

**MODULE: LCHS4003 – INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND
SOCIAL CARE**

COMPONENT 1 – PORTFOLIO (POSTER + ESSAY)

**AN OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES
IN THE UK: DEVELOPMENT, FUNCTIONS, CHALLENGES
AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

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Task 1

PHARMACY SERVICES IN THE UK

What are Pharmacy Services?

Pharmacy services offer drugs, medical guidance and medical support to patients. They have a central role in fostering health, preventing diseases, and safe use of medicines (Almerman, 2024). These community pharmacies, in many cases, turn out to be the frontline of people who either need treatment due to minor health issues or they want to be advised on certain matters related to medications.

Who Uses Pharmacy Services?

- General public
- Patients with long-term conditions such as diabetes and asthma
- Older adults
- Children and families

Who Provides the Service?

- Pharmacists
- Pharmacy technicians
- Dispensing assistants and support staff

Where are Services Delivered?

- Community pharmacies
- Hospitals (Pantasri, 2022)
- GP practices
- Care homes
- Online pharmacies

Current Function of Pharmacy Services

Pharmacy services support patients by:

- Dispensing prescriptions safely
- Providing over-the-counter medicines
- Offering advice on minor illnesses (Walpole et al., 2024)
- Supporting long-term condition management
- Delivering vaccination services
- Promoting healthy lifestyles

Brief History

There has been a tremendous growth in pharmacy services. The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain was established in 1841 in order to regulate the profession. In 1948 the NHS was formed which introduced community pharmacies to the health care system in the UK. Pharmacists have since expanded their roles to dispensing of medications, providing clinical guidance and advice, health promotion and administering vaccinations and prescription services (Smith et al., 2023). More recently, Pharmacy First programme has empowered the pharmacists to treat some minor diseases without patients having to visit the GP

How the Service Works

Patient → Pharmacy Consultation → Assessment by Pharmacist → Treatment/Advice → Referral to GP or Hospital if required
The majority of pharmacy services are financed by the NHS and controlled by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) (Atif et al., 2022). The new trends have been electronic prescriptions and the introduction of widened prescribing roles to the pharmacists.

Challenges Facing Pharmacy Services

1. Workforce Shortages

There are shortages of pharmacy technicians and pharmacists in many drugstores. This adds workloads, stresses staffs, and could result in lengthening patient waiting hours. The quality and availability of services can also be impacted due to labour shortages.

2. Financial Pressures

The increase of the operating costs and financial restrictions has put a lot of pressure on the community pharmacies (Otieno et al., 2022). Certain pharmacies have decreased their operation and even ceased to operate altogether, and it has become harder to find healthcare and medicines, especially in deprived districts.

Conclusion

The field of pharmacy is a significant component of the health care system in the UK. They enhance access to medical care, safe drug use, and decrease the demands on GP practices and hospitals. Despite the emergence of activities like Pharmacy First that augmented their role, shortage of workforce and



Task 2

Community Mental Health Services: History, Function and Importance

The Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) are treatment, support, and care that support and treat individuals who undergo mental health conditions and helps them continue to stay in their local communities. Such services are useful to those people experiencing various types of illness like depression, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and personality disorders. CCHS Community Mental Health Services Community Mental Health Services at Community invoke recovery to achieve independence and social inclusion through person-centred care offered in the community outside hospitals.

Community Mental Health Services in the United Kingdom can be traced back to the middle of the twentieth century. Similarly, before this period, the mentally ill would often be treated by taking medication in large institutes of psychiatric care or asylums. But the care problems of the institution, including social isolation and poor living conditions yielded to change of policy. The Mental Health Act 1959 encouraged the community-based treatment as far as attainable. The policy of deinstitutionalisation in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in the closure of psychiatric hospitals with the latter institution of the community-based mental health services. This practice was indicative of the evolving concepts on mental illness and an underpinning of the rights of the patients, their autonomy and their social integration (Department of Health, 1959).

Today the Community Mental Health Services are managed by multidisciplinary staffs which comprise of psychiatrists, mental health nurses, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists as well as support workers. These professionals work together to assess the service users, construct care plans, provide psychological interventions, monitor them on medication and provide crisis intervention. Services are provided in clinics within communities, GP practices, homes of the service users and more recently via the internet. The NHS Long Term Plan has further enhanced the community mental health provision through pathing the way to integrated and personalised care (NHS England, 2019).

Community Mental Health Services are helpful on improving the quality of lives of the service users. Maintaining family connections, participating in their schools or occupations and remaining active in their localities, this can be done by supporting the victims in their internalised environments. The opportunities of recovery can be enhanced with the use of early intervention and constant support, and the number of hospitalisations is reduced (Mind,

2024). In addition, community-based care upholds dignity, independence, and inclusion societal factors, which are most fundamental components of the mental health.

In spite of the above advantages, Community Mental Health Services have a number of challenges. One of the challenges is the increasing demand of the mental health provision. Due to greater awareness on mental health challenges and the impact of social and economic strains with time, there has been a rise in the number of referrals. This has led to lengthy waiting hours by many service users prior to treatment. Access delay to care may deteriorate symptoms and have a detrimental effect on recovery.

The second challenge is shortage of workers. One of the challenges that many mental health services face is recruitment and retention of qualified employees such as nurses, psychiatrists and psychologists (The King's Fund, 2023). There is a possibility of staff shortages further increasing workloads, staff burnouts and staff availability. This can be relevant to quality and timeliness of care that service users receive.

The Community Mental Health Services have transformed the institutional models of care to a community system of care with focus towards the recovery, independence and inclusion. Even though these services greatly enhance the quality of life of a significant number of people, a surge in demand and the lack of workforce remains a huge challenge. This additional investment and services expansion is hence necessary in order to meet future demand needs of mental health.

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