

Date Time	Monday October 13 th . 2025, 7.30-9.00pm	Chair	Harpal Bhandal (Mob: 07834 015500) (harpalbhandal@hotmail.com)
Venue	Zoom	Chief Officer	Stephen Noble (Mob: 07856 309573) (ceo@cpblackcountry.org)
Members in attendance plus guests	Harpal Bhandal Stephen Noble Navinder Matharu Sukhy Somal- ICB	Rifat Asghar-Hussain Olutayo Arikawe Scot Taylor Alison Crompton	Bhupinder Malhi Arvinder Sagar Rimi Baden Indy Grewal Nick Holden

Details

Open section	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome, apologies and Declarations of Interest 2. Last meeting's notes were approved
Action Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no action points
Quick recap	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The meeting covered updates on various pharmacy initiatives including generic drug switches, national campaigns, and patient-led ordering policies, with discussions on performance monitoring and safety measures. The group addressed winter pharmacy pressures and branded generics, with specific focus on switching priority medications and extending pharmacy hours during weekends and bank holidays. The committee reviewed upcoming events and meetings, discussed pharmacy staffing costs and rates for extended services, and considered contractor rates for new services while emphasizing the need to maintain profitability and service quality.
Action points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sukhy to update the letter about pharmacies switching products without prescription changes and share with the committee first. • Sukhy to include information about COVID vaccine eligibility and national booking platform issues in the same letter. • Sukhy to create a proposal for winter pressure pharmacy openings with pricing based on committee feedback by Wednesday. • Sukhy to share the EMIS practice functionality for Pharmacy First triage with Stephen. • Sukhy to ask about including clinical pathways in the GP incentive scheme at the next weekly meeting. • Sukhy to notify pharmacies near the 4 pilot practices about potential increased workload. • Committee members to provide Sukhy with cost breakdown for extended opening hours by Tuesday evening. • Stephen to create a poll for the next committee meeting options. • Stephen to reach out to the Lilly representative again about a Q&A session on Mounjairo claiming process. • Pharmacies to email Sam Padley with the names of their two NHS app ambassadors. • Committee members to attend the INT workshop on November 20th.

Summary

1. Pharmacy Initiatives and Performance Updates

Sukhy provided updates on several pharmacy initiatives, including generic drug switches, upcoming national campaigns, and changes to patient-led ordering policies. She addressed concerns about pharmacy performance and patient safety, reassuring attendees that regular monitoring and support are in place. Sukhy also discussed new funding opportunities for community pharmacy lead officer roles and potential incentives for Pharmacy First referrals. Additionally, she shared information on a weight management bid and the importance of promoting the NHS app, emphasizing the need for pharmacy ambassadors to register with Sam Padley.

2. Branded Generics and Winter Pharmacy Support

The group discussed two main topics: branded generics and winter pharmacy pressures. For branded generics, Harpal suggested prioritizing quetiapine XLs and oxycodone for switching to generics due to stock issues, while Bhupinder added fentanyl and buprenorphine as important candidates. For winter pharmacy support, Sukhy proposed paying pharmacies to extend hours (1pm-9pm) on weekends and bank holidays near UTC sites, with Harpal's group agreeing to provide cost estimates by the next day, focusing on a fair rate that reflects the service value rather than expected income.

3. Pharmacy Integration and Clustering Plans

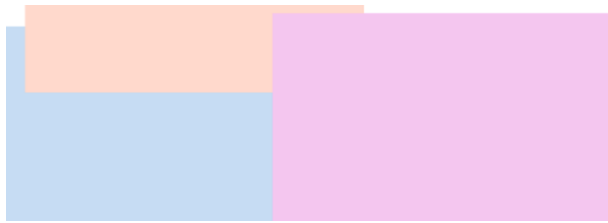
The meeting focused on several key topics. Sukhy discussed the need for communication between pharmacies and treatment centres, as well as plans for 20 pharmacies per area to handle potential winter demand. She also addressed concerns about minor ailments services and the upcoming patient-led ordering policy, which will be implemented across all practices from March 1st. The group discussed the clustering of BSOL and Black Country, with official clustering expected in April 2026 and a legal merger by April 2027. Stephen shared positive feedback from the recent AGM and training event, highlighting the involvement of key stakeholders. The conversation ended with a discussion about voting on accounts, with all CCA votes approved but no reactions from contractors.

4. Committee Plans Upcoming Events

The committee discussed upcoming events and meetings. Stephen announced a special general meeting for voting on accounts, scheduled for next Monday evening. Sukhy suggested using the session for a webinar on EHC or antidepressants, but Stephen felt it wasn't practical at this stage. They discussed training events, including a Johnson & Johnson webinar on smoking cessation and an update meeting with BSOL. Stephen mentioned a planned visit to pharmacies with Angela and Corrine in November. The committee also discussed a meeting with CGL in Walsall about supervised consumption and needle exchange services. Upcoming meetings were reviewed, including an INT workshop at the ICB on November 20th, which Stephen encouraged attendance at. The committee agreed to hold a poll to decide on the next meeting date.

5. Pharmacy Staffing and Rate Agreements

The group discussed pharmacy staffing costs and rates for extended hours services. They agreed that Saturday rates should be £180-200 per hour, with Sunday rates slightly higher, and bank holiday rates matching the national rate of £3.50. The group decided to propose opening 2-3 pharmacies per PCN area rather than the initially suggested 5, to ensure fair compensation for staff while maintaining service quality. They also discussed the need to set rates that would not



	<p><i>negatively impact national rates, with concern that going too low could lead to future rate reductions.</i></p> <p>6. <u>Pharmacy Contractor Rate Negotiation</u></p> <p><i>The committee discussed pharmacy contractor rates for a new service, with Olutayo advocating for a minimum rate of £200 while others suggested starting lower to allow for negotiation. The group debated the value of pharmacy services compared to optometry and dental services, with Rifat and Nazam emphasizing the need to break down costs and maintain profitability. Stephen proposed considering the service as a potential lifeline for contractors struggling to meet thresholds, suggesting targeted support for those close to their targets. The committee agreed to think further on the rate and provide feedback via WhatsApp, with Stephen planning to conduct a poll for the next meeting and options for an INT workshop.</i></p>
<p>AOB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>There was no other business</i>
<p><i>Signed by the Chair</i></p>	<p>-----</p>