

## COVID-19 vaccination programme

# Community Pharmacy Expression of Interest Process

## Autumn/Winter 2023/24

This document sets out the process and timeline for pharmacy contractors to express an interest in delivering services under the community pharmacy enhanced service for the 2023/24 COVID-19 vaccination programme.

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# Summary

Pharmacy Contractors proposing to deliver the autumn/winter 2023 – 2024 Covid-19 vaccination service at their pharmacy may opt-in (by expressing an interest), subject to meeting the Minimum Requirements outlined on p9 of this document.

Pharmacy Contractors proposing to deliver the service at a site away from their pharmacy may also express an interest in doing so. These will be considered if an unmet Population Need is identified and may be selected by the Commissioner based on the details submitted within their expression of interest.

## **How to express an interest**

Any Pharmacy Contractor must express their interest by registering and submitting information on the [Health Family Portal](#) by 5pm 29 August 2023 (search for: C173469). A list of Key Dates is outlined on p7 of this document.

Further guidance on how to use the Family Health Portal can be found in [Community Pharmacy Expression of Interest How to Submit an Expression of Interest](#).

## **What is included in the expression of interest**

There are three forms on the Health Family Portal. The pharmacy contractor should complete the appropriate form(s):

- EOI A - for a single pharmacy site
- EOI B – for multiple pharmacy sites
- EOI C – for single or multiple site(s) away from the pharmacy

A list of questions on each form can be found in the [Community Pharmacy Expression of Interest Questions](#).

If you have any questions or problems with this process, please see p22 for details of who to contact for further support.

# Introduction

This document describes the process and timeline for Pharmacy Contractors to express an interest to deliver services under the Community Pharmacy National Enhanced Service COVID-19 Vaccination Programme: Autumn/Winter 2023 – 2024 (ES) as commissioned by NHS England.

This document and the process within it has been established to ensure that the commissioning of pharmacy-led sites is equitable and transparent and provides assurance to the Commissioner that all Covid-19 vaccination sites meet the requirements to deliver the service. The process outlined in this document must be followed by any and all Pharmacy Contractors who wish to be commissioned to deliver the ES and by Commissioner representatives involved in the commissioning of the ES. The Commissioner is not liable for any costs incurred by the Pharmacy Contractor in preparation or submission of their expression of interest.

Any services commissioned under the ES will commence no earlier than 1 September 2023.

This document is aimed at:

- NHS England Regional Teams who, in collaboration with Integrated Care Boards and other local community partners, are responsible for commissioning vaccination services that provide equitable access for their local population. Regional Teams must use the process within this document to commission Pharmacy Contractors to provide the Covid-19 vaccination service for Autumn/Winter 2023 - 2024.
- Pharmacy Contractors who wish to provide vaccinations in Autumn/Winter 2023 – 2024, whether or not they have previously provided a Covid-19 vaccination service, must submit an expression of interest via the process outlined in this document. It will only be possible to accept expressions of interest submitted via the process outlined in this document.

See p21 for a list of the definitions used within this document.

# Contracting

The ES is commissioned by the Commissioner pursuant to the Pharmaceutical Services (Advanced and Enhanced Services) (England) Directions 2013 having consulted with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (Community Pharmacy England). Under direction 14, the Commissioner is only authorised to arrange for the provision of enhanced services with Pharmacy Contractors and so only Pharmacy Contractors are eligible to express an interest in providing services under the ES in accordance with this document.

This document and the ES specification must be read by Pharmacy Contractors prior to expressing an interest so that the Pharmacy Contractor can be confident that they are able to meet all of the Commissioner's requirements.

Pharmacy Contractors should note that they shall only be eligible to deliver Covid-19 vaccinations where they also deliver the Community Pharmacy Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Advanced Service 1 September 2023 - 31 March 2024.

At the time of publication, the ES has been provided in draft form to give sufficient information and time to commence planning, but some requirements in the ES and timescales in this process may be subject to change when the JCVI has provided additional guidance. Pharmacy Contractors should not sign the draft ES. A final version will be issued as soon as details are finalised and any variations from the published draft will be highlighted. Pharmacy Contractors should note that by responding to the process in this document they are bound to accept the terms of the final ES, save to the extent that it is materially different to the terms of the published draft ES. Any Pharmacy Contractors expressing an interest following publication of the final ES are not required to read the draft version but should refer to the final version.

Once approved, Pharmacy Contractors must at all times during the term of the contract continue to meet (and be able to demonstrate this to the Commissioner's reasonable satisfaction) the Minimum Requirements and, if appropriate, continue to maintain and deliver the content of and standards within their response to each of the expression of interest questions (D2-E15 (inclusive)). The Commissioner must be informed immediately if for any reason the Pharmacy Contractor ceases to meet these.

Should the final advice from JCVI relating to the recommendations for Autumn/Winter 2023 – 2024 result in the population to be vaccinated within a geographical area being significantly lower than anticipated, the Commissioner reserves the right to undertake a provider selection process to select an appropriate number of providers.

Invitations to submit targeted expressions of interest will be communicated locally by Regional Teams. The contract notice will be published on [Find a Tender](#) and [Contracts Finder](#), and the opportunity will be published on the [Health Family Single eCommercial System](#) provided by Atamis Ltd.

The names of sites operated by Pharmacy Contractors will be published following contract award on the NHS England website at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/vaccination-sites>

## Key dates

Expression of interest responses must be received no later than the time and date indicated. The Commissioner reserves the right not to accept any response received after the relevant deadline and to only accept such a response in circumstances where the reason for the delay was completely outside of the control of the Pharmacy Contractor and it would be fair and proportionate to do so in all the circumstances.

For the avoidance of doubt, to be considered as having been submitted prior to the deadline, the EOI response must be fully uploaded and received by the Commissioner in full. It is the Pharmacy Contractor's responsibility to ensure that its response is fully uploaded in sufficient time prior to the relevant deadline.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity / Milestone</b>
4 August	Expressions of Interest open for Pharmacy Contractors at <a href="https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome">https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome</a> .
18 August	Deadline for Pharmacy Contractors to submit queries on the process on the Health Family Portal.
23 August	Deadline for the Commissioner to publish responses to queries that have been submitted by Pharmacy Contractors through the Health Family Portal
29 August 5pm	Deadline for Pharmacy Contractors to have registered and completed their expression of interest submission(s).
5 September	Deadline for the Commissioner to notify Pharmacy Contractors who have submitted an expression of interest for the service to be provided from their pharmacy of the commissioning outcome.
After 5 September	Ad-hoc activity to invite further expressions of interest (Stage 5).
23 October	Deadline for Commissioner to notify Pharmacy Contractors who have submitted an expression of interest for the service to be provided away from their pharmacy of the commissioning outcome.

# Stage 1: Identification of Pharmacy Contractor intentions

Pharmacy Contractors who wish to participate in the ES at their pharmacy can opt-in to the service, subject to meeting the Minimum Requirements and the requirements of the assurance processes by completing the expression of interest process (Stage 2 and 4). Pharmacy Contractors can also express an interest in providing the service from a location away from their pharmacy (Stage 3 and 4).

The purpose of this expression of interest process is for the Commissioner to:

1. Understand which Pharmacy Contractors would like to deliver the service at their pharmacy, whether they can meet the Minimum Requirements (Stage 2) and to gather information to support with capacity and allocation planning ahead of the start of the campaign. Pharmacy Contractors that would like to deliver the service at their pharmacy should complete expression of interest form A. This expression of interest can only be completed once (but see point 2 below).
2. Enable Pharmacy Contractors who would like to deliver the service from multiple pharmacy premises to express an interest in doing so by registering on the [Health Family Portal](#) once and completing and uploading the provided excel spreadsheet onto expression of interest form B (spreadsheet available to download from the documents file in your Health Family account).
3. Collect proposals from Pharmacy Contractors who would be interested in delivering the service from premises away from their pharmacy should there be an identified Population Need for additional vaccination sites to provide capacity or access (see Stage 3). These Pharmacy Contractors should complete expression of interest form C. This expression of interest can only be completed once (but can allow expressions of interest relating to multiple localities).

Please see the Data Handling statement on the Health Family Portal for further information about how your data will be treated.



## Stage 2: Review of expressions of interest against Minimum Requirements

All Pharmacy Contractors who submit an expression of interest for a Covid-19 vaccination site at their pharmacy (expression of interest forms A and B) which meets the Minimum Requirements described below (within this Stage 2 section) will form part of the Commissioner's provisional network for autumn/winter 2023/24 for delivering the ES, subject to the approval requirements in Stage 4.

Pharmacy Contractors who submit an expression of interest for a site at their pharmacy will not be required to administer all vaccinations from the pharmacy; they must also vaccinate eligible housebound/care home patients if requested by the Commissioner and they may also deliver outreach services (eg, pop up services) if agreed with the Commissioner. However, the Commissioner will usually only approve requests to operate services in the vicinity of the pharmacy where there is a Population Need, for example within the same System, as allocation planning is based on ICB and Population Need.

Pharmacy Contractors who wish to frequently and regularly operate a site away from their pharmacy, for example in a different System, must complete expression of interest form C. Pharmacy Contractors that complete expression of interest form C will not be considered at Stage 2 and will pass directly to Stage 3. These expressions of interest must also meet the Minimum Requirements.

### **Minimum Requirements which Pharmacy Contractors must meet to continue in the process:**

The Pharmacy Contractor must be intending to administer vaccines at their pharmacy and must meet all of the Minimum Requirements described below (and continue to meet all of those requirements throughout the entirety of the ES term). They must:

1. Have read the ES (draft until final ES is available) and be confident that they will be able to meet the requirements specified within the ES (noting particularly the requirements within the ES to:

- a. commence vaccinating within (a) 4 weeks of notification of contract award; or (b) by the start date of the vaccination programme covered by the ES (whichever is latest); and
  - b. deliver the Community Pharmacy Advanced Service specification Seasonal influenza vaccination September 2023 - 31 March 2024.
2. Be able to offer (and then deliver if accepted) at least 100 Covid-19 vaccinations per week **when/if** required through a combination of published walk-in clinics and through the National Booking Service (NBS).
3. Not have any ongoing investigations (for example by any NHS, System or GPhC bodies), or restrictions on practice imposed after an investigation, in relation to their pharmacy superintendent or the pharmacy; or for the Commissioner to be satisfied that findings or restrictions imposed as a result of any such investigation would not impact on the satisfactory delivery of the service.
4. Have 'Standards Met' in the most recent GPhC inspection of the Pharmacy (if one has taken place) for all 5 principles or for no recent GPhC inspection to have taken place; or if an inspection has taken place and all standards were not met, for the Commissioner to be confident that the outcome would not impact on the satisfactory delivery of the service.
5. Have not had a previously held Covid-19 vaccination contract terminated early, or for the Commissioner to be satisfied that conditions that led to this termination are unlikely to recur.

Where the Pharmacy Contractor has indicated that they have:

- ongoing investigations (for example by any NHS, System or GPhC bodies), or restrictions on practice imposed after an investigation in relation to their pharmacy superintendent or the pharmacy; and / or
- not met all five principles in their most recent GPhC inspection; and / or
- previously held a contract for a Covid-19 vaccination service enhanced service that has been terminated early,

the Commissioner will review the submitted details in relation to the above questions and determine whether to:

- a) assign 'Minimum Requirements met' to the expression of interest where they are satisfied by all the relevant element(s);
- b) assign 'decision pending' status if the Commissioner considers that the relevant element(s) of the Minimum Requirements could be satisfied at a later date (for example when remedial action has been taken, the NHS has conducted their own assurance visit or any investigation has been concluded); or
- c) reject the expression of interest for the relevant site (in which case the Pharmacy Contractor submitting that expression of interest will be excluded from the process and its submission will not be considered any further).

Any expressions of interest that are placed in a decision pending state will only be able to continue through the expression interest process if the pending decision is resolved within a week following the expression of interest deadline (or in exceptional circumstances as agreed with the regional team). If the resolution is achieved after this date, the provisional network will have been formed, and the expression of interest will only be considered if the System needs change in the future, as outlined in Stage 5.

Where a Pharmacy Contractor who has submitted an expression of interest for a site at their pharmacy has not demonstrated that they would be able to meet one or more of the Minimum Requirements then their expression of interest will be rejected and the Pharmacy Contractor submitting that expression of interest will be excluded from the process and its submission not considered any further. The reason for rejection will be recorded by the Commissioner and communicated to the Contractor.

## Stage 3: Review of sites away from the pharmacy

Some Pharmacy Contractors may want to propose to operate the service away from their pharmacy. Such a location away from a Pharmacy Contractor's pharmacy would be a site where vaccine supply would be delivered and may be a site at which vaccines would frequently and regularly be administered or a secure base from which roving or pop-up services would be provided as agreed with the Commissioner in advance.

In all cases, where vaccinations are offered from a site other than the pharmacy, the Responsible Pharmacist at the pharmacy retains professional responsibility for the safe delivery of vaccination services. We intend to commission services away from pharmacy only where there is a Population Need for additional vaccination sites once the provisional autumn/winter 2023/24 network has been established.

We do not require Pharmacy Contractors to identify suitable premises outside of the pharmacy themselves within the initial expression of interest, although Pharmacy Contractors may propose a site(s) if they wish.

Any premises proposed must have an appropriate Planning Use Class to be used for vaccinations. This would usually be Class E – Commercial, Business and Service use (previously D1 Health Use). The Commissioner will be able to advise on appropriate properties or will instruct Pharmacy Contractors to seek out such a property if a Population Need is identified.

Pharmacy Contractors should not enter into any agreement or arrangement with landlords or property custodians (or incur or commit to incurring any costs of any nature) until such time as the relevant proposed site is fully approved at the conclusion of both this expression of interest process and the approval requirements in Stage 4.

The Commissioners will not be liable for any costs, expenses, liabilities or losses (of any nature, and whether arising directly or indirectly) incurred or suffered by a Pharmacy Contractor arising out of or in connection with that Pharmacy Contractor entering into any agreement or arrangement in advance of a site being fully

approved at the conclusion of both this expression of interest process and the approval requirements in Stage 4.

The Commissioner will evaluate any relevant expressions of interest relating to sites away from the pharmacy and use the process below to consider selecting such sites as part of this expression of interest process as outlined below:

1. Determining the Population Need:

Regional Teams, in collaboration with Systems and the national support functions, will agree the Population Need for each locality. This will include the number of vaccinations that will be required and the age groups to be vaccinated, considering previous uptake levels, demographics, transport links etc. Regional Teams will also determine any requirements for vaccinations of eligible care home residents and housebound patients (based on assumed Population Need in advance of publication of JCVI advice).

2. Determining the need for additional vaccination sites:

Following this analysis, the Commissioner will review the provisional network relating to each locality. This provisional network will consist of Pharmacy Contractors identified in Stage 2, as well as other providers, for example NHS Trusts and general practitioners who have met relevant respective requirements. The provisional network will be compared against the Population Need to determine whether additional sites are required to provide capacity and/or access.

- a. Where there is not a Population Need for further vaccination sites or that need is met by the provisional network then the relevant proposals for sites away from the pharmacy will be placed in a decision pending state. The Commissioner will inform the Pharmacy Contractor of the position, retain a record of the details, and contact the Pharmacy Contractor should there be additional future opportunities identified to deliver services from the relevant sites.

3. Site selection:

Where there is a Population Need for vaccination sites that would not be met by the provisional network, the Commissioner will consider other providers including Pharmacy Contractors who have proposed to operate a site away from their pharmacy. Proposals for services will be identified from those who have stated that they would be able to offer services from the locality with the Population Need.

- a. Proposals from Pharmacy Contractors to operate a site away from their pharmacy will be assessed to ensure they meet the Minimum Requirements.
- b. Where the proposals meet the Minimum Requirements either:
  - i. If the number and capacity of the proposed sites away from pharmacy premises are appropriate to fill the gap in Population Need for vaccination sites and not likely to result in overcapacity that may lead to vaccine wastage and/or inefficient use of staff, then all the proposals for sites away from pharmacy premises that meet the Minimum Requirements will go through to Stage 4 (Verification of plans and designation) following agreement of premises (see step 4 of this Stage 3 below).

Should there be more proposals for sites away from pharmacy than are required to meet the Population Need for vaccination sites, then the Commissioner will select the proposals that meet the Minimum Requirements, best meet the Population Need and make best use of resources by reviewing the Pharmacy Contractor's response to the expression of interest questions. These selected sites will be put forward into Stage 4 following agreement of premises (see step 4 of this Stage 3 below).

Proposals for sites away from the pharmacy that are not selected will not be put forward into Stage 4 and will be placed in a decision pending state. The Commissioner will inform the Pharmacy Contractor of the position, retain a record of the details, and contact the Pharmacy Contractor should there be

additional future opportunities identified to deliver services from the relevant sites.

- ii. Should there be insufficient proposals for sites away from pharmacy premises than are required to meet the Population Need for vaccination sites, then the process outlined in Stage 5, step 3 onwards may be followed.

#### 4. Agreement between Pharmacy Contractor and Commissioner on premises:

The Commissioner will review any proposed premises away from the pharmacy put forward by the Pharmacy Contractor and/or seek to identify appropriate properties that may be used.

- a. If the property suggested is a commercial property or there is not a specific property suggested, then the Commissioner must determine whether there are vacant NHS or local authority properties that may be suitable and available by liaising with their colleagues in NHS Estates. Vacant NHS or local authority properties should be preferred in order to make best use of taxpayer funding.
- b. If the Commissioner locates an appropriate property, then they should advise the Pharmacy Contractor of the proposed site and confirm with the Pharmacy Contractor that they would be happy to proceed at that location.
- c. If there are no suitable NHS or local authority properties available, or the Pharmacy Contractor does not agree to proceed at the location identified by the Commissioner, then the Commissioner should provide the Pharmacy Contractor with information relating to the size, location and Value For Money (VFM) guardrails for the site and give the Pharmacy Contractor an opportunity to identify a suitable property. The value for money guardrails will be determined by the Commissioner to make best use of taxpayer money and will take into account factors including local lease costs, location and capacity of the premises in relation to the Population Need, duration of the lease and any remediations / adaptations needed (eg, to facilitate vaccine storage or improve accessibility).

- d. If the Pharmacy Contractor is unable to identify any properties within 2 weeks, or the Commissioner considers that the property / properties identified by the Pharmacy Contractor are unsuitable (by reference to the size, location or VFM guardrails) then the Commissioner will review options for alternate commissioning in line with this process. The proposal for the relevant site(s) away from the pharmacy will be placed in a decision pending state. The Commissioner will inform the Pharmacy Contractor of the position, retain a record of the details, and contact the Pharmacy Contractor should there be additional future opportunities identified to deliver the services from the relevant sites.
- e. If the Commissioner and Pharmacy Contractor agree on a proposed premises, then the site will go forward into Stage 4.

This process of identifying and agreeing locations on which to base the site can take several weeks, and the Commissioner may request additional information from the Pharmacy Contractor where this would be helpful for the purpose of ensuring the best possible outcome for the population and this information has not previously been requested on the expression of interest form C.

The Commissioner will not seek additional information during this Stage 3 from any Pharmacy Contractor that has not fully and comprehensively answered any of the expression of interest questions.

Pharmacy Contractors should therefore note that any failure by them to fully and comprehensively answer any of the expression of interest questions is likely to have a negative impact on the Pharmacy Contractor (and potentially its selection prospects) at Stages 3 and 4 of this process.

If the Pharmacy Contractor fails to provide all additional information within the reasonable deadline specified by the Commissioner, the Commissioner may reject the prospective site and that site will not be considered any further in relation to commissioning of this ES.



## Stage 4: Verification of plans and designation

For sites progressing to be commissioned, the Commissioner will inform and agree the provisional requirements of the site with the Pharmacy Contractor – such provisional requirements will include: anticipated site capacity, location and age cohorts to be vaccinated and the Commissioner will confirm any additional provisional plans such as for roving or pop-up models. All requirements and plans will be provisional until final JCVI recommendations are received and so details of the population to be vaccinated are available and in final form. Plans and requirements will be confirmed at this point, however these may be subject to change should further new guidance be published (eg, based on changes to the epidemiology). Significant changes to the population who are required to be vaccinated may mean that commissioned sites at the point of the change in recommendations will be encouraged to vaccinate more people, or to vaccinate in a shorter timeframe. Should these sites be unable to safely provide more activity, then NHS England will consider whether additional commissioning is required.

Contract award is contingent on the Pharmacy Contractor confirming they can meet the terms of the ES and all of the Minimum Requirements. The Commissioner reserves the right to carry out appropriate assurance checks if they have concerns that any confirmation by any Pharmacy Contractor that it can meet the terms of the ES and/or all of the Minimum Requirements is not (or might not be) accurate. This may be by asking the Pharmacy Contractor to demonstrate how they would meet the terms of the ES. They may choose to ask questions of the Pharmacy Contractor, conduct a virtual interview or review of the proposed site, or to visit the proposed site as is deemed appropriate.

The Superintendent Pharmacist is responsible for putting in place processes and procedures to secure safe and effective operations, and so any assurance carried out by the Commissioner must be collaborative, mindful of this legal responsibility and proportionate to risk so as not to impose inappropriate burden on the Pharmacy Contractor. Note that until the contract is awarded, work undertaken by the Pharmacy Contractor should be limited, and Pharmacy Contractor funding should not be committed.

Should the Commissioner determine that:

- they are not able to verify that the Pharmacy Contractor is able to meet the Minimum Requirements and the requirements of the ES to appropriate standards); or
- (in the case of a site away from the pharmacy) they are not satisfied that the site is able to meet the plans submitted in the expression of interest that formed a basis for selection at Stage 3 within the required timescales (i.e. ahead of contract signing and the service start date);

then the Commissioner will document the reasons that the site is being rejected and inform the Pharmacy Contractor that their site will not be required. If necessary (where a Population Need has been identified), the Commissioner will revisit expressions of interest that have been categorised as "decision pending" to select another proposed site.

For any Pharmacy Contractor who has previously delivered the COVID-19 vaccination service and is successfully re-selected as a result of this expression of interest process, designation and onboarding may not be required if the site is already set up on the necessary systems (although they may be asked to reconfirm some information). Designation and onboarding will be required for any new sites and may be required for sites that have been paused/inactive.

Once the Commissioner has received confirmation that the Pharmacy Contractor meets the Minimum Requirements and the terms of the ES, then the Pharmacy Contractor will be informed that they have been approved by the Commissioner and agreement on likely vaccine volumes will be reached. At that point the Pharmacy Contractor will be invited to re-confirm acceptance of the ES (once the final version is published) and/or site on-boarding will commence (onboarding will take approximately 10 working days):

1. For new sites, the Commissioner or their representatives will gather the required information from the site lead and submit it to the national programme support functions to allow for vaccine supply and other accounts to be created. This will include contact details for IT systems such as:
  - a. the Foundry system (accessed to review information held about the site, reporting and vaccine ordering);

- b. the NHS Future Collaboration platform (accessed to review guidance and other relevant information about the COVID-19 vaccination programme);
  - c. NBS administrators (accessed to set up other NBS users and schedule appointments);
  - d. preferred point of care system and administrators if relevant (accessed to record vaccinations).
2. New sites, those that have been paused/inactive or previously closed sites may be asked to reconfirm the information listed in point 1, immediately above.
3. Information on training and other preparations for go-live will be provided.
4. The Pharmacy Contractor must inform the Commissioner once go-live preparations have been completed or are on track to be completed ahead of vaccinations commencing (the details on how to do this will vary according to locality). The Commissioner will submit these details to the national supply functions, the site will be marked as 'active' and able to order vaccines.
  - a. Pharmacy Contractors must not incur any costs that they expect to be reimbursed without the prior written authorisation from the Commissioner. The Commissioner will not reimburse any costs or expenses incurred by Pharmacy Contractors other than those approved by the Commissioner in advance.
5. Allocations of vaccine will be made to providers in the network by the Commissioner in accordance with expected demand based on: modelling of the local population; patient invitation schedule; previous uptake rates in that locality; and characteristics (size, location, anticipated population) of the vaccination site network.

## Stage 5: Future participation in the COVID-19 vaccination programme

As System requirements change over time, for example where a provider is no longer able to fulfil the terms of the ES or there is a change in recommendations from JCVI, the Commissioner may choose to commission this service from additional Pharmacy Contractors. If this occurs during the duration of this ES:

1. The Commissioner will consider again any expressions of interest for services to be provided from the pharmacy where the Pharmacy Contractor is not currently contracted to offer the service.
2. The Commissioner will then consider again expressions of interest from Pharmacy Contractors who propose to operate the service away from the pharmacy, applying this process from Stage 3 onwards.
3. Where there are insufficient expressions of interest to meet the Population Need for the locality arising from steps 1 and 2 immediately above, then the Commissioner may request further expressions of interest from Pharmacy Contractors. At this stage, the Commissioner will provide further visibility and more detail of the requirements in that locality or population, for example in the form of a postcode or postcodes for the locality where the Population Need could be met. Invitations to submit targeted expressions of interest will be communicated locally by Regional Teams and publicised on the [Health Family Portal](#), and the [Find a Tender](#) and [Contracts Finder](#) websites.
4. Should any new expressions of interest be submitted for sites to be operated at a pharmacy, these should be accepted and taken through Stage 2 onwards.
5. Following this, if the Population Need is still considered to be unmet, all new expressions of interest from Pharmacy Contractors to operate the service from premises away from the pharmacy should be considered in line with Stage 3 onwards.

# Definitions

Within this expression of interest process document:

- the **Commissioner** means NHS England, including NHS England Regional Teams.
- the **ES** means the Community Pharmacy National Enhanced Service COVID-19 Vaccination Programme: 2023/24 Agreement, published [here](#).
- the **Minimum Requirements** are the set of conditions Pharmacy Contractors must be able to fulfil to be eligible to be commissioned to provide Covid-19 vaccinations to patients, as outlined in Stage 2 of this document.
- the **Phase 5 ES 2022/23** means the current Enhanced Service: COVID-19 Vaccination Programme: September 2022 to 31 August 2023 Agreement.
- a **Pharmacy Contractor** is a person operating a retail pharmacy business included in a pharmaceutical list maintained by NHS England to provide Pharmaceutical Services, where the pharmaceutical list was prepared under regulation 10(2)(a) of the National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 as amended (the “Pharmacy Regulations”) or relates to a scheme made under Part 13 of the Pharmacy Regulations (Local Pharmaceutical Services but excludes appliance contractors).
- **Population Need** is determined by the Commissioner in collaboration with Integrated Care Systems and other local community partners. The relevant Population Need is arrived at as a result of an assessment of the number of vaccines that need to be administered, the population that they will be administered to and the specific requirements of those people and the local geography. The Population Need will form the basis for selecting sites away from the pharmacy premises. The overall Population Need will also inform vaccine allocations for all commissioned providers.
- **Regional Teams** are NHS England Regional Teams.
- **Systems** refers to Integrated Care Systems and "System" refers to a single Integrated Care System.

## Queries

**For technical queries about the platform** we are using to receive expressions of interest (Health Family Portal provided by Atamis Ltd) e.g. registering, please call the helpdesk on 0800 9956035, available 8am–6pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), and leave your contact details for a member of the Atamis team to get back to you.

**For queries about the process or this documentation**, Pharmacy Contractors should use the messaging service on the Health Family Portal. Pharmacy Contractors should review this documentation immediately upon receipt and identify and submit any queries as soon as possible and, in any event, no later than 3 days before the closure of the expression of interest window.

These queries will be directed to the NHS England team who will respond to all reasonable questions/clarifications as soon as possible via the FAQs document (contained within the Documents in your Health Family account) which will be updated every week during the expression of interest portal window opening. The Commissioner will not respond to any queries raised via any method other than the Health Family Portal and we advise Pharmacy Contractors not to rely on communications issued via any other method.

Answers to questions will not be provided on an individual basis. If a Pharmacy Contractor wishes the Commissioner to treat a question/clarification as confidential it must state this when submitting the question/clarification. If the Commissioner determines at its sole discretion that the question/clarification is not confidential, the Commissioner will inform the Pharmacy Contractor and it will have an opportunity to withdraw it. If the query is not withdrawn, the response will be issued to all Pharmacy Contractors.

**Queries relating to the outcome of the process** should be addressed to the appropriate local Regional Team. The Regional Team will not be able to provide individual confirmation of receipt of expression of interest submissions; add or amend details; or enter into discussion on the content or context of the expressions of interest. Contact details can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-contract-teams/>.

NHS England  
Wellington House  
133-155 Waterloo Road  
London  
SE1 8UG

This publication can be made available in a number of alternative formats on request.