

**Embargoed: 00:01 hrs, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**Self Care Week 2015:**

**Staying healthy as you get older is the UK's top health concern**

New PAGB-commissioned research<sup>1</sup> has revealed the nation's top health concerns are staying healthy as you get older (65%), keeping fit and active (59%) and eating a healthy diet (56%). As well as wanting to prevent ill health, people also worry about funding for the NHS (29%) and delays to get a doctor's appointment (22%) if they become unwell.

However, despite this desire to remain in good health, people might not be making the best use of services to access health advice. While 82% of people turn to Google for health information<sup>2</sup>, 89% rely on their GP<sup>3</sup>. Pharmacy, on the other hand, is comparatively underutilised, with just 63% trusting their pharmacist with their health concerns<sup>4</sup>.

The data is launched as part of Self Care Week (16-22 November 2015) which aims to help people make healthy lifestyle choices, take care of common self-treatable illnesses such as coughs and colds, and effectively manage more serious long-term health conditions if they do develop. The annual awareness week encourages people to 'self care for life' and is being supported by a wide range of health organisations from across the country, including NHS England, Public Health England, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities, GP surgeries and pharmacies.

Dr Pete Smith, a GP and Co-chair of the Self Care Forum which organises the week, said: "I am encouraged that people want to stay fit and eat well, but it is vital that we provide information to people to help them make those healthy lifestyle choices and ensure they know where to go for advice and support. Self Care Week is an opportunity for all healthcare professionals to work with their local community to do just that. This will have many benefits for people's short-term and long-term health,

as well as addressing their other concerns about funding for the NHS and availability of GP appointments, by reducing pressure on the NHS.”

PAGB Chief Executive, John Smith, added: “On average, over an hour a day of every GPs time is spent discussing self-treatable conditions<sup>5</sup>, such as coughs and colds, sprains and strains or headaches. Often the pharmacy is the best place to go for advice on self-treatable conditions as well as information on lifestyle choices which will help people stay healthy as they get older. Pharmacists are highly trained healthcare professionals and, for the vast majority of people, pharmacies are easily accessible and no appointment is needed.”

**-ENDS-**

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**Notes to editors:**

The Self Care Forum is a network of doctors, nurses, patient groups, NHS managers, pharmacists, the Department of Health, NHS England and the OTC medicines industry. The purpose of the Self Care Forum is to further the reach of self care and embed it into everyday life.

**Visit the Self Care Forum website at: [www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org)**

The Self Care Forum fact sheets on 14 of the most common ailments can be downloaded at: [www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets/](http://www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets/). Healthcare professionals can use the fact sheets with patients to explain how long the symptoms typically last for, how they can handle the same symptoms themselves next time and the warning signs that signal something more serious is wrong.

The Self Care Week 2015 logo is available to download at:

<http://www.selfcareforum.org/events/self-care-week-resources/>



PAGB (Proprietary Association of Great Britain) is the UK trade association representing manufacturers of branded over-the-counter medicines, self care medical devices and food supplements.

PAGB is a partner in NHS England and Public Health England's national NHS winter campaign, 'Stay Well This Winter' [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell)

**Visit the PAGB website at: [www.pagb.co.uk](http://www.pagb.co.uk)**

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<sup>1</sup> Conducted by Redshift Research in September 2015 with a base of 2,000 people from the UK general population

<sup>2</sup> How much, if at all, do you use Google to get information about your health?: % of respondents using a lot/a little: 82%

<sup>3</sup> How much, if at all, do you use the GP/Doctor to get information about your health?: % of respondents using a lot/a little: 89%

<sup>4</sup> How much, if at all, do you use pharmacy / chemist to get information about your health?: % of respondents using a lot/a little: 63%

<sup>5</sup> IMS Health, Minor ailment workload in General Practice, 2007