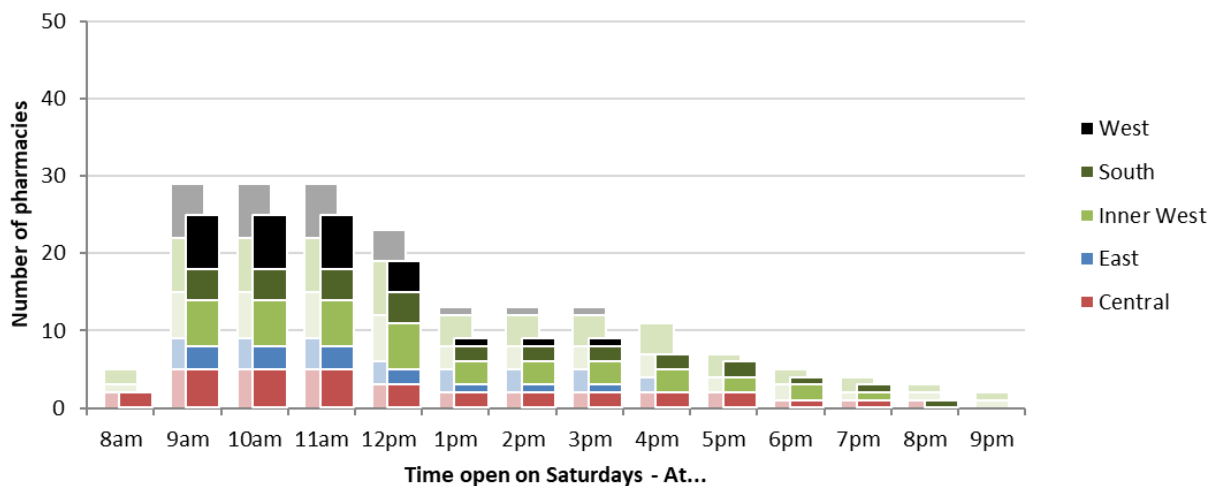
1. Weekdays



Time open on weekdays - Up to...

	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm
Central	12	12	10	1	1	0	0	0
East	4	4	3	0	0	0	0	0
Inner West	9	9	9	2	2	1	0	0
South	9	9	7	1	1	1	0	0
West	9	8	5	0	0	0	0	0

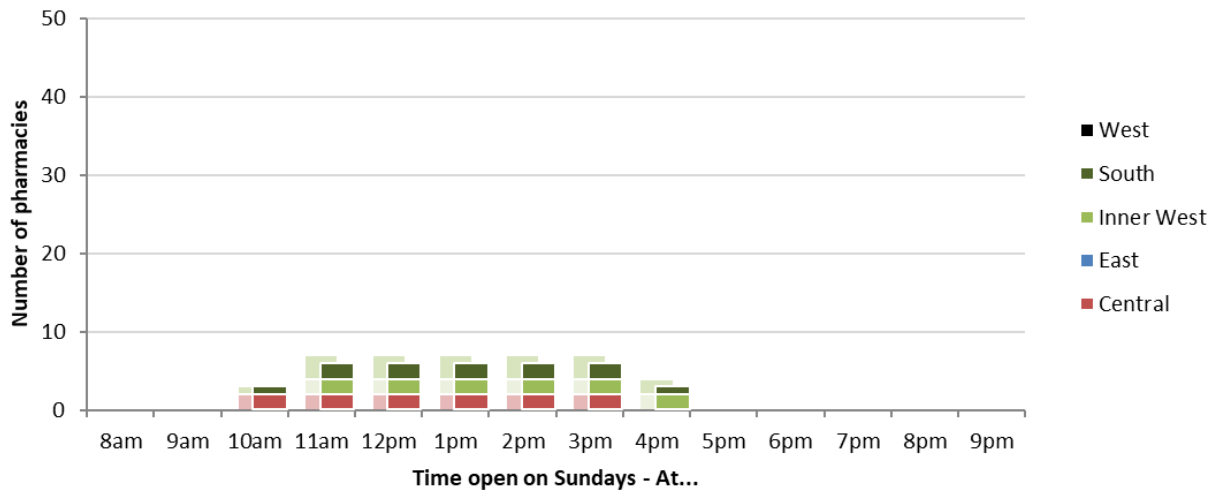
2. Saturdays



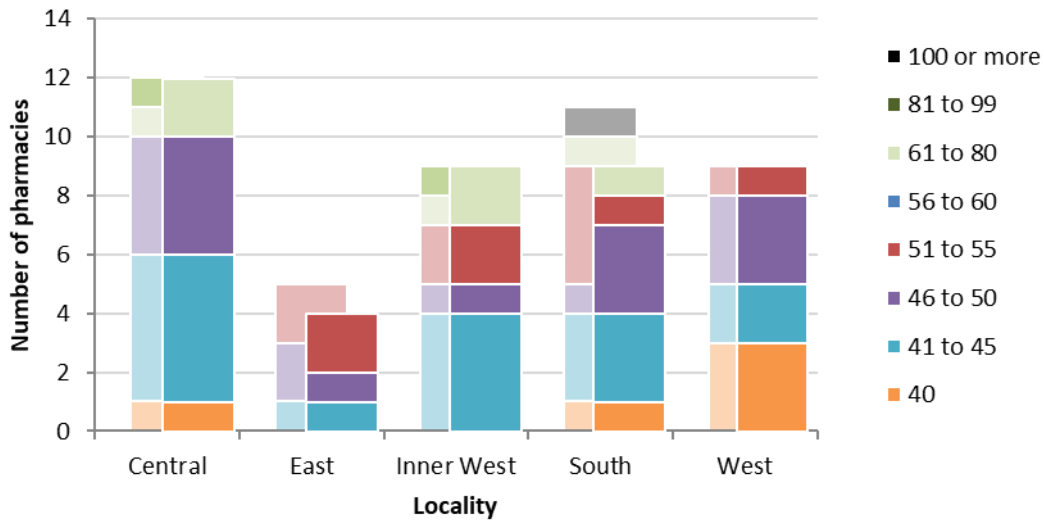
Time open on Saturdays - At...

	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm
Central	2	5	5	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0
East	0	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inner West	0	6	6	6	6	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	0
South	0	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	0
West	0	7	7	7	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

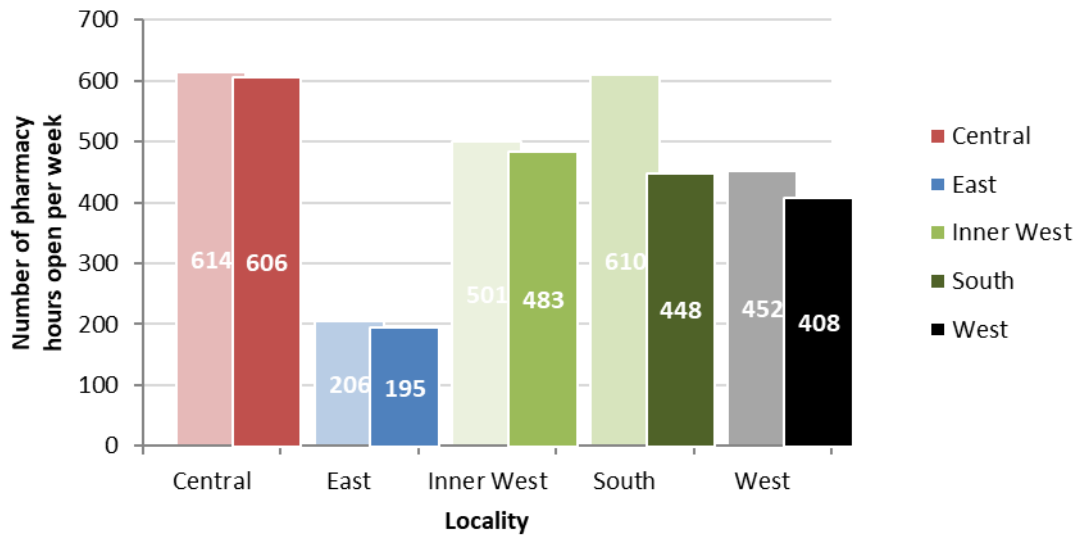
3. Sundays



4. By locality



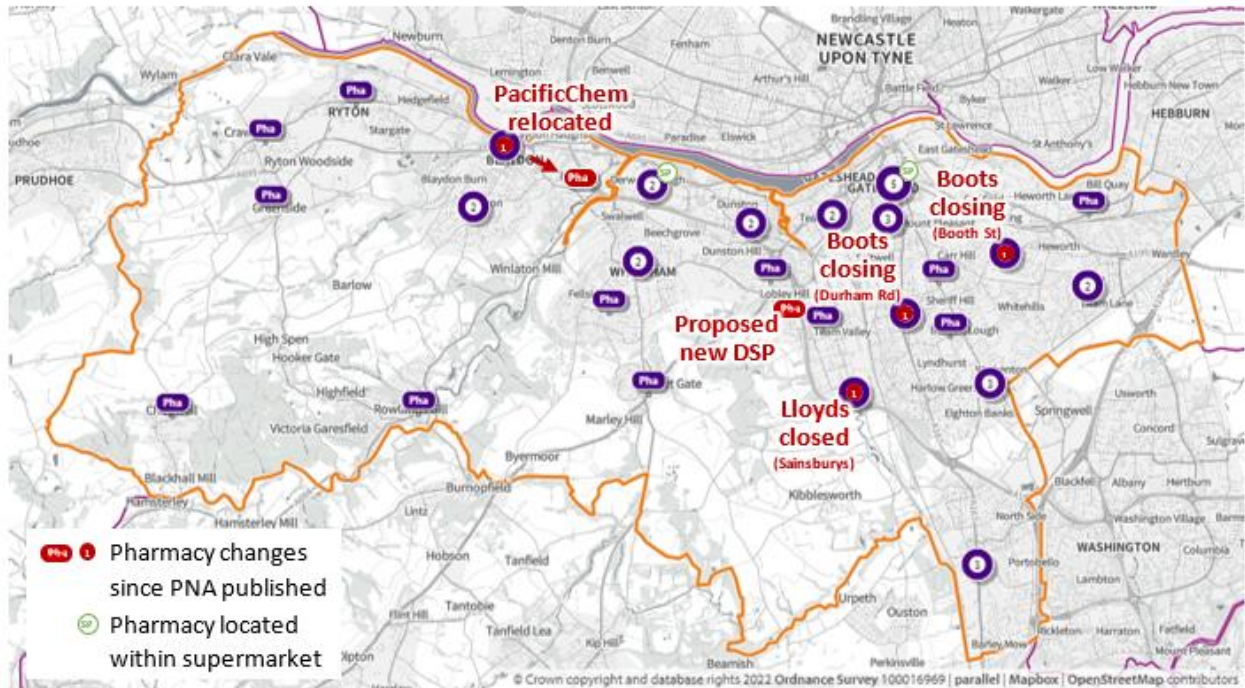
	Under 40	40	41 to 45	46 to 50	51 to 55	56 to 60	61 to 80	81 to 99	100 or more
Central	0	1	5	4	0	0	2	0	0
East	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Inner West	0	0	4	1	2	0	2	0	0
South	0	1	3	3	1	0	1	0	0
West	0	3	2	3	1	0	0	0	0



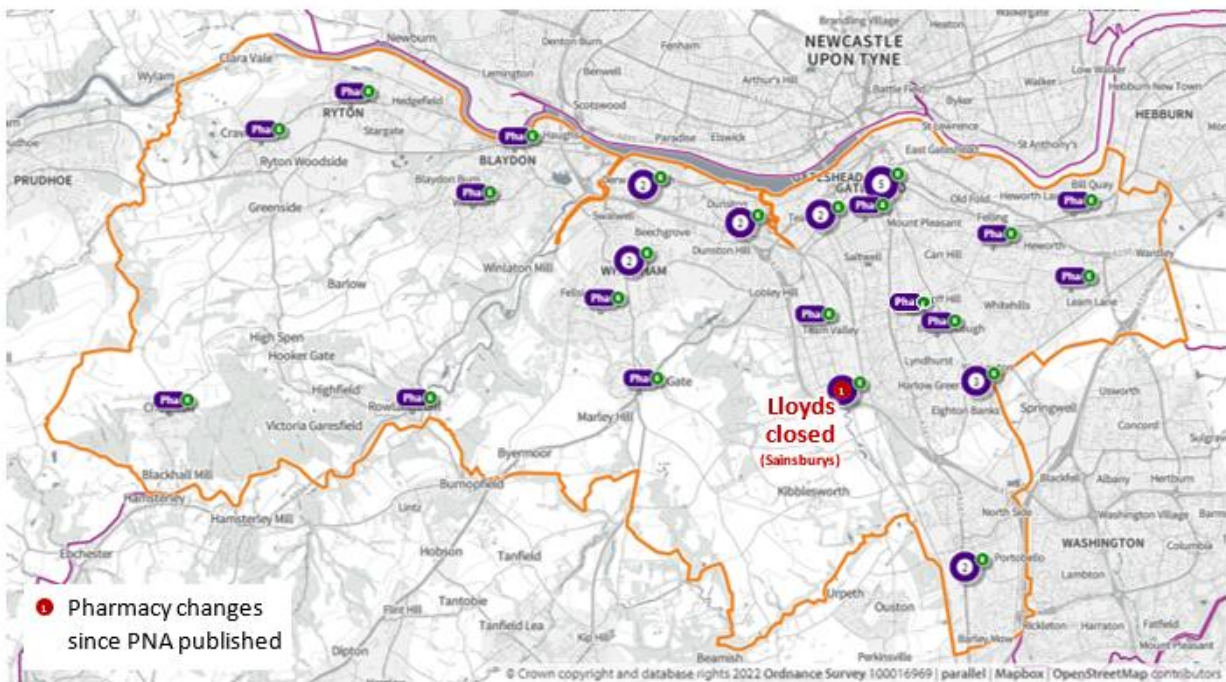
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Appendix 2

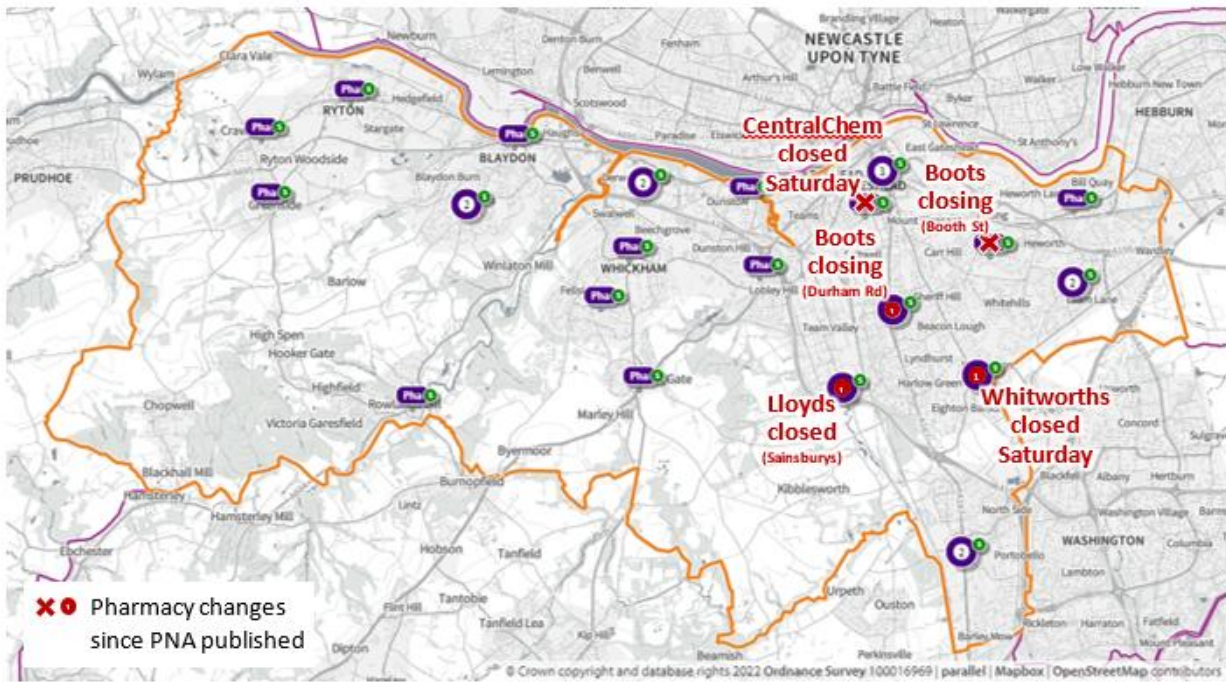
1. All pharmacies



2. Pharmacies open on weekday evenings



3. Pharmacies open on a Saturday



4. Pharmacies open on a Sunday

