



Executive Summary: Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing Pathfinder

- From 2026 onwards, all new pharmacists joining the GPhC register will be qualified as Independent Prescribers. The Independent Prescribing (IP) in Community Pharmacy Pathfinder programme has been developed with the national NHSE Pharmacy Integration Fund (PhIF) Team.
- The programme is to inform the right commissioning framework to introduce independent prescribing in community pharmacy services.
- This programme is intended to explore how community pharmacists and their teams can deliver an integrated clinical service aligning prescribing activity with general practices and the population needs of local communities.
- The key purpose of the IP Pathfinder programme is to develop, implement and learn. The volume of prescribing from the IP sites will, certainly initially, be relatively low.
- The IP sites are aiming to go live with at least one clinical model in Summer 2024 with the programme running until at least 31st March 2025.
- Humber and North Yorkshire ICB have been given funding for 11 Pathfinder sites delivering 5 clinical models. For information on location sites go to page XX and more information on clinical models go to XX.

Collaboration between General Practice and Community Pharmacy will be a key factor in developing, implementing, and delivering a successful community pharmacy IP Pathfinder. The community pharmacies selected as Humber and North Yorkshire sites will be in contact with their local general practice(s) over the next few weeks to discuss the IP Pathfinder in greater detail and supported by the ICB.

For more detailed information regarding IP Pathfinder please read on.

Questions or queries about the IP Pathfinder to Stacey Stanton, IP Pathfinder Project Support stacey.stanton@nhs.net or Katy Tennyson, Community Pharmacy Clinical Lead, katy.tennyson@nhs.net



Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing Pathfinder

May 2024 – update

Humber and North Yorkshire ICB is participating in the NHSE Independent Prescribing Pathfinder (IP Pathfinder) programme. The programme has been introduced by NHSE to inform the commissioning framework required to introduce independent prescribing into NHS community pharmacy services. The IP Pathfinder will explore how community pharmacists and their teams can deliver an integrated clinical service aligning prescribing activity with general practice and the population needs of local communities.

This national IP Pathfinder programme provides the opportunity to influence the future of independent prescribing within NHS community pharmacy and to test the different ways that independent prescribing in community pharmacy will benefit patients and the public.

Developing the clinical skills of pharmacists as prescribers and pharmacy technician with enhanced clinical skills to deliver clinical services is a key strategic aim for NHS England to create access for patients and enable capacity across primary care.

Benefits to Patients

- Supports patients to have their primary care needs met more directly with fewer contacts in the health care system.
- Enables more episodes of care to be completed within community pharmacy.
- Supports access to primary care.
- Greater patient choice of where to access prescribing services.
- Extended hours access from some community pharmacy sites.

Benefits to General Practice

- Supports Modern General Practice Access models signposting and care navigating patients to alternative Primary and Community service provision as appropriate to their needs.
- Supports general practice to continue to grow the number of referrals of patients with minor illness care navigated to community pharmacy (entry route via Pharmacy First referral).
- Reduces the number of patients referred back to general practice by community pharmacy for management as more episodes of care can be completed within community pharmacy by the pharmacist independent prescriber.
- Will enable the IP pharmacy sites to develop referral protocols for patients linked to clinical areas beyond minor illness (see below for clinical model details) supporting capacity within general practice.
- Greater utilisation of skill-mix with commissioning of prescribing services through community pharmacies enabling general practice to see more patients with complex needs.

Benefits to Community Pharmacy

- Utilising the clinical skills and qualifications of the community pharmacists and developing the pharmacist workforce.
- Greater job satisfaction for pharmacists – improved recruitment and retention.
- Enable community pharmacy to provide suitable experience and support other community pharmacists in becoming independent prescribers.

Collaboration between General Practice and Community Pharmacy will be a key factor in developing, implementing, and delivering a successful community pharmacy IP Pathfinder. The community pharmacies selected as Humber and



North Yorkshire sites will be in contact with their local general practice(s) over the next few weeks to discuss the IP Pathfinder in greater detail and supported by the ICB.

This will be an iterative process and require engagement and involvement from general practices, pharmacies and the ICB to realise the long-term benefits. This is a pathfinder programme which differs to the roll out of an existing service or pilot of a new service. Using independent prescribing as an NHS service within community pharmacy is novel and there will at times be ambiguity, and issues and barriers to overcome. It requires working together, in partnership, to seek answers and solutions and overcome challenges. It is recognised that some of the practical elements that will be part of the pathfinder programme will require continuous development and this learning is being fed into the national evaluation.

We hope that despite all the current challenges within the whole of primary care this opportunity is recognised and realised through working together to influence and inform future commissioning that benefits our patients. General practice, and community pharmacy.

IP Pathfinder Key Information

- The key purpose of the IP Pathfinder programme is to develop, implement and learn. The volume of prescribing from the IP sites will, certainly initially, be relatively low.
- The IP sites are aiming to go live with at least one clinical model in Summer 2024 with the programme running until at least 31st March 2025.
- Details of the community pharmacies selected to be part of the IP Pathfinder in Humber and North Yorkshire are listed in appendix 1.
- Close working with local general practices is essential. The IP Pathfinder Pharmacist Independent Prescriber (PIP) has time allocated to engage and work with their local general practices in setting up and implementing the IP Pathfinder.
- The IP Pathfinder will ensure appropriate communication pathways between the IP Pathfinder sites and relevant general practice(s) enabling access to relevant patient records, tests/bloods and post IP Pathfinder consultation messaging including feedback of any newly or altered prescribed medicines.
- Access to clinical support, Communities of Practice for each clinical area and peer support networks will be provided for the PIPs to ensure they are not practising in isolation.
- All the PIPs in the IP Pathfinder are existing pharmacist independent prescribers who will be working within their scope of practice following local and national guidance.
- The oversight of governance and assurance processes for the Pathfinder is held by Humber and North Yorkshire ICB through the Humber and North Yorkshire IP Pathfinder Steering Group (accountable to the Integrated Pharmacy & Medicines Optimisation Committee - IPMOC) with members from community pharmacy, general practice, ICB Medicines Optimisation, ICB Primary Care, LPC and LMC. The steering group provides strategic oversight, governance, and tactical support for the Humber and North Yorkshire Pathfinder Programme. This includes surveillance and monitoring of the IP Pathfinder in Humber and North Yorkshire.
- NHSE are overseeing the evaluation of the IP Pathfinder in all 42 of the ICBs.



IP Pathfinder Clinical Models:

- **Model 1 – Management of Minor Illnesses / Common Conditions** which require assessment, self-care advice and/or a prescribing intervention. This may involve linking into CPCS consultations where patients are excluded from OTC licensing, which will reduce demand back into the practices by expanding the cohort of CP eligible patients.
- **Model 2 – Hypertension / Blood Pressure Service** where patients identified as part of the Pharmacy BP Check Service require review and potential initiation of antihypertensives e.g. following an ABPM. This would involve initiating step 1 of the NICE guidelines for people meeting the threshold for treatment following safety checks (e.g., bloods and differential diagnosis).
- **Model 3 – CVD Detection, Prevention and Management** to be run in parallel with Model 2 and may include:
 - AF risk identification, escalation and treatment initiation, if appropriate.
 - Lipid management.
 - CVD assessment.
 - Titration of a previously prescribed antihypertensive and reducing the dose of hypotensive (in line with local and NICE guidance), and, if necessary, stopping antihypertensives following e.g. an ADR.
 - Smoking cessation in collaboration with secondary care colleagues (Smoking Cessation Service) and local authority services e.g. Varenicline provision (when available) / NRT initiation and support e.g. off license usage.
- **Model 4 – COPD Management** to build upon the previous pilot Modality PCN supporting COPD patients in order to reduce reliance on rescue pack medication and improving adherence to inhaled therapies. IP's would support patients with inhaler technique, changing formulations / devices if appropriate as well as assessing compliance / adherence and prescribing rescue packs or escalating to respiratory specialist teams if needed.
- **Model 5 – Safe and Quality Deprescribing, Review and Optimisation of Medicines (SQuaDROM)** working with general practices to utilise GP ePACT2 data to identify patients on 8 or more unique medicines for referral to a CP-based IP for a full medication review with the aim of optimising medicines and deprescribing where appropriate.

Whilst these models are being developed by working groups attended by key stakeholders, we would welcome general practices sharing their local needs with Pathfinder sites, in order to co-develop local models that fit into one of the above models. Additionally, if general practice colleagues wish to participate in working groups on any area, please reach out to either Katy or Stacey – contact details below.

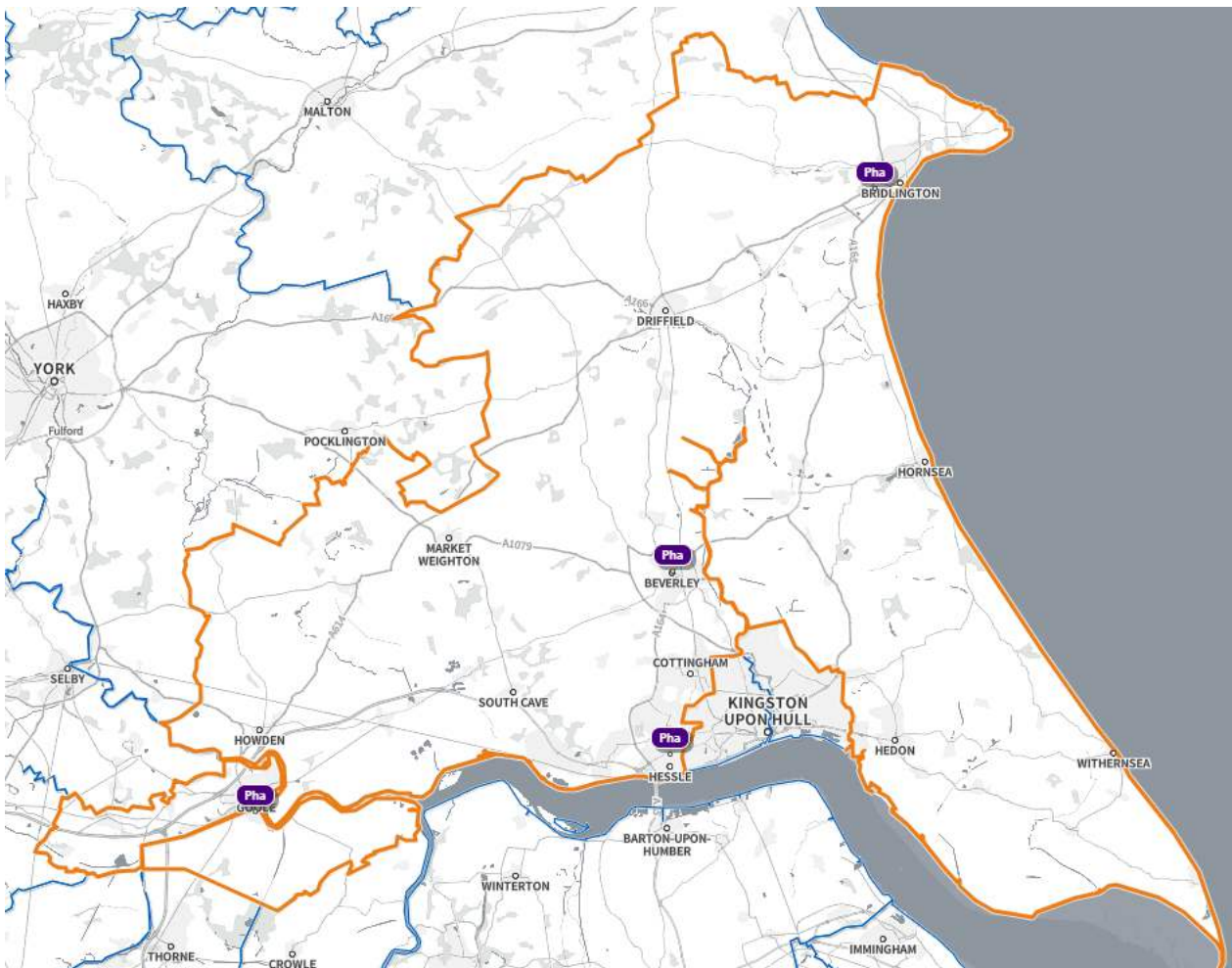
Questions or queries about the IP Pathfinder to Stacey Stanton, IP Pathfinder Project Support stacey.stanton@nhs.net or Katy Tennyson, Community Pharmacy Clinical Lead, katy.tennyson@nhs.net



Appendix 1 – Humber and North Yorkshire IP Pathfinder Site Information

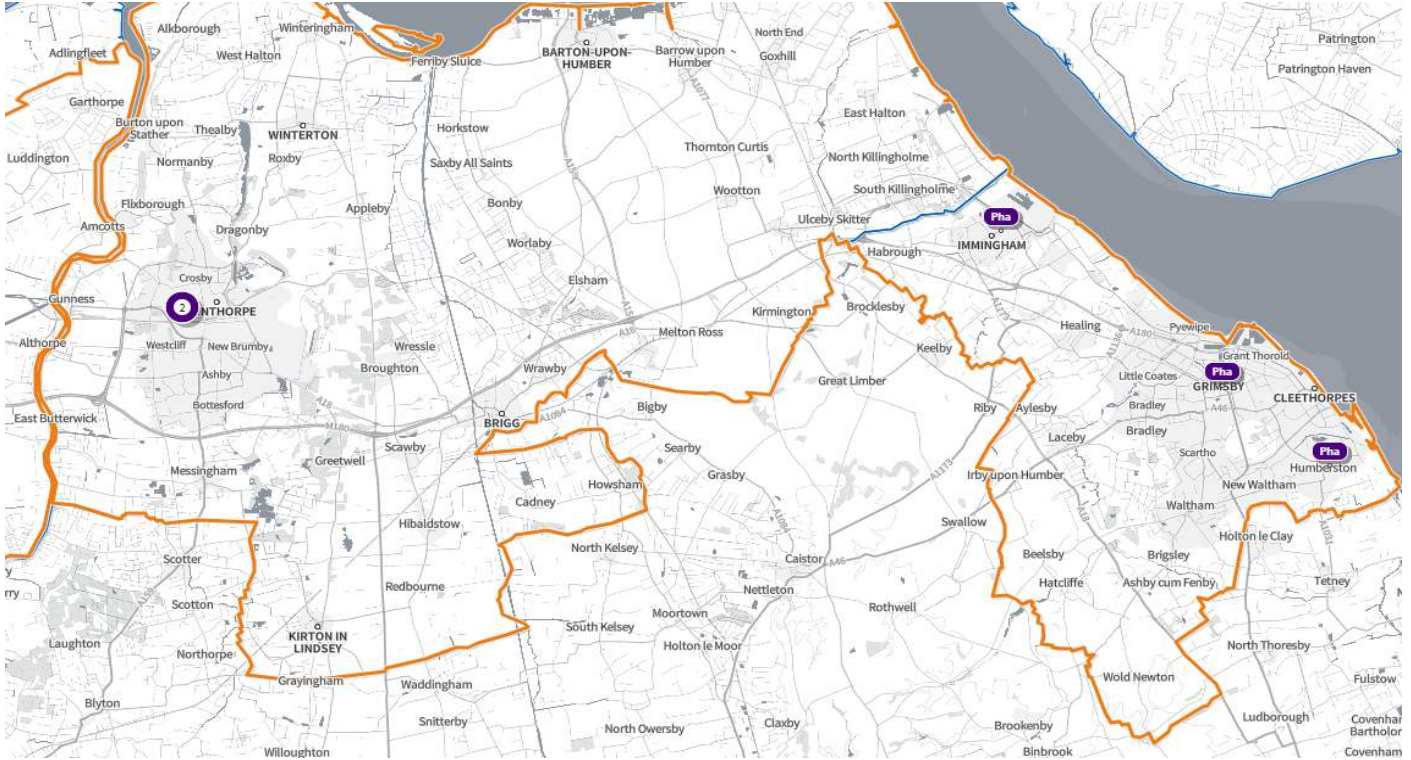
IP Pathfinder Name	Location	Place
Westhill Pharmacy	Bridlington	East Riding of Yorkshire
Stone Pharmacy	Goole	East Riding of Yorkshire
Hessle Pharmacy	Hessle	East Riding of Yorkshire
Hengate Pharmacy	Beverley	East Riding of Yorkshire
Taffs Pharmacy	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
Boots Pharmacy	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
Pharmacy@Roxton	Immingham	North East Lincolnshire
Humberston Pharmacy	Grimsby	North East Lincolnshire
Drugs4Delivery	Grimsby	North East Lincolnshire
Citywide Health – Water End	York	York
Citywide Health – Tower Court	York	York

East Riding of Yorkshire





North and North East Lincolnshire



York

