



Notice of Special General Meeting & Proposed LPC Transformation – Community Pharmacy Halton, St Helens and Knowsley

Dear pharmacy owner,

This is formal notification that Community Pharmacy Halton, St Helens and Knowsley will be holding a Special General Meeting (SGM) alongside its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 23rd September 2026 at 12:15pm.

Pharmacy owner drop-in sessions are being held in advance of the AGM, which offers dedicated time to talk through the LPC transformation proposal (as set out below) and provide the opportunity for you to ask questions, engage in discussion and fully consider the proposal before making your vote.

The case for change

The NHS has evolved significantly in recent years, with Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) becoming the primary structures through which healthcare services are planned, commissioned and delivered. Community pharmacy is increasingly expected to work as an integrated clinical partner within these systems, supporting neighbourhood healthcare, prevention, urgent care and population health priorities.

The changing NHS landscape has therefore prompted review of current arrangements for pharmacy owner representation within the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside footprint, which serves 2.7 million patients.

The review was completed by a working group formed of LPC Committee Members representing Community Pharmacy Cheshire and Wirral, Community Pharmacy Halton, St. Helens and Knowsley, Community Pharmacy Liverpool and Community Pharmacy Sefton.

The working group identified that maintaining the current LPC arrangements is becoming less sustainable, and the LPC structure also needs to evolve to strengthen its strategic capacity, enhance its local influence and organisational resilience, and realise greater efficiencies through increased scale. The working group concluded that there is a clear need, and advantage, to forming a merged committee, which will further enhance our influence, investment and sustainability. When members of the working group presented these findings back to their respective LPCs, each committee was in agreement.

This proposal is not about reducing local representation or changing committee governance arrangements. It is about enhancing current structure to align footprints to



strengthen engagement with NHS partners, reduce duplication and create opportunities for shared resources, collaboration and future service development.

Throughout this proposal process, pharmacy owner engagement, transparency and good governance will remain central, with pharmacy owners having the opportunity to discuss, question and ultimately vote on the proposal.

What this means for pharmacy owners

Community Pharmacy Halton, St Helens and Knowsley will follow a transformation plan to merge with Sefton and Liverpool LPCs and create Community Pharmacy Merseyside, subject to pharmacy owners' approval through the formal voting process.

This will create one of two local pharmacy representative bodies which together align with the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside footprint.

LPC name	Number of pharmacy contracts
Community Pharmacy Sefton	66
Community Pharmacy Halton, St Helens, Knowsley	105
Community Pharmacy Liverpool	104
Community Pharmacy Merseyside	275
Community Pharmacy Cheshire and Wirral	256

Key recommendations - Pharmacy owners are asked to consider voting on the key recommendations of the working group:

- Align community pharmacy representation in Sefton, Liverpool, Halton, St Helens and Knowsley, more effectively within the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside footprint
- Create the infrastructure required to support pharmacy owners across a larger geography
- Reduce duplication across LPC governance, administration and operational functions
- Enhance sustainability, helping to keep future levy uplifts to a minimum whilst responding to increasing expectations and responsibilities placed upon representative bodies
- Increase capacity and scale, enabling greater investment in executive and operational support
- Strengthen community pharmacy's ability to influence future service development and commissioning opportunities

Examples of how the proposal supports the needs of pharmacy owners:

- **Continued local support and representation:** You and your pharmacy will continue to receive support and representation that reflects the needs of your local area. The LPC will retain familiar team members who understand your locality and can provide ongoing assistance. The combined LPC team will strengthen this support by enhancing the workforce capacity and increasing its resilience.
- **Enhanced representation:** In addition to maintaining strong local representation, your pharmacy will benefit from a wider and more influential voice across the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside footprint.
- **Greater strategic focus:** Bringing together the collective skills and expertise of the LPC leadership teams will help reduce duplication in meeting attendance and administrative tasks. This will create more capacity for strategic working, including strengthening local commissioning opportunities and taking a more proactive approach to emerging priorities.
- **Utilisation of funds:** The LPC levy funding will support a new strategic plan, to maximise the benefits of the key recommendations.

Subject to pharmacy owner approval and completion of the necessary constitutional and governance processes, the proposed transformed LPC would take effect on the 1st April 2027.

Pharmacy owners within the new geography will have the opportunity to elect representatives as part of the scheduled elections in 2027. There is a commitment to ensuring effective representation across the new LPC geography, recognising the five Places of Sefton, Liverpool, Halton, St Helens and Knowsley. The detailed arrangements for committee and locality representation will be developed as part of the transition.

Maintaining local pharmacy owner engagement, visibility and continuity of support throughout the transition period will remain a key priority. The new LPC will maintain appropriate locality engagement across all five Places - Sefton, Liverpool, Halton, St Helens and Knowsley - recognising that each has its own local relationships, priorities and needs. Arrangements will be put in place to ensure pharmacy owners in each Place continue to have an effective local voice and that established relationships with local authorities, NHS partners and other stakeholders are maintained. Further details regarding locality engagement, representation and support arrangements will be discussed at the drop-in sessions.

Financial rationale and levy monies

The working group has assessed the potential financial benefits of the proposed transformation for pharmacy owners. At this stage, the principal savings are expected to arise from a reduction in overall committee costs.

The proposal would reduce the total number of committee members across the three LPCs from 29 to between 10 and 13, resulting in lower reimbursement expenditure. Administrative and venue costs associated with committee meetings would also be substantially reduced. In addition, the newly formed LPC would require only one Chair and one Treasurer, rather than three individuals in each role, creating further efficiencies.

These savings can then be reinvested in the LPC's strategic functions, strengthening its ability to represent community pharmacy effectively within the evolving NHS environment. It would enhance the delivery of a high-quality service to pharmacy owners while ensuring that available funding is directed towards activity that provides tangible benefits for the local community pharmacy sector.

Levy funding will continue to be calculated in the same way and continue to be collected by NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) Prescription Service, further details can be found on [Funding of LPCs and Community Pharmacy England - Community Pharmacy England](#). The LPC will continue to focus on keeping future levy uplifts to a minimum whilst responding to increasing expectations and responsibilities placed upon representative bodies

All existing reserve funds held by Community Pharmacy Halton, St Helens and Knowsley, and later carried over to Community Pharmacy Merseyside, shall remain ringfenced, until such time that a fair single reserves system can be implemented.

Timelines & next steps

- 24th August 2026 – Special Meeting notification issued
- 24th August 2026 – Voting opens
- Tuesday 8th September at 7pm-8pm and Wednesday 9th September at 1pm-2pm – Pharmacy owner drop-in sessions to discuss the proposal
- 23rd September 2026 – AGM & Special General Meeting at The Old Schoolhouse community project, John's Rd, Liverpool, L36 0UX

The outcome of the pharmacy owner vote will determine the next steps. Subject to a vote in agreement of the proposal, the LPC constitution under the new entity of Community Pharmacy Merseyside shall be adopted from the 1st April 2027.

The risks of not transforming and why this matters

The LPC is responding to the changing environment in the NHS. Direct commissioning of primary care services, along with streamlining of resources will impact the way the LPC engages with the ICB. It is noted that Cheshire and Merseyside ICB have formed



their structure around two combined authorities – Liverpool City Region and Cheshire & Warrington.

Without transformation there is a risk that key stakeholders within the ICB will feel that working with four LPCs is too challenging for their resources, causing them duplication of work and increasing their own inefficiencies. This could damage relationships and limit engagement, reduce commissioning opportunities and threaten the input of community pharmacy being accommodated.

This proposal builds on aligning community pharmacy representation with the wider ICB footprint, ensuring it has the capacity and resilience needed to support pharmacy owners and influence future NHS developments.

By strengthening our infrastructure and system alignment, community pharmacy will be better positioned to maximise opportunities for pharmacy owners and maintain a strong voice within the NHS.

We encourage all pharmacy owners to attend the drop-in session, engage in the discussion and participate in the SGM vote.

If you have any questions ahead of the drop-in session or AGM, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,



Suketu Patel
LPC Chair
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