

Update for Wiltshire Area Boards

February 2024

Pharmacists in BSW begin treating people for common conditions

Patients in BSW will be able to get treatment for seven common conditions at their high street pharmacy from today without needing to see a GP, as part of a major transformation in the way the NHS delivers care.

All 140 pharmacies in BSW will be offering the ground-breaking initiative, with the health service making it easier and more convenient for people to access care.

Highly trained pharmacists will be able to assess and treat patients for sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65) without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

The major expansion of pharmacy services will give the public more choice in where and how they access care, aiming to free up 10 million GP appointments a year.

The scheme is part of the NHS and government's primary care access recovery plan, which committed to making accessing healthcare easier for millions of people.

Prescriptions Ordering Direct Service

The Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) service, which allows some patients to arrange their repeat medication by phone or email, is set to discontinue in its current form later in the year, with the practices and care homes that use the system offering repeat prescribing instead.

It is expected that POD will close on or before 30 June 2024, although this date may change as plans are formed and formal timeframes agreed.

People who regularly use POD are advised to continue ordering their medicines in the usual way through POD, and not to order any more than is needed.

The decision to close was made in early January following a rigorous period of engagement, during which the ICB worked with local health and care providers, including colleagues in GP practices, care homes and pharmacies, to explore if the current POD model could be provided differently.

Over the coming weeks, the ICB will be focusing on ensuring a smooth transition away from POD and offering support to the 85 colleagues affected by the closure.

A list of [frequently asked questions](#) is available on the ICB website, which provides further details on the decision-making process, as well as advice for patients.