

Pepe Di'lasio  
General Secretary  
Association of School and College Leaders

7th January 2025

Dear Pepe

## Pharmacy First – an NHS service being offered from pharmacies across England

I am writing to you from the representative body of community pharmacies in England to highlight an NHS service which almost all pharmacies across England are now offering for children and adults called **Pharmacy First**.

I understand that student attendance is a high priority for schools and colleges and this free NHS service may assist with getting children back to school/college following a minor illness, as well as also being of use to school/college staff. As such, I thought you may want to bring the service to the attention of your members so that they could raise awareness of it amongst parents/carers of children, as well as school/college staff.

### What is Pharmacy First?

This NHS service allows children and adults to get quick access to healthcare advice as they can walk into a pharmacy and access the service, removing the potential delay of having to wait for a GP appointment. The person will be offered a consultation with a pharmacist in a private consultation room, with some pharmacies also offering the service remotely as a video consultation.

The service supports the following conditions:

- **Earache** (ages 1 to 17 years)
- **Impetigo** (ages 1 year and over)
- **Infected insect bites** (age 1 year and over)
- **Sore throats** (age 5 years and over)
- **Shingles** (age 18 years and over)
- **Sinusitis** (age 12 years and over)
- **Urinary tract infections** (UTIs) in women (ages 16 to 64 years)

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Community Pharmacy England is the operating name  
of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee.



The pharmacist will provide advice and, if clinically necessary, a prescription medicine to treat the condition. Any medicines are supplied free of charge to children under 16 years, with the normal [NHS prescription charge rules](#) applying to people aged 16 or over. Should the pharmacist be unable to help, they will direct the person to their GP surgery or other health professional.

We have developed an animation to explain about the service which is available on [YouTube](#) and more information can also be found on the NHS website at [nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst](https://nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst)

### Resources to promote the Pharmacy First service to parents/carers and staff

We are keen to raise awareness of the service to parents/carers of children, as well as school/college staff so that more people make use of the service and get better sooner when suffering from one of the seven conditions. We would therefore be keen for you to highlight this service to your members in England, so they can consider sharing information about the service with parents/carers of children and staff.

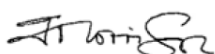
We have created a suite of resources for use by schools/colleges including:

- Downloadable posters which can be displayed in reception/waiting areas or staff rooms;
- Downloadable flyers which could be included in school bags or left in reception/waiting areas;
- Content for digital screens in schools/colleges;
- Template news stories that could be included on websites or in newsletters; and
- A template letter/email for parents/carers highlighting the service.

The resources are available at [cpe.org.uk/information-on-national-pharmacy-services](https://cpe.org.uk/information-on-national-pharmacy-services)

If you have any questions on the service or would like to discuss promotion of the service further, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague [alastair.buxton@cpe.org.uk](mailto:alastair.buxton@cpe.org.uk).

Yours sincerely



**Janet Morrison** OBE  
Chief Executive