Getting the message across: how WMAS improved Common Ailments Service guidance for community pharmacists in Wales







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Background

The Common Ailments Service (CAS) is a priority component of the Welsh Government commissioned Clinical Community Pharmacy Service (CCPS), making healthcare more accessible and reducing burden on general practice.

CAS is strategically a high priority service for Wales – aligning with the vision set in A Healthier Wales,¹ the ambitions in the profession's strategy Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales,² and the contractual reform of community pharmacy services in Wales in A New Prescription.³

Provided in

99.4%

of community pharmacies in Wales 4

Used by nearly

267,000

people

April 2023 –
March 2024 4

April 2023 – March 2024

+ ~344,000

consultations delivered 4

Need processes and solutions that make it as easy as possible for pharmacists to deliver this essential service





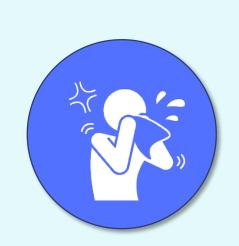
Multi-profession WMAS publications team write and review portfolio of resource for CAS (evidence-based framework, patient group directions and patient information leaflets)



Established partnership with Local Health Board (LHB) community pharmacy leads and service user group



Desire to develop new resources following user-centred design principles



Allergic rhinitis monograph is complex and 'off-CAS' supplies have been made in error, so a review is needed

Approach

Using the Design Council's Framework for Innovation ⁵ helped us to find the right problem to solve, and then to solve it in the right way using user-centred design principles.

Discove

Current CAS formulary access is ~150 page pdf or on the INFORM platform but both are wordy and difficult to use during a consultation with a patient.

Service management board feedback highlighted the need for the clinical framework to be this detailed.

User feedback obtained from community pharmacists across Wales to discover what would be useful.



User needs, wants and pain points associated with using CAS formulary identified.

Potential solutions from comparator services reviewed (Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Australia).

Brief reframed:

"How might we summarise the advice and treatment recommendations for the allergic rhinitis component of the Common Ailments Service?"



Evidence-base reviewed and allergic rhinitis clinical framework updated.

Prototype clinical pathway then process mapped, developed and user tested.

Usability tests highlighted areas for improvement.

Prototype refined through three iterations.



The WMAS updated clinical framework and newly developed pathway have been approved by the Community Pharmacy Clinical Advisory Group.

Awaiting All Wales Prescribing Group (AWPAG) approval and subsequent ratification by the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG).

Summary clinical pathway, the updated clinical framework, patient group directions and patient information leaflets will be published in April/May 2025.



Solution

By developing the summary clinical pathway in collaboration with users and other stakeholders, this increases the likelihood that it will be **useful** and **adopted** in practice.

The WMAS team have shown leadership, innovation and empathy with service users, collaborating with subject experts in order to improve the resources available to support community pharmacists in Wales deliver this vital service.

This achieves UKMi network objectives of supporting patients with medicines use, and improving patient safety and reducing risk associated with medicines and their use in practice.

5. Design Council (2024) Framework for Innovation. https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-resources/framework-for-innovation/

References

1. Welsh Government (2018) A Healthier Wales: our plan for health and social care. https://www.gov.wales/healthier-wales-long-term-plan-health-and-social-care

4. Welsh Government (2024) Community pharmacy services. Data on pharmacies, prescriptions dispensed and pharmaceutical services offered. https://www.gov.wales/community-pharmacy-services

- 2. Welsh Pharmaceutical Committee (2019) *Pharmacy: Delivering a Healthier Wales*. https://www.rpharms.com/wales/pharmacy-delivering-a-healthier-wales
 3. Welsh Government (2021) *Presgripsiwn Newydd / A New Prescription: the future of community pharmacy in Wales*. https://www.gov.wales/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-reform
- ssociated with medicines and their use in practice.

