



Enter & View

Day Lewis, Newquay,
Chester Road Pharmacy

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1 Introduction

1.1 Details of visit

Service provider: Day Lewis Pharmacies

Service Address: 1 Chester Road, Newquay, TR7 2RT

Date: 20th April 2026

Authorised representative: Nigel Oakes

1.2 Purpose of visit

The purpose of this Enter and View visit was to observe the environment and service processes within the pharmacy, hear directly from patients and staff about their experiences on the day, and identify opportunities to improve patient experience and service delivery.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cornwall would like to thank patients and staff who took the time to share their experiences during this visit.

1.4 Disclaimer

This report relates to findings observed on the specific date above and is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of the visit. Findings should be interpreted as a snapshot of observations on the day of the visit and not a judgement of clinical effectiveness.

1.5 About Healthwatch Cornwall

Healthwatch Cornwall is an independent organisation committed to amplifying the voices of Cornwall's residents in the planning and delivery of health and social care services. Through public engagement, we gather their views and experiences with these services. We ensure these perspectives are represented in decision-making processes both locally and nationally, driven by the belief that community feedback is vital to improving standards of care.

1.6 What is Enter and View?

As a local Healthwatch we are authorised to "Enter and View" health and social care services through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Local Authorities Regulations 2013 (part 4). These services can include hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits are an opportunity to see services in action, listen to and understand the experiences of individuals who use them, and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The visits are organised based on feedback received about individual services or in response to themes identified in our research.

2 Visit Summary

Conversations with staff

Healthwatch Cornwall spoke with five staff members, including the pharmacist manager

Conversations with residents

Eighteen patients were asked about their experience of the pharmacy.

Observation of facilities

Observations were made throughout the visit, focussing on the condition of the facilities, administrative procedures and patient experience.

Observations and feedback indicated a generally positive experience of the service, alongside several areas where improvements could enhance patient experience and service delivery

3 Service overview

Chester Road Pharmacy is located in a busy shopping area on the outskirts of Newquay. There is on street parking adjacent and several pay per visit car parks nearby. The pharmacy is open six days a week, including Saturdays.

The pharmacy processes approximately 14,000 prescriptions per month, in the main from two large GP practices located close by.

The Pharmacy has an automated dispensing system that can be accessed from both inside and outside the store. The dispensing service is advertised as being available outside of normal working hours.

The service dispenses both prescription and non-prescription medications and also stocks a range of non-medical retail items. An on-site pharmacy first service is available to complete episodes of care for 7 common conditions following defined clinical pathways. There is a pharmacist on site during opening hours.

4 Observations

On arrival our identification was checked, and we were introduced to the pharmacist manager and the assistant manager who was serving on the counter. We were given full access to all areas of the store and pharmacy areas, and staff were given adequate opportunity to talk with us in private.

There were a wide variety of informational notices on display throughout the pharmacy on topics including wellbeing, data protection, NHS phone app and pharmacy first services. All notices were relevant, in date and displayed neatly.

At times during the visit queues of up to six patients developed and wait times were up to seven minutes to be served. As queues grew, additional staff members came from the dispensary area to help serve patients and assist with location of prescribed medication. Most patients were served promptly but one incident was observed where a patient was kept waiting for some time as their medication had been misfiled and could not be found. Several patients were issued with 'items owing' paperwork due to stock shortages, which may contribute to repeat visits and inconvenience for patients

There were several chairs around the store and patients were observed using these whilst waiting to be served or when waiting for medication to be dispensed. Several patients were also observed to be using the automated medicines dispensing system without any apparent issues.

Overall, the pharmacy environment appeared well-organised, with staff demonstrating responsive and patient-centred interactions during periods of increased demand

5 Patient feedback

Staff attitude

Sixteen patients commented favourably on the service they received from the pharmacy and fourteen said that the staff were kind and helpful. One patient told us, 'The staff here are all absolutely lovely, they go out of their way to be helpful and always have what I need'. Another told us, 'I came on holiday without my medication and they were so helpful and efficient in getting it sorted for me, they even rang my home GP and gave them the details of what I needed and where to send the prescription, I can't speak highly enough of them and I don't think they could have done more for me if they had tried'. A patient who had previously been paying for an over-the-counter medication told us, 'They have explained that I can get my GP to prescribe this medication now, so I can get it free, I'm so grateful they took the time to explain this to me, the personal touch really makes a difference'.

Stock availability

Four patients reported problems with availability of their prescribed medication. One told us, 'I've been three times now to collect an inhaler, but it's not been available, I'm not sure where the problem is but suspect it might be the GP surgery and pharmacy not speaking to each other'. Another said, 'They owe me medication, I keep getting told they don't have the full number of tablets I need so I have to come back another time', they added, 'They always make sure I have the important ones but it's sometimes inconvenient to have to come back'. One patient reported that they had problems with getting medication for a relative when the GP had changed the prescription, they told us, 'I've had to come in multiple times now and I feel there is no joined up thinking between the GP and the pharmacy, I feel that I'm the go between and I really don't have the time to do this'.

Wait times

While staff described concerns about staffing capacity, patient feedback on waiting times was mixed, with some reporting delays and others describing prompt service

Five patients reported that they had experienced long waits in the pharmacy, one told us, 'I came in last Saturday and the queue was out the door, so it took an age to get served'. Another said, 'I just want a non-prescription item today, but I've had to queue up behind everyone who needs things looking for'.

Four patients commented favourably on wait times. One said, 'I came in and had to have a chat with the pharmacist and got seen straight away, which was brilliant', they added, 'So much better than having to go to the doctors, I'm very pleased I came here'. Another told us, 'If there's a queue it generally moves quite quickly and the staff all seem to help each other out. It's much better here than the pharmacy at the doctors surgery, so I come here now as I never have to wait too long'.

A patient who had used the automated dispensing service described it as, 'Simply brilliant', they told us that they regularly had to collect medication and had never experienced a delay. They added, 'I can't imagine why more folk don't use it, you skip all the queues and can even come when the pharmacy is closed, I'm a big fan'.

6 Staff feedback

Management team

The management team reported challenges in communication and engagement with senior company leadership this was, they thought, because of restructuring within the company. They said that company policy regarding staffing levels had led to challenges within the pharmacy.

They also reported a sub-optimal relationship with one of the local GP surgeries, saying that they had problems getting queries answered in a timely manner, which led to delay in issue of medication in some cases. Further problems were described with some inappropriate pharmacy first referrals. They also told us that some referrals from the NHS 111 service were thought to be inappropriate.

We were told that there had been efforts made to improve communication between the pharmacy and surgery, but that a planned staff exchange scheme had been delayed due to staff absences.

Dispensing team

Staff described challenges relating to staffing levels, training opportunities and communication with senior management. Some staff reported that staffing gaps had not been filled following departures, which they felt increased pressure on the team. Staff also reported concerns about the clarity and consistency of communication from higher management.

We were told, 'We recently lost a staff member who was on probation, but they haven't been replaced, which leaves us a staff member down'. A staff member who had recently taken on extra duties told us that they didn't feel they had been adequately supported with training to cope with the demands of the role. Speaking about the company, one staff member said 'They tell us what they think we want to hear but nothing ever changes'. Another described the company as, 'Too hierarchical', and said they did not communicate effectively.

All staff spoke in positive terms about the in-store manager, deputy manager and the relationships between staff members. One told us, 'It's the team here that keeps me coming back, we all help each other and the pharmacist is really great to work with'.

7 Recommendations

Healthwatch Cornwall have offered some recommendations based on observations and feedback from both patients and staff to improve experiences in the pharmacy

- 1) Staff reported concerns about staffing levels and access to training. The pharmacy should reflect on whether current staffing arrangements adequately support safe service delivery and staff development
- 2) Poor relations with a local GP surgery were reported by both staff and patients. The pharmacy should consider reinvigorating proposed plans for improved communication and staff exchange programmes.
- 3) Inappropriate referrals can lead to delay in treatment and poor patient experience; the pharmacy should consider review of referral resource paperwork to improve the referrals pathway with local GP surgeries and NHS 111 services.
- 4) Patients reported repeated instances of medicines being unavailable, resulting in return visits. Review of stock management processes for commonly prescribed items may help reduce delay in issue of medication.

- 5) The pharmacy should review internal communication processes with senior management to ensure consistency, clarity and transparency for staff.

8 Provider feedback

Healthwatch Cornwall shared the draft report with Chester road pharmacy and invited a response by 21st May 2026. Despite follow-up contact, no reply was received before publication. We welcome any future feedback and will add a provider statement should one be submitted.

Contact us:

Healthwatch Cornwall, Suite 1, Calenick House, Heron Way, Newham, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 2XN

 0800 038 1281

 enquires@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 @HWCornwall

 @healthwatchcornwall