

Distance Selling Premises Application

Application by Newcastle Pharma Ltd (the applicant) to open distance selling premises at Unit 4, Perth Court, Eleventh Avenue North, Team Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0NJ

Explanatory notes by North East and North Cumbria ICB

Q1. What is this application for?

The applicant wishes to open an NHS internet pharmacy at Unit 4, Perth Court, Eleventh Avenue North, Team Valley, Gateshead, NE11 0NJ. This type of pharmacy is referred to as 'distance selling premises' in the regulations and operates under strict rules which means it is not able to provide services face to face at the premises.

A pharmacy can only give patients medicines prescribed by NHS GPs if it has North East and North Cumbria ICB's permission. We give permission for this type of pharmacy where we are satisfied that they will be able to provide services safely and effectively without seeing the patient face to face. This type of pharmacy provides the same services as any other type of pharmacy but you can't, for example, take your prescription there to be dispensed or collect it once it has been dispensed. Instead you could post it to the pharmacy or ask your GP to send it electronically. The pharmacy would then dispense it and send it to you either via the post or a courier.

These notes explain the process we follow when deciding whether to give permission.

Q2. Why have I been sent a copy of the application?

You are being invited to make comments on the application before North East and North Cumbria ICB takes a decision on whether the pharmacy can go ahead. Any comments must be received before the end of the 45-day period mentioned in the letter.

Applications are not confidential. If you want, you may share details with anyone else who might be interested. They can also make comments within the same 45-day period.

Any comments we receive will be sent to the applicant. They will have a chance to respond to us about those comments.

When we come to make a decision, North East and North Cumbria ICB will consider any comments it has received and any response to those comments from the applicant.

Q3. How will North East and North Cumbria ICB decide whether to give permission for a new pharmacy?

Firstly we need to check to make sure the applicant is offering to provide services to anyone in England who may want to use them.

Then we look at how they say they will provide services without seeing the patient face to face. We need to check to make sure they are able to provide all the services you would expect from a pharmacy safely and effectively.

Q4. When will a decision be made?

We expect to make a decision by 8 July 2024.

Q5. What will happen if permission is given?

If we decide to give permission for the pharmacy to open, this does not automatically mean that it will happen. Other local pharmacies may be able to appeal against the decision. Appeals are dealt with at national level by NHS Resolution.

If no appeals are received or if they are rejected by NHS Resolution, the applicant would then have up to 12 months to open, although this could be extended to 15 months. If those deadlines were not met, then the permission would expire.

Q6. What if permission is refused?

The applicant would be able to appeal.