View results

Respondent

27 Anonymous

79:04
Time to complete

Title and contact details

1. Title of Initiative (please ensure this is a good description of your initiative in no more than 90 characters) *

The Living Well Service – Community Pharmacy

2. Name of organisation and region (please state context, ie general practice, community care etc) *

Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI)

3. Name of person or team involved in the self-care initiative *

Community pharmacy teams across Northern Ireland

4. Timeframe and dates of initiative *

Campaigns run on a 2-month basis

5. Contact name for entry *

Clare Hunter

6. Contact email for entry *

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

About your self-care initiative

7. Describe the problem you were facing and your objective(s) in tackling this. (1200 characters max) *

The primary problem addressed by the Living Well service in Northern Ireland is the high prevalence of preventable lifestyle-related diseases and public health inequalities. Problem and Context • High disease burden: Elevated rates of chronic conditions linked to modifiable risk factors like high blood pressure, tobacco, alcohol misuse, and poor diet. • Access barriers: People often delay seeking early health advice or over-rely on busy GP services for minor guidance and preventative support. • Low public awareness: Limited community recognition of local pharmacies as accessible, everyday hubs for proactive healthcare information. Core Objectives • Address risk factors: Focus on major contributors to disease, including high blood pressure, poor diet, smoking and alcohol misuse. • Provide health information: Share consistent, up-to-date guidance with people collecting prescriptions and other pharmacy visitors. • Signpost to support: Direct individuals to appropriate healthcare professionals, community groups and specialist services. • Offer behavioural interventions: Provide brief, timely support that helps people make healthier lifestyle choices.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

8. Outline your initiative, explain your planning and execution of the project. (1200 characters max) *

The Living Well service is a community-based public health initiative delivered through more than 500 community pharmacies across Northern Ireland. By drawing on the accessibility of local pharmacy teams, it provides the public with health information, behavioural advice & practical interventions—without the need for an appointment. The service delivers rolling public health campaigns, updated every 2 months to reflect regional public health priorities. Community pharmacists & pharmacy staff display campaign materials, provide information & offer advice to people collecting prescriptions and to other pharmacy visitors. Important health information is shared with housebound patients by putting relevant leaflets into patient's prescription bags. Living Well promotes self-care by improving health literacy & empowering people to manage their physical and mental wellbeing. It provides the practical knowledge, tools & behavioural guidance needed to prevent illness & make confident everyday lifestyle choices. With many pharmacies operating in disadvantaged areas across Northern Ireland, they can reach communities with high areas of deprivation & health inequality.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

9. What were the challenges and how did you overcome these? (1200 characters max) *

High Local Health Stigma and Complex Traumas Challenge: Initiating conversations on sensitive public health topics—such as alcohol limits, mental health, and obesity—was met with public hesitation. Northern Ireland also exhibits unique historical and cultural factors. Overcoming it: Pharmacists utilized highly approachable frameworks like the "Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing" to destigmatise mental health discussions. Staff relied on a passive-to-active outreach model, utilizing visible Living Well poster displays and print media to prompt natural, patient-led questions. Workforce Pressures and Time Constraints • Challenge: Community pharmacies face severe operational pressures, workforce shortages, and surging prescription volumes. Staff may struggle to find time for proactive health conversations while managing core dispensing duties. • Overcoming it: The service integrated opportunistic interventions. Conversations were seamlessly tied to existing touchpoints, such as handovers during prescription collection. Dedicated Living Well Campaign Support Packs and standardized toolkits minimized administrative prep time for staff

Please enter at most 1200 characters

10. Did you collaborate with other local partners, if so, who and why were they chosen? *

The service is delivered in partnership with Community Pharmacy NI (CPNI), the Public Health Agency (PHA), the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), and the Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development (NICPLD). They were chosen because of their direct relevance and experience in the subject matter and profession.

11. Would you describe your initiative as "innovative", if "yes" please tell us why. (800 characters max) *

During the 'Stay Well This Winter' campaign, 375 community pharmacies participated in the TARGET Antibiotic Checklist Brief Intervention Service, completing more than 8,962 checklists over 2 months. When a patient presented a prescription, the patient & pharmacy team completed the checklist together. This structured information guided a personalised conversation about antibiotic use, helping each patient understand how to take antibiotics safely & effectively. Qualitative evidence: "The TARGET antibiotics toolkit hub leaflets were great for getting the message of self-care across & safety netting advice. They enabled discussions around antibiotic resistance & avoiding unnecessary antibiotics in future, as well as helping to clinically assess the suitability of prescribed antibiotics."

Please enter at most 800 characters

12. Did you use any of the Self-Care Forum's free resources as part of your initiative? Provide details *

The Self Care Forum factsheets were included as a resource for community pharmacy teams.

Impact, outcomes, and evidence

13. Who was the initiative directed at and what were the benefits to the targeted group or individuals? (1200 characters max)

Campaign Example: Stay Well This Winter - The campaign ran in 504 pharmacies during October & November 2025. It encouraged the public to prepare for winter, plan and take steps to protect their health, helping to reduce pressure on health services. It was aimed at all adults, with emphasis on people aged 65 and over, those with underlying health conditions, pregnant women, and parents or guardians. Key Messages • If you are eligible for the free flu, COVID-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) &/or pneumococcal vaccine/s because you are at greater risk of serious illness from these viruses, it's best to get vaccinated ahead of winter. • Getting vaccinated is the most important thing you can do to reduce your chances of getting seriously ill. • Self-care is often the best way to treat minor illnesses. • Pharmacists are qualified to give advice about different health matters, including minor illnesses, so consider speaking to a pharmacist before going to your GP. • If you are feeling unwell, antibiotics are not always needed. You should take your GP or pharmacist's advice & only take antibiotics when you need them.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

14. Please quantify the impact of your initiative. (e.g. cost improvement, numbers of people helped, time saved) ((1200 characters max))

The Stay Well This Winter Evaluation Report provides a full overview of campaign impact. The most common enquiries concerned flu and COVID-19 vaccination and symptoms, the expected duration of common illnesses, self-care and antimicrobial resistance. The age groups most frequently engaged were 51–60, 61–70, 71–80 and 80-plus. Pharmacies reported providing information to the following priority groups: • 463 to older people • 376 to people with long-term conditions or their carers • 283 to young families • 243 to socially isolated people • 227 to housebound individuals • 193 to people of ethnic minorities • 167 to people living in poverty or deprivation

Please enter at most 1200 characters

15. Do you have formal or anecdotal evidence of success? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, informal feedback?) (1200 characters max)

Qualitative evidence: "Many patients with coughs and colds want an antibiotic and are annoyed when they don't get one. We were able to give lots of other self-care tips and explain why antibiotics are largely not appropriate for these viral infections. Once explained, patients responded positively to our advice." Stay Well This Winter Evaluation Report and NI pharmacies celebrate 1 million public health interventions (Links sent in email)

Please enter at most 1200 characters

Learning and sustainability

16. What was the cost of this initiative in time, money, and other resources? Please be as specific as you can. (1200 characters max) *

The Living Well service is delivered throughout the year during normal pharmacy opening hours and is embedded within routine community pharmacy practice. It involves the whole pharmacy team, who provide opportunistic brief interventions, health information and signposting alongside day-to-day dispensing and patient care. While this requires staff time and resource within already busy pharmacy settings, the use of prepared campaign materials and consistent messaging helps minimise additional administrative burden. The benefits to patients, particularly through improved access to self-care advice and early public health support, make the service a highly worthwhile use of pharmacy time and resources.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

17. Were there any learnings from the initiative, if so what were they? (1200 characters max) *

Primary learnings include: Trusted Local Presence Drives Preventive Care Community pharmacies are highly trusted, accessible healthcare settings that break down traditional clinical barriers. Impact: Patients are more willing to discuss sensitive, stigmatized topics—such as mental health, obesity, & alcohol use—in a familiar local pharmacy than in a formal GP surgery or hospital setting. Standardization is Crucial for Large-Scale Execution Coordinating health campaigns across 500+ independent, decentralized pharmacy contractors requires operational clarity. Impact: Providing centralized campaign packs & pre-made digital toolkits via the Business Services Organisation (BSO) proved essential. It ensured consistent health messaging across the region. Integration with Local Networks Maximises Success Pharmacy-led health promotion relies on external local infrastructure. Impact: Developing clear, region-specific directories for social prescribing allowed pharmacy teams to transition seamlessly from raising awareness to providing actionable help. The service is most effective when pharmacists can confidently signpost patients to active, localized community & voluntary services.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

18. Are you continuing to implement the initiative, please give details. (1200 characters max) *

The next stay well this winter campaign will run across October and November 2026, empowering local patients so they are equipped to self-care their own health and well-being.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

And finally .....

19. How easy will it be to replicate your initiative and do you have top tips to share? (1200 characters max)

The Living Well service is highly replicable because its success is built on the active participation of community pharmacists and their teams. A key tip is to identify a dedicated "Living Well champion" within each pharmacy, who can lead engagement with campaign materials and brief the wider team on each campaign's aims and resources. Pharmacy teams already know their local communities and are well placed to recognise patients who may benefit from targeted information, self-care advice or signposting. This local knowledge, combined with clear campaign resources and consistent messaging, makes the model practical, scalable and easy to embed into everyday pharmacy practice.

Please enter at most 1200 characters

20. Please let us know the social media addresses of those involved in the initiative.

Public Health Agency:@publichealthni Community Pharmacy NI:@compharmacyni Participating community pharmacies will add social media assets using their own platforms.

21. Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award? (800 characters max)

Living Well deserves the Self Care Award for turning over 500 community pharmacies into accessible preventive-health hubs that empower people across Northern Ireland. Unrivalled access: Brings self-care into communities, including vulnerable, isolated and deprived groups less likely to visit GPs. Preventive impact: Consistent campaigns encourage proactive self-care and healthier lifestyles. Behaviour change: Trusted pharmacy teams provide personalised interventions and practical lifestyle advice. Scalable model: Shows how pharmacy networks can reduce pressure on primary care. Social prescribing: Connects people with local voluntary, food and specialist support services.

Please enter at most 800 characters

22. Do you have an image, materials or weblinks to supplement your application? Please supply no more than 2 images which may also be used to promote your application if successful. Ensure images are square (ie height and width dimensions are the same). Please email information to selfcare@selfcareforum.org including the name title of your initiative (as in Q1).

Yes, I will email images.

23. Your application may be chosen to be uploaded to the "best practise" page of the Self-Care Forum website to share self-care excellence with others who might want to use the learnings in your application. We will also include your email address so that people may get in touch with you. Please confirm your preference below. *

- ○ I am happy for the Self-Care Forum to add our entry to the website **with** my email address
- ◉ I am happy for the Self-Care Forum to add our entry to the website **without** my email address
- ○ I would rather our entry was not included on the Self-Care Forum website

24. Would you consider becoming a self-care champion? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ◉ Maybe, I'd like to know more