## Needle Exchange Pharmacy Service Use Report

## Background

In order to ensure that the most appropriate community pharmacies are being used for the needle exchange service, Hertfordshire LPC undertook a survey of all community pharmacies in Hertfordshire.

There are 242 pharmacies that could potentially provide this service in Hertfordshire although recognising that this should be based on patient need and many of these community pharmacies will not have the need to provide needle exchange services. There are 28 community pharmacies currently providing the service. Full details about the current service are available on the LPC website: <http://www.hertslpc.org.uk/public-health/commissioned-services/drugs-alcohol-spectrum-cri/>

**Data Collection Process**

Data collection took place over a period of 3 and a half weeks from Wednesday 27 May until Friday 19 June 2015. Every pharmacy was sent a paper copy of the questionnaire (appendix one) along with an electronic version of the questionnaire made available online.

**Results**

49 (20%) community pharmacies responded to the questionnaire. Of these 49, nine (32%) community pharmacies of the 28 providing the service responded. 40 (82%) community pharmacies not providing the service responded to the questionnaire.

The responses were received from across Hertfordshire with representation from each locality (figure one) except one: Upper Lea Valley (localities have been broken down according to CCG localities).

*Figure One.*

***Needle Exchange Service Providers***

Those providing the needle exchange service were asked three questions about whether they were aware of the claiming process (figure two), whether they knew the CRi Spectrum hub details (figure three) and how often they referred to this hub (figure four):

*Figure Two.* The comment stated: “CRi ask for needle exchange of surgerised not on a 3 month basis and take 2-3 months to pay.”

*Figure Three.*

*Figure Four.*

In the free text comments one respondent praised CRi as being supportive and responsive.

There was one comment from a provider on the service that “packs do not necessarily satisfy patient requirements”.

***Community Pharmacies not providing the Needle Exchange Service***

Of the 40 community pharmacy providers that returned their questionnaire just under half (47%) respondents (figure five) indicated that patients had requested needle exchange services from the provider.

 *Figure Five.*

Of the 19 community pharmacy providers that indicated patients were requesting this service from them, over half of these community pharmacies indicated that they had received queries from 6 or more patients (figure six).

 *Figure Six.*

However 70% of the community pharmacies receiving these queries knew where to signpost the patients to (figure seven) with the majority (75%) being referred to another pharmacy (figure eight).

 *Figure Seven.*

 *Figure Eight.*

There was some free text for community pharmacies to respond. Nine of the pharmacies indicated that they would like to provide this service from the following areas:

* Stort Valley = 1
* Hertsmere = 1
* Welwyn and Hatfield = 1
* Dacorum = 1
* North Herts = 2
* Stevenage = 3

At least four respondents indicated that they were unaware of other service providers for needle exchange.

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