



**Well Pharmacy
Enter & View
Report**



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Healthwatch Hartlepool

Well Pharmacy

Enter and View Report

Visit Well Pharmacy 11th December 2025

1. Introduction

Well Pharmacy is a busy local pharmacy located in the Victoria Road Health Centre which is also home to 3 GP practices. It is close to the town centre, well served by local bus services and there is a large carpark next to the building.

It is one of five Well Pharmacy outlets in Hartlepool, and part of the Well Pharmacy group, which is the UK's second-largest pharmacy chain, operating over 700 branches nationwide. It was formed in 2014 when the Bestway Group acquired the Co-operative Pharmacy group, which was rebranded to Well Pharmacy after acquisition.

Details of visit:	
Service address:	Victoria Road Health Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, TS26 8DB
Service Provider:	Well Pharmacy
Date and Time:	11 th December 2025, 10am - 12pm
Authorised Representatives:	Margaret Wrenn, Bernie Hays
Contact details:	Healthwatch Hartlepool, 1st Floor, Greenbank, Waldon Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7Q

2. Background - Well Pharmacy Victoria Road

Our visit to the Well Pharmacy located in the Victoria Road Health Centre was our first Enter and View visit to a pharmacy for some years. We have however worked closely with the Tees Valley Pharmacy Network and assisted with the promotion of initiatives such as Pharmacy First which is a national initiative which aims to increase the usage of pharmacies as first port of call for a range of minor ailments.

However, on this occasion, our main purpose was to speak to patients about their overall experience of service delivery, and in particular the receipt of NHS prescriptions. With this in mind, the feedback we received from patients during the course of the visit has given some fascinating insights into patient experience of prescription and other services delivered at Well Pharmacy.

Core Services delivered at the pharmacy include –

- NHS prescription dispensing
- A range of vaccination services including flu and covid.
- Consultation and medicines advice
- Blood pressure checks
- Online prescription management
- Home delivery service

3. Aim of the Visit

The visit to Well Pharmacy was conducted by Healthwatch Hartlepool and was delivered within parameters contained within national Enter and View Guidance which were discussed and agreed with the Practice Manager at a pre-visit meeting.

Our overall aim of the visit was to –

- Gather feedback from patients at the Victoria Road Well Pharmacy branch, in order to gain insight into their experience of pharmacy service provision.
- To make appropriate recommendations and comments based on findings and information received.

4. Methodology

This was the first Enter and View visit conducted by Healthwatch Hartlepool to a pharmacy since before outbreak of the Covid pandemic in 2020.

The visit process started with a face-to-face discussion with the Practice Manager at which the purpose, conduct and parameters of the forthcoming visit were discussed and agreed.

This meeting also helped familiarise the visitors as to the nature of services provided and the visit subsequently took place on 11th December 2025. It was undertaken by two Healthwatch Hartlepool Enter and View representatives, Margaret Wrenn and Bernie Hays.

In addition to the visit on December 11th, the visit questionnaire was also made available to patients who subsequently visited the pharmacy until January 16th and in total 19 questionnaires were completed and returned.

5. The Visit - Arrival at Well Pharmacy

We arrived at Well Pharmacy at 9.50am and were warmly received by Katherine Brady, the Pharmacy manager and her staff and commenced our visit. Katherine had already had a pre-meeting with Healthwatch staff, regarding the purpose of our visit.

The pharmacy was already busy when we arrived. It was attached to the Victoria Health Centre, where three GP practices are situated and it was very easily accessed from either inside or outside of the Health Centre. It was spacious, light and airy and there was plenty of seating available. It is all on one level and accessible to wheelchair users.

6. Visit Findings

During the course of the visit, we managed to speak to 15 patients, all of whom completed the visit questionnaire. A further 4 questionnaires were returned by patients during the extended consultation period which ran until January 16th. A detailed summary of completed questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1.

Whilst there, we observed that the staff member dealing with patients was very friendly, she greeted everyone with a smile and used their names. She was able to hand over prescriptions which were ready on a shelf within her reach and did so quickly and efficiently.

“It is a very busy pharmacy, Erin is very professional, scripts always ready, usually no problems.”

She reminded some clients of Blood pressure appointments they had arranged or mentioned relatives whose scripts were already available for them to collect. The majority of the transactions appeared to go without a hitch, and the patients left the building seemingly happy with their visit. Patients were able to see the Pharmacist if they asked, for healthcare or medicine advice, or to purchase medicine that was suggested. There was a steady flow of patients at the visit, the majority for whom this was their chosen pharmacy. There was a good range of leaflets on various pharmacy topics also available for patients to take away with them if they chose to do so.

We observed patients from the GP practices who share the location being able to collect both prescription and medication in the one visit.

The Pharmacy provides a delivery service, which for those who are aware of it, was well used and appreciated. The fact that patients were informed by text message when prescriptions were ready to collect was also appreciated.

A summary of key findings from our discussions and completed questionnaires is shown below –

- Most patients visit the Pharmacy monthly to collect prescriptions.
- Fifteen out of nineteen patients said that they always used this Pharmacy.
- Seventeen patients said the purpose of today’s visit was to collect a prescription, two said they were having blood pressure checks and two also said that they were seeking general healthcare advice.
- Fifteen patients rated the standard of customer service as either very good or good, with only two patients rating it as poor or very poor.

- Seven patients commented that they had experienced a problem collecting a repeat prescription, and in most cases the problem had been with the GP surgery, NHS app or not receiving a text message informing them it was ready to collect.
- All seventeen patients who responded said that the prescriptions they received were always correct.
- Five patients commented that some items on their prescription were not always in stock.
- Thirteen patients reported that prescriptions were always or mostly ready on time, and one person commented that their prescription was never ready on time.
- Thirteen patients were aware of the delivery service, three said they were not aware.
- Ten patients said they were aware of the Think Pharmacy First service, eight were not aware of the service. Five patients said that they had used the service for a range of conditions including skin allergies, eye conditions, infections and nasal/coughs.

7. Summary of visit

Overall, this was quite a pleasant visit, and we were impressed with the speed and efficiency of the handover of pre-prepared prescriptions, and the manner in which each patient was seen and dealt with in a pleasant and professional manner. Reception staff were pleasant, helpful and professional at all times.

A few patients expressed concern that prescriptions were not always ready on time, and some issues with repeat prescriptions, but generally patients were very satisfied with the service received but, in most cases, the cause of the delay was out of the control of the Pharmacy.

A considerable number of patients (eight) were not aware of Think Pharmacy First, despite recent extensive recent publicity, both locally and nationally.

Finally, we were disappointed not to receive a completed Practice Manager Questionnaire, despite giving several reminders. The completed questionnaire is usually included in our final report and is an opportunity to give some additional detail and background as to the services provided.

8. Recommendation

- All staff at the Victoria Road Well Pharmacy should be commended for the high standard of service which is delivered to patients and the respectful, courteous and dignified manner in which day to day services are delivered.
- The Practice should explore ways in which awareness and uptake of services such as Think Pharmacy First and other available services and initiatives can be improved. The introduction of a quarterly newsheet, which patients could take away when collecting prescriptions should be considered.

9. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hartlepool would like to thank Pharmacy Manager Katherine Brady and the staff team for the warm welcome we received when visiting the Pharmacy and for answering our many questions which they did with openness, transparency and good humour. We wish them all well for the future.

10. Service Provider Response

After reading through and checking all the factual parts everything you have down is spot on. The only points of notice I found and thought of was my name was written as Katherine Braithwaite rather than my actual name which is Katherine Brady. Also in Hartlepool there are 4 stores total; ourselves (Victoria Road), York Road, Catcote Road and Seaton. We also offer the Pharmacy First Scheme, Hypertension Blood Pressure Checks and a Contraception Service for a wide range of patients.

Other than those mentioned everything else is correct and I'm so glad you were able to get a good collection of data from patients to get a good picture on how things are run and the improvements we are making. Here as a team we have made some huge changes over the past couple of years and, as a store, we are in a much more stable place, have regular members of permanent staff, and continue to see the growth through our figures, but more importantly through the relationship we are gaining with our customers. I would like to thank you for your research and for being so kind and welcoming towards us with your visits. I look forward to the final outcome

11. Appendices

Appendix 1

Well Pharmacy – Patient Questionnaire Summary

1. How often do you visit the Well Pharmacy?

Daily	0
Weekly	1
Monthly	15
Quarterly	2
Once or twice a year	0
Other	1

Any additional comments:

- Live out of town, don't usually come here.

2. Do you always use this pharmacy, if no which do you usually go to?

Yes	15
No	4

Any additional comments: None

3. Reasons for today's visit? (tick all that apply):

Collect prescription/s	17
Purchasing medication	2
Medicine advice	1
Blood pressure check	2
Healthcare advice	2
Other	1

Any additional comments:

- I have come for a prescription and flu jab, but not available today, advised come back next week.
- To enquire about flu jab (2)

4. How do you rate the customer service at Well Pharmacy?

Very Good	11
Good	4
Neutral	1
Poor	1
Very Poor	1

Any additional comments:

- Very busy pharmacy, Erin is very professional, scripts always ready usually no problems. If there is a problem, she explains everything fully.
- Good atmosphere, staff are nice.
- The staff are always polite and caring.
- Do not have a lot of staff, can take 40-50 minutes to pick up prescription at Victoria Road.

5. Have you ever had a problem with receiving repeat prescriptions?

Yes 7	No 10	N/a 2
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Any additional comments:

- Problem was with GP surgery/had to contact surgery to resolve problem. (3)
- Don't always receive text message to say it is ready to collect. (1)
- Problem with NHS app, could not get a review and my medication was running out.

6. Are the prescribed items you require always in stock?

Yes 11	No 5	N/a 2
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Any additional comments:

- Not always (1)
- Had to call back later in day (2)
- Had to call back next day (1)
- Called back next day and they were in stock.

7. When you collect prescriptions is the medication you receive always correct?

Yes 17	No 0	N/a 2
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Any additional comments: None

8. When you collect prescriptions are they ready on time?

Always	9
Mostly	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	0
Never	1
N/a	2

Any additional comments:

- Receive text message when they are ready to collect. (2)

9. Does Well Pharmacy provide a delivery service?

Yes 13	No 3	Don't Know 3
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Any additional comments:

- They do but I don't use it (5)
- Yes, the service is good, they send you a text to say when it will be delivered.

10. What is usually your first port of call for healthcare advice?

GP	15
Internet	1
Pharmacy	3
A+E	0
NHS 111	4
Friends	1
Other	0

Any additional comments:

- I used to always go to GP, advised to use Pharmacy First.

11. Does the pharmacy help you manage the medication you take each day?

Yes 2	No 1	N/a 12
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Please give us a little more information describing why you felt that way.

- Yes, use a pill dispenser.
- Yes, the Pharmacist phones and checks you are ok with the new medication.

12. Are you aware of the Think Pharmacy First Service?

Yes 10	No 8
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Any additional comments: None

13. If yes, what conditions have you used the service for: -

Digestive disorder 0	Nasal, coughs 2	Mouth Problems 0	Not used 3
Infections 1	Skin allergy 1	Eyes 1	

Any additional comments: None

14. Do you need assistance opening medication or reading instructions?

Yes 2	No 0	N/a 3
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Any Additional comments: None

15. General Comments

- Great service and lovely staff, always happy to help!
- Usually incredibly good service, much better than it was.
- Smile now and again, staff don't understand mental health.

About you

16. Please tell us which area of Hartlepool you live in

TS24 (8)	TS26 (7)	TS25 (2)	TS22 (1)
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17. Please tell us your age

17 or younger (1)	18 -24 (0)	25 - 34 (1)	35 -44 (3)
45 -54 (3)	55 – 64 (4)	65 - 74 (3)	75 or older (3)

18. How would you describe your gender?

Female (9)	Male (8)
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Appendix 2



Pre-Visit Questions for Well Pharmacy Practice Manager

A. About The Pharmacy

- Who owns, the Well Pharmacy?
- Are you part of a group, if so are there other branches of your group in the area?
- Please detail your opening hours
- Do you ever open out of hours, if so for how long and how often?
- Will you be open during the Christmas period?
- Do you provide a delivery service for customers, and if so are there eligibility criteria or service charges?
- Do you provide customers with information about the Think Pharmacy First service, and have many customers used the service.

- Please list the full range of services including those delivered by other organisations that are provided at Well Pharmacy?

B. Staffing

- Please detail the number and different types of staff that work at Well Pharmacy?
- What qualifications do you look for when recruiting different types of staff at Well Pharmacy?
- Do you find it easy to recruit staff, and if you have problems recruiting, please tell us why?
- Do you ever employ locum/temporary staff, and if so, how often and are they sourced?
- Please tell us about the types of training staff are expected to take as part of their ongoing professional/personal development?

C. Supporting Equality and Diversity

- Is the pharmacy fully accessible, including to wheelchair users – please give details?
- Is the pharmacy Dementia friendly? Please give examples of how you support customers who have dementia?

- Do you provide assistance to customers who have sensory loss, or who are unable to read the instructions that come with their medication?
- Do you have customers whose first language is not English, and if so, how do you provide support and advice?

D. Safety and Security

- What procedures do you use to ensure that prescriptions are always accurately dispensed and mistakes do not occur?
- How do you ensure that sensitive patient information is protected and never inappropriately disclosed?
- Do you have a private room in which patients can receive advice and discuss issues relating to their medication and conditions confidentially?
- Do you have emergency procedures to protect staff and patients in emergency or threatening situations?

E. Patient Wellbeing

- Please tell us how you ensure that patients are as informed and knowledgeable about how to take and manage their medication and any possible side effects ?

- Do patients receive texts or emails advising them that prescriptions are ready to collect
- Do you provide any healthy living services such as smoking cessation or weight management?
- Do you have links with neighbouring GP practices, and in particular social prescribers, and if so how?
- Do you provide information about local community and voluntary services from whom patients can receive support (for example, Hartlepool Carers, The Bridge etc)?

F. Final Comments

- Is there anything else you want to tell us about Well Pharmacy or the services you provide?

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