

Key themes from Expanding independent prescribing in community pharmacy: professionals' and patients' views

1 WHO TOOK PART?

482 voices shaping the future of community pharmacy prescribing



187
Community pharmacists



76
Other prescribing professionals & commissioners



219
Patients

April – June 2026

UK-wide

Three surveys

2 THE OPPORTUNITY VS THE REALITY

Community pharmacists believe in prescribing, but the system isn't ready for scale.

84%

agree expanding prescribing would improve access to timely treatment for patients

84%

agree the NHS should commission and fund prescribing as a standard part of primary care

30%

feel the current infrastructure is adequate for scale

"Confidence in the model is high. Confidence in the system is low."

3 WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE FIRST?

Top priorities for expanding pharmacist prescribing

68% Sustainable NHS funding

65% Access to patient records & IT integration

40% Routine NHS commissioning of services

Pharmacists also highlighted appropriate remuneration and funding (76%) and access to clinical IT systems (70%) as the two most critical improvements.

4 THE CURRENT PRESCRIBING LANDSCAPE

Training alone isn't enough—qualified pharmacists need opportunities to prescribe.

187 Pharmacists surveyed

↓
 94 Qualified Independent Prescribers

↓
 60 Actively prescribing

Among the 88 who confirmed their prescribing status (n=88):

34% NHS + Private
13% NHS only
22% Private only

≈32% of qualified pharmacists who responded are **NOT** prescribing

5 PATIENTS ARE READY

Patients are broadly positive about pharmacist prescribing.



68%

already knew pharmacists could prescribe



70%

have not yet had a pharmacist prescription but would be happy to try

Top factors that would make patients comfortable:



56%

Quick access



51%

Privacy



49%

Access to medical history

6 WHAT IS STOPPING EXPANSION?

The barriers are structural—not clinical.

FUNDING
Lack of sustainable NHS funding and appropriate remuneration.

CLINICAL IT ACCESS
Limited access to patient records and IT systems hinders safe prescribing.

DPP AVAILABILITY
Extremely difficult to secure Designated Prescribing Practitioners for training placements.

PROTECTED LEARNING TIME
Absence of funded, protected time for training and development.

7 THREE PERSPECTIVES, ONE SHARED FOUNDATION

Where views align—and where they differ.

PHARMACISTS	OTHER PROFESSIONALS	PATIENTS
Ready to expand	Need stronger infrastructure	Want reassurance
Strongly supportive	Cautiously supportive	Generally positive
Need funding & IT	Need evidence & governance	Need confidence in safety

WE AGREE

Access to medical records	Privacy in consultations	Clear escalation pathways

8 FIVE KEY TAKEAWAYS

What 482 people told us.

Strong professional support
Pharmacists strongly back expansion.

Patients are ready
Most patients are aware and open to pharmacist prescribing.

Infrastructure isn't ready
Only 30% believe current systems can support scale.

Funding & IT are essential
Top priorities for safe and sustainable expansion.

National commissioning is the next step
Routine NHS commissioning will unlock the full potential.

“

To better meet patient needs, I believe healthcare services must become more accessible, personalised, and integrated. My vision is for a system that puts patients truly at the centre, where care is not only clinically effective but also compassionate, inclusive, and responsive to individual circumstances.

Insights Report

Expanding independent prescribing in community pharmacy

June 2026

INPA NATIONAL PHARMACY ASSOCIATION

th'scovery

