
From: Dan Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Dr Anjan Ghosh, Director of Public Health

To: Kent Health and Wellbeing Board, 11 February 2025

Subject: 2025 Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Each Health and Wellbeing Board has the responsibility to publish and update a pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA) as outlined by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and The NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Service) Regulations 2013. The current Kent PNA was published in September 2022 and is due to be revised by October 2025.

This paper sets out the plan to update the PNA and proposed sign-off process to ensure the 2025 PNA is published according to legislative requirements.

Recommendations: The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. **AGREE** the production plan and sign-off process of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2025
 2. **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to draft and approve the first iteration of the PNA to go out to statutory consultation.
 3. **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to revise the PNA following the statutory consultation and identify if a subsequent consultation period is required.
 4. **CONFIRM** that approval of the PNA will be subject to decision making by the Health and Wellbeing Board in the autumn of 2025.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board have a statutory responsibility to publish and keep up to date a statement of needs for pharmaceutical services in Kent, referred to as the "Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment" (PNA).

- 1.2 The PNA assesses current and future need for pharmaceutical services by systematically identifying any gaps in service and making recommendations for improvement.
- 1.3 The PNA is a key document used by the National Health Service (NHS) and Kent County Council (KCC), to support commissioning decisions; including, but not limited to, approving applications to open new pharmacies and commissioning services through pharmacies based on population health needs.
- 1.4 Since April 2013, the statutory responsibility of the PNA became that of the Health and Wellbeing Board when the Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred responsibility from primary care trusts. The NHS (Pharmaceutical Services and Local Pharmaceutical Service) Regulations 2013 sets out the legal requirements and process for developing the PNA.
- 1.5 The Health and Wellbeing Board is required to publish a PNA at least every 3 years, or sooner if significant change to the pharmaceutical needs of its population is identified. In the interim, supplementary statements may be published to describe changes to the availability of pharmaceutical services when relevant to the granting of applications or preventing significant detriment to the provision of pharmaceutical services. Once published, supplementary statements form part of the PNA.

2. PNA production plan and sign-off process

- 2.1 The current PNA was published in September 2022 and has a life span of three years.
- 2.2 Production of the PNA is a complex process and requires input from multiple stakeholders, hence, a PNA Steering Group was established in September 2024 to oversee and ensure production of a robust PNA. The Steering Group includes representation from KCC Public Health, KCC Engagement, Kent Public Health Observatory, the Kent Local Medical committee, the Kent Local Pharmaceutical Committee, Healthwatch Kent and the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board.
- 2.3 A specialist provider called Soar Beyond Limited have been commissioned, via a competitive tender process, to support delivery of the 2025 PNA.
- 2.4 Taking into account the scheduled 2025 Health and Wellbeing Board meetings and local Kent election, request is made for the Health and Wellbeing Board to delegate authority of the PNA to the Director of Public Health and agree the proposed plan and sign-off process to ensure publication of the PNA before the statutory deadline of October 2025, subject to consultation with the Chair of HWB. (See section 7).
- 2.5 Outlined below is the proposed plan and sign-off process to ensure timely delivery of the 2025 PNA.

Proposed PNA production plan and sign-off process:

Activity	Time
Establish PNA Steering Group	September 2024
First Steering Group meeting- agree data to collect	October 2024
Information/ data gathering	October 2024 - January 2025
Key stakeholder engagement	November - December 2024
Second Steering Group meeting- review data	January 2025
Draft first iteration of PNA	February - March 2025
Draft PNA circulated for Steering Group review and sign-off	March 2025
Third Steering Group meeting- PNA draft sign-off	March 2025
PNA draft sign-off by Director of Public Health (via delegated authority), in consultation with Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, for consultation	April 2025
Statutory 60 day consultation	May - July 2025
Draft final iteration of PNA from the consultation report If substantial revisions are required post consultation, the Director of Public Health (via delegated authority) will amend the draft PNA, identify the timescale required for a further period of consultation and oversee the subsequent consultation process	July 2025
Final draft PNA circulated for Steering Group review and sign-off	July 2025
Fourth Steering Group meeting – sign-off final draft PNA and incorporate any amendments	July - August 2025
Final draft PNA sign-off by Director of Public Health	August 2025
Submit final draft PNA to Health and Wellbeing Board for final approval and publication	August 2025

Publication of PNA	Before October 2025

3. Actions to date

- 3.1 The PNA Steering Group have met twice, in October 2024 and January 2025, to agree and review data collection. A minimum of two further meetings are scheduled for March 2025 and July 2025 to review and finalise critical stages of PNA development; meetings are chaired by KCC's Director or Deputy Director of Public Health.
- 3.2 Engagement with key stakeholders was completed in December 2024; questionnaires were used to seek public, dispensing doctors and pharmacy contractor views and experiences of pharmaceutical services in Kent. Responses are currently being analysed and used to inform the PNA.
- 3.3 Data and information have been sought from the Council, NHS and healthcare partners to inform the current and future pharmaceutical needs of Kent.
- 3.4 Prior to the release of the Government's English Devolution White Paper, in consultation with KCC Democratic Services and Engagement, an agreement to delay the 60 day consultation to May 2025 had been taken to observe democratic proceedings pertaining to the 2025 election.

4. Financial Implication

- 4.1 A specialist provider has been commissioned at a cost of £33,500 to support delivery of the PNA following a competitive tender process in 2024.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board have a statutory responsibility to produce and publish the next PNA by October 2025 under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Health and Wellbeing Board may risk facing a judicial review if the deadline is breached.

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be included in production of the PNA.

7. Governance

- 7.1 Considering the schedule of Health and Wellbeing Board meetings and election activities taking place in 2025, to ensure the PNA meets regulatory requirements and is published in a timely manner, it is proposed that delegated authority be given to Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of

the Health and Wellbeing Board, to draft and approve the first iteration of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment to go out to statutory consultation.

- 7.2 It is also proposed that the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, have delegated authority to make any revisions following the consultation. If no substantial changes are required, the final Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board for approval in the autumn of 2025.
- 7.3 However, should the PNA require substantial changes following the initial statutory consultation with the relevant bodies, the Director of Public Health, via delegated authority will amend the draft PNA, identify the timescale required for a further period of consultation and oversee the subsequent consultation process. If no further revisions are required, the final version of the PNA will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board for approval and publication.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The PNA is a statutory requirement of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The current PNA will expire by October 2025 and a revised PNA must be published in its place.
- 8.2 A specialist provider has been commissioned and the PNA Steering Group has been established to oversee production of a robust PNA.
- 8.3 Considering activities in 2025, request has been made for the Health and Wellbeing Board to delegate authority of the PNA to the Director of Public Health to prevent breach of legislative duty and ensure timely publication of the 2025 PNA.
- 8.4 Final draft of the PNA will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2025 for final approval and publication.

9. Recommendation(s):

- 9.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:
- 9.1.1 **AGREE** the production plan and sign-off process of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2025.
 - 9.1.2 **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to draft and approve the first iteration of the PNA to go out to statutory consultation.
 - 9.1.3 **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to revise the PNA following the statutory consultation and identify if a subsequent consultation period is required.
 - 9.1.4 **CONFIRM** that approval of the PNA will be subject to decision making by the Health and Wellbeing Board in the autumn of 2025.
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10. Background Documents

- 10.1 Department of Health and Social Care: Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Information Pack for local authority health and wellbeing boards, 2021.
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/617bdc31d3bf7f5601cf3168/pharmaceutical-needs-assessment-information-pack.pdf>

11. Contact details

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