

Introducing the PharmOutcomes approach to the changes in the CPCS contractual model

What does this mean for me?

Since the launch of the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) in October 2019, NHS England has paid for accredited IT system suppliers to support community pharmacy teams with the delivery of this service.

On the **1st of October 2021**, NHS England will stop paying for the IT support required to provide the Community Pharmacy Consultation Service in a community pharmacy. At that point, community pharmacies will be able to choose a solution they feel will provide them with the right solution to manage their notifications, consultations, and claims. The cost of that solution will be paid for by the pharmacy contractor.

PharmOutcomes Support for CPCS

PharmOutcomes Direct is the management solution that Pinnacle have created to make choosing PharmOutcomes easy and economically viable for community pharmacy owners.

The PharmOutcomes platform has been widely used across England to manage every aspect of the CPCS service for more than 2 years. PharmOutcomes is a trusted, secure solution that can manage every aspect of the service:

- NHS 111 referrals received directly electronically or via NHS mail
- NHS 111 Online referrals received directly electronically or via NHS mail
- GP electronic referrals directly into the platform¹
- NHS.NET referrals received via email, initiating within enabled PMR systems²
- Visibility of the referral outcomes within enabled PMR systems²
- For electronic referrals, a referral receipt alert at your pharmacy via email
- For electronic referrals, the option of PharmAlarm ensures you do not miss a single referral
- Patient validation via the Personal Demographic Service (PDS) with SmartSearch
- Access to the GP record via GP Connect³
- Access to the patient summary care record via SCR 1-Click
- Access to local health care records (LHCR)⁴
- Integrated Service Finder for onward referral³
- Time critical indication for referrals that have deadlines³
- Secure transmission of outcomes to GP practice via MESH
- Fully automated claim management solution transfers claim information directly into MYS
- Provision of secondary datasets to NHS England³

¹ Where the GP Practice uses PharmRefer or the triaged referral process directly within EMIS Web

² Where the PMR system has the integration facility available to users

³ Subject to specification, development and accreditation requirements as published

⁴ Where the local health care record has enable integration

How will I know who can support me to deliver the CPCS service?

NHS England is currently finalising a compliance framework that sets out the standards for system suppliers to meet for them to qualify as an accredited system supplier. Community pharmacies will be able to choose which IT system they wish to use from the accredited suppliers list. Every system supplier appearing on the framework must be able to offer support as detailed in the compliance framework and service specification.

Our Promise

PharmOutcomes was the original system to create the opportunity for electronic referrals from NHS 111 to community pharmacy. In considering our approach to the change by NHS England that was stated in the Five Year Deal, we want to continue to support pharmacy teams in their ongoing care of NHS patients but also to recognise the challenges that this change will present to pharmacy owners.

PharmOutcomes Direct has at its heart the clear principle that pharmacies will only pay us when they will get paid themselves.

The team at PharmOutcomes understand that not every referral received can be completed and that only completed referrals will result in a claim being made for the pharmacy.

There will be no sign-up fee and no annual fee to pay to use the platform.

How much will this cost?

To manage all aspects of the CPCS service securely and effectively sites will only pay a fraction of the fee paid to them. We will operate a sliding cost scale that applies a smaller management charge for larger numbers of referrals completed. This tiered cost structure will be published in due course but will only apply for referrals that result in a CPCS claim – receiving and handling referrals that do not result in a CPCS claim are not chargeable.

Where larger numbers of referrals are completed in a monthly invoicing period, the transactional cost is lower. Contractors can achieve much lower transaction rates if they are invoiced as part of a group as here the group is invoiced, and the rate charged is set against the group activity not the individual site activity.

- For regional or national multiple pharmacy owners, this provides the opportunity to aggregate their quieter referral sites with their busiest to achieve the best transactional cost
- Independent and small groups can achieve the same scaled cost savings by joining an Affinity Group (see below)
- For those smaller pharmacy owners who do not wish to join an Affinity Group, the option will always remain to be charged and to pay directly

Independent Pharmacy or Small Group – Cost Saving Opportunities

To support smaller chains and independent contractors, PharmOutcomes Direct introduce the concept of **Affinity Groups**. An affinity group is an organisation that can offer to its membership the ability to manage CPCS claims for its members. Pharmacies will be given the option to either sign up directly or to sign up with an affinity group within PharmOutcomes Direct.

What are Affinity Groups?

With the NHS England change, Pinnacle will change from having one customer that requires billing to potentially having to manage thousands. Affinity Groups are organisations that wish to act as an umbrella for a number of pharmacy owners – billing can then be to that Affinity Group, reducing our costs and allowing us to pass those savings to the Affinity Group and hence to pharmacy owners. Affinity Groups will range from large representative organisations and buying groups to LPC provider companies. By allowing us to reduce our invoicing costs, we can support independent and small group pharmacy owners to achieve a lower CPCS transaction rate because the activity across the whole Affinity Group will dictate the rate charged. The Affinity Group in these cases will be invoiced for the group activity by Pinnacle and then collect payment from its individual members, probably alongside normal billing activity reducing the owner costs in bank charges by reducing the number of payments necessary.

How do I sign up to PharmOutcomes Direct?

From late August 2021, pharmacies and pharmacy chains will be able to sign up to PharmOutcomes Direct as their CPCS solution, although the change in contracting arrangement by NHS England will not occur until 1st October 2021.

To make this as simple as possible, the Pinnacle team are creating a portal that will manage the whole sign-up process. Pharmacy owners will be able to sign into the portal using a login that is linked to their main PharmOutcomes user account.

Once logged in, pharmacy owners will see a view of all pharmacies in their group and be able to:

- Set their preferences for CPCS
- Sign up for PharmAlarm
- Sign up for PreConsult
- Sign up to an Affinity group
- See their activity
- See their expected bills
- See their past bills

Some Affinity Groups may offer the ability to sign up on their own website.