

The Centre for Research Equity

National Pharmacy Association

Community Pharmacy Partnership

Manifesto

NOVEMBER 2025

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The Centre for Research Equity Community Pharmacy Partnership Manifesto

The **vision** of this partnership is to advocate for research practices that prioritise inclusivity, equity, and meaningful engagement with diverse and underserved communities across the UK by leveraging the community pharmacy network, disproportionately located in the most deprived areas and reaching underserved communities. Pharmacies are staffed by highly skilled pharmacists who are close to their communities. The objective of the programme is to increase research equity and reduce health inequalities, improving health outcomes for all.

Manifesto statements to develop equitable research using community pharmacies



Broaden the pool of research partners by making greater use of the UK's community pharmacy network, visited by 1.6m people every day

Advance the understanding of inclusive research practice and community engagement

Ensure clinical trial and health practice research is inclusive and representative of the full UK population, delivering relevant and applicable outcomes

Build on the evidence base around the determinants of health inequalities, propose methods and research designs to improve outcomes for the population

Support inclusive engagement, involvement, and participation in research through a breadth of activities across the UK's community pharmacy network

Promote inclusive participation methods and accessible trials to ensure everyone has equal opportunity to take part and benefit from research

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Aim

The aim is to increase research equity across the UK through a unique cross-boundary collaboration that shares knowledge, expertise, and resources to reduce research disparities and associated health inequities.

Why

Clinical trial and health practice research is funded to improve the lives of the population. Research that is relevant and accessible requires a full understanding of population needs and priorities, which can be gained only through direct, sustained, and constructive interactions with communities. Community pharmacies are located in neighbourhoods and are visited by 1.6m people across the UK every day and can be a conduit to accessing the population and embedding research in prevention, treatment, and management of health and wellbeing.

Who

The [Centre for Research Equity \(CfRE\)](#) group, established in 2023, led by Prof Mahendra Patel OBE and Prof Chris Butler, is an independent, non-profit coalition of patient and public advocates, healthcare professionals, researchers, pharma and health industry, academics, and regulators.

The National Pharmacy Association is a membership organisation for independent community pharmacy across the UK. Around 6,000 pharmacies are members of the NPA, and this represents almost a half of all pharmacies in the country. Community pharmacies are also an increasingly important health resource and part of the policy shift from hospital to community.

The NPA shares the CfRE's commitment towards better and meaningful inclusion in research inside and outside of member organisations.

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Why community pharmacy?

- Around 15,000 pharmacists work across the NPA's 6,000 member pharmacies.
- Community pharmacy bucks the inverse care law, with pharmacies disproportionately located in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Community pharmacies are well placed to access underserved communities including deprived communities and ethnic minority communities.
- The role of the community pharmacist is expected to be expanded significantly over the coming years as the independent prescribing qualification becomes more widespread. Over a third of the country's 60,000 pharmacists have an independent prescribing qualification, and training of the legacy workforce along with 3,000 graduates able to prescribe immediately on qualification from 2026 will support rapid growth.
- Health policy plans across the four nations of the UK plans will result in community pharmacies expanding their role in urgent care (through the Pharmacy First Service); prevention (including vaccination and health checks); long-term condition management (including hypertension, asthma and raised cholesterol); and medicines management (greater support to patients to improve adherence with medication regimens).

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What is being planned?

- The development of a network of research sites in community pharmacies.
- Provide support and training for research and support staff to increase health and social care equity.
- Evidence the benefits for community-based recruitment and research trial/study design.
- Build on the evidence base around the determinants of health and social care inequalities and propose methods and research design to improve outcomes for all.
- Support inclusive patient and public involvement and participation in research.

This will be achieved through:

- The development of a network of community pharmacies across the UK that are able to take part in clinical trials and practice research.
- Advice at research trial development and delivery phases to understand the equity implications and provide solutions.
- Structured training programmes including workshops, toolkits, and guidance.
- Presentations to share the work that has successfully overcome barriers to health and social care equity.
- Showcase and evidence trials, including platform trials, and other novel research study/trial design mechanisms to deliver inclusive research in the real world.
- Curate a repository of exemplar case studies with supporting evaluation data.
- Monitor and evaluation mechanisms to evidence increase in health and social care equity.

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Further information

- External organisations interested in designing and delivering research studies should contact: mahendra.patel@phc.ox.ac.uk or cfre@phc.ox.ac.uk
- Pharmacy staff wishing to register or to express an interest in recruiting patients and customers into clinical trials through their community pharmacy establishments should email: s.williams@npa.co.uk
- For more information about NPA visit the [National Pharmacy Association website](https://www.npa.co.uk)