

Enter and View Report:

Nash Pharmacy

817 Commercial Rd, London E14 7HG

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Visit Details	
Service Visited:	Nash Pharmacy
Address:	817 Commercial Rd, London E14 7HG
Service Manager:	Joe Sivadasam
Date & Time of Visit:	11th September 2024, 1pm – 3pm
Status of Visit:	Announced
Authorised Representatives:	Shreya Mandal, Gary Mckeown
Lead Authorised Representative:	Shreya Mandal

1. Visit Background

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets is your **local, independent health and social care champion**. We help local people to voice their **views and opinions** about the services they use.



We **listen** to people and **collect their feedback** on health and social care services.



We **report on key findings** and **make recommendations** for improvement.



We **present these reports** to those involved in the planning and commissioning of the health and social care services.

What is Enter and View?

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and listen to service users at premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, and pharmacies. We also interview management and staff members. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Enter and View visits can be arranged if people tell us there's a problem with a service, but equally, they can also occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', will be shared with the service provider, local

commissioners and regulators outlining what has worked well, and give recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our [website](#).

Disclaimer

Please note, this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets would like to thank the service provider and service users for enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank our volunteer, Gary Mckeown, who assisted in conducting the visit and our intern Jannah Zulkifli, who produced this Enter and View Report.

2. About This Visit

Nash Pharmacy

On 11th September 2024, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets visited Nash Pharmacy, located in Poplar, London E14. The practice focuses on providing free prescription collection from local GP surgeries and prescription delivery to elderly and vulnerable patients in the E14 area.

We interviewed a total of 9 staff members, 5 patients and the Pharmacy Director. A promotional poster and questionnaires were emailed to the practice manager one week prior to the Enter and View visit. This was to ensure staff and patients who were interested but not available on the day of the visit had the opportunity to share their experience with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets.



Online Feedback

The [NHS review page](#) contains a total of two 5-star ratings reviews from 2023. The reviews commended the pharmacy's efficiency, politeness, and professionalism

Feedback is also available on [Google Reviews](#); Nash Pharmacy had received 62 reviews prior to our visit on 11th September 2024, averaging at 4 stars out of 5.

The comments mention issues such as delays in prescription deliveries, misplaced prescriptions, lack of organisation, and concerns over patient confidentiality. Some customers have reported long waiting times for prescriptions, and instances where staff were perceived as unprofessional or untrained.

However, there were also compliments, particularly for its friendly and helpful staff, and the pharmacy's willingness to assist patients with urgent medical concerns. Many long-term customers praised the quick service and efficient prescription handling. Others highlighted the staff's politeness, attentiveness, and the pharmacy's well-maintained premises.

Focus of the Visit

On 31st January 2024, the government and NHS England launched the [Pharmacy First Scheme](#) to give patients quick and accessible care, and ease pressures on GP services. It allows community pharmacies to independently supply prescription-only medication, including antibiotics and antivirals where clinically appropriate

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets are conducting a meta-analysis style report to explore how community pharmacies are coping with providing these enhanced services.

Most pharmacies that were contacted by Healthwatch Tower Hamlets were unable to accommodate a visit due to increased workload and current pressures on their services.

The rationale for conducting the Enter and View visit to Nash Pharmacy was based on the data sourced from engagement, surveys and comments posted online (NHS Reviews and Google Reviews).

The main of the visit was to gain a better understanding of the pharmacy's operations, patient experience, and the measures in place to manage its growing service demand. We also wanted to assess how they manage the additional services they provide and address areas where improvements could be made. Therefore, questions for staff and patients were formulated to explore these aspects, alongside the standard Enter & View observations.

Our pharmacy work is making an impact.

In the Healthwatch England [pharmacy report last year](#), it was recommended that pharmacy teams be given greater flexibility to substitute medicines when it is safe to do so and patients agree. This request was reiterated in a [joint letter](#) with other organisations on medicines shortages in November 2024.

Last month, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society highlighted a recent DHSC (Department of Health and Social Care) response to a coroner's Prevention Of Future Deaths Report, which notes that the Government intends to proceed to a public consultation on Healthwatch England's call to enable pharmacists to make appropriate substitutions when something is out of stock.

3. Summary of Findings

During the visit to Nash Pharmacy, the Authorised Representative was allowed to explore the premises open for the public independently, taking photographs when appropriate.

There are seven categories of observation. These categories include Outside and Entrance, Environment, Safety, Information Displayed, Accessibility, Reception and Waiting Area and Staff.

Nash Pharmacy is located on Commercial Road, which is an area that is easily accessible by foot, car, and public transport. The surrounding environment is moderately busy but not overly crowded, ensuring a smooth flow of visitors.

What worked well?

- **Outside and Entrance:** The pharmacy's external signage is clearly visible ensuring that the pharmacy is easily identifiable to both regular and first-time visitors.
- **Accessibility:** The pathway leading up to the entrance is unobstructed and there is a small ramp available. It features an automatic sliding door which allows for step-free access. The public area inside the pharmacy is spacious enough to accommodate wheelchair users and mobility aids, ensuring ease of movement for all patients.
- **Environment:** The general environment at Nash Pharmacy is clean, creating a welcoming atmosphere for patients. Throughout the visit, a steady stream of customers was observed, and staff members were courteous and engaged positively with customers. The public area is well-lit with natural light streaming through the large shop window.



Figure 1: Nash Pharmacy's exterior and signage.

- **Waiting Area:** There is a private consultation room which provides a designated space for confidential discussions between patients and pharmacy staff. The layout is organised, allowing customers to receive their prescriptions and services smoothly.
- **Safety and Information Displayed:** General information about pharmacy services was observed to be on display. There were flyers near the entrance covering various health topics, including contraception, sexual health, asthma, smoking cessation, and recovery support services. Notably, one of the brochures was available in Somali, reflecting efforts to provide health information to a diverse community.
- **Staff & Customer Interaction:** There were typically two pharmacists on duty, allowing for efficient handling of prescriptions and patient enquiries. Staff were observed to be polite, helpful and attentive to customer needs. Their friendliness and professionalism contribute to the pharmacy's strong relationships with the community.

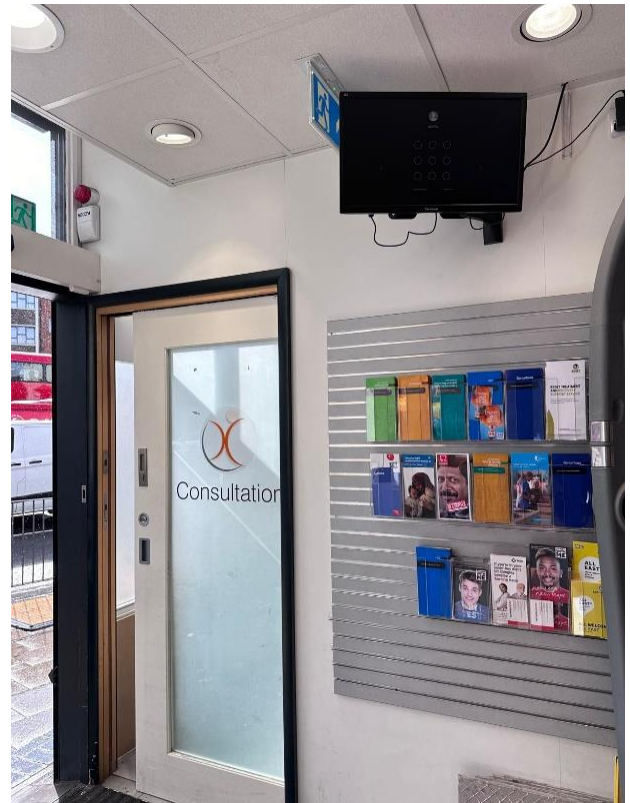


Figure 2: A consultation room located near the entrance. Digital monitor above was not operational.



Figure 3: Leaflet display right near the entrance, providing a wide variety in topics and in other languages.

What could be improved?

- **Signage & Information Display:** Although the external signage is clear and visible, there is limited promotional material displayed within the pharmacy to inform customers about available services. Some informational posters displayed in the pharmacy were torn or worn out, making them difficult to read. Additionally, while there is COVID-19 guidance at the entrance, it is unclear whether this information is still relevant, as there have been no updates or removal of outdated notices. (see Appendix E)
- **Waiting Area & Seating:** The waiting area provides adequate seating, accommodating six to seven people at a time. However, some chairs appeared worn and in need of refurbishment to enhance overall patient comfort (see Appendix D).
- **Digital Screen & Leaflets:** The digital monitor inside the pharmacy was turned off at the time of the visit, limiting access to important health information and service updates. While leaflets were available, their selection was sparse and limited in variety (see Appendix C).
- **Automatic Door Sensor Issues:** The pharmacy is equipped with an automatic sliding door, but it was noted that the door kept opening unnecessarily at times. This could be distracting for staff and customers and may result in unnecessary energy usage.
- **Limited Feedback Opportunities:** A printed notice regarding feedback and complaints was displayed in the pharmacy, providing information about how customers can raise concerns and share their feedback. However, there were no visible feedback forms or a dedicated feedback box for immediate and anonymous input. While the pharmacy does have a complaints procedure in place, the accessibility and visibility of feedback opportunities could be improved by incorporating a

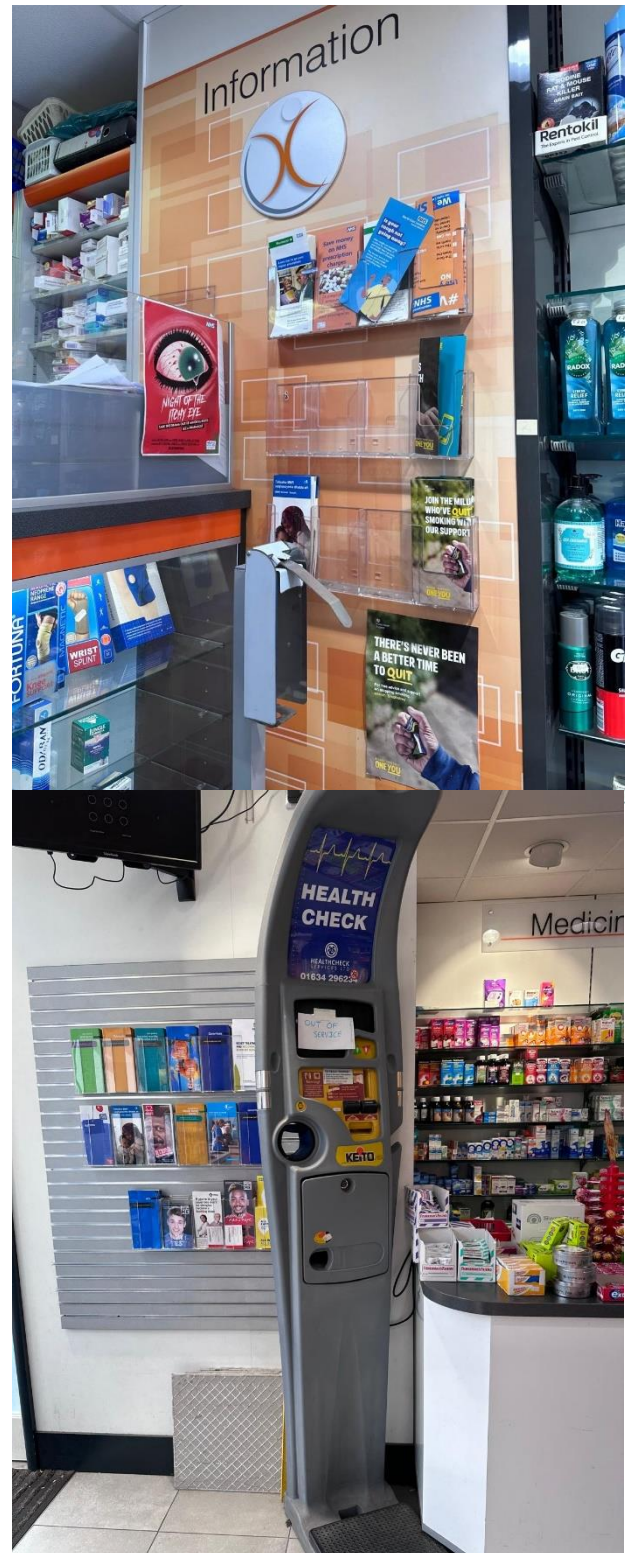


Figure 5: A health check machine was present in the pharmacy but marked as out of service.

physical or digital feedback system that allows customers to share their experiences conveniently (see Appendix B).

- **Clutter & Obstructions:** Crates were observed in the corner of the pharmacy near the entrance, creating unnecessary clutter. This could pose a potential obstruction for individuals with mobility issues. Keeping the entrance and waiting areas free from storage items would improve accessibility and enhance the overall patient experience (see Appendix A).
- **Out-of-Service Health Check Machine & Sanitiser:** A health check machine was present in the pharmacy but was marked out of service at the time of visit. Additionally, an old hand sanitiser station was observed in the pharmacy but was not in use. Its presence may create confusion for patients looking for a functional hand sanitiser.



Figure 6: Unused hand sanitizer station

Summary of recommendations:

1. Improve and implement regular maintenance and management of internal signage, promotional displays and leaflet stands.
2. Upgrade seating in the waiting area – refurbish or replace worn out chairs to enhance customer comfort.
3. Ensure the digital screen is functional. Regularly update and display health-related information, pharmacy services, and public health messages to keep patients informed.
4. Adjust and modify the automatic door sensor.
5. Provide clearer feedback opportunities
6. Declutter the entrance and waiting areas
7. Repair or remove the out-of-service health check machine

4. Interviews

During the visit on 11th September 2024, we had the opportunity to interview a few patients and staff members, along with the Pharmacy Director at Nash Pharmacy. Selected comments from patient interviews have been shared. We asked a total of 13-15 questions on various topics such as consultations, environment and feedback.

4.1 Staffing and Work Environment

Staff members at Nash Pharmacy generally expressed positive views on their working environment and the expanded range of services now provided at community pharmacies. There has been a noticeable increase in patient referrals, particularly for minor ailments and blood pressure checks. This has reduced pressure on local GPs, allowing pharmacists to offer quicker and more accessible healthcare solutions.

However, some staff members mentioned that while they received sufficient training and resources, further soft skills training would be beneficial for managing challenging customer interactions. Additionally, with the increased volume of patients, some staff highlighted that extra computers or streamlined processes could improve workflow efficiency.

Staff Feedback



- *"There has definitely been an increase in the amount of patients coming to the pharmacy for minor ailments, blood pressure checks, and emergency contraception."*
- *"Yes, it makes it easier for patients to get help and advice without waiting for hours for a doctor."*
- *"We receive many calls and face-to-face visits asking for help from a pharmacist. The confidence in pharmacists has definitely increased."*
- *"Extra computers in case of rush hour could streamline the processes, hastening patient experience and service time."*
- *"Pharmacy First was introduced at a short notice, and while we have adapted well, further resources and refined workflow processes would enhance our ability to provide these services efficiently."*



4.2 Patient Experience and Accessibility

Most patients found Nash Pharmacy to be clean, accessible, and well-organised. The automatic sliding door and step-free entrance made access easier for those with mobility impairments. Patients also noted that staff were friendly, professional, and knowledgeable, making it easy to communicate and seek advice.

However, some concerns were raised about stock shortages, requiring patients to return multiple times for medications. Additionally, while the waiting area was considered adequate, a few patients mentioned that some chairs were damaged and looked worn out.

Selected Patient Feedback



- *"I try to walk but I have mobility issues. No issues entering or exiting."*
- *"The standard is okay, but the seating area is worn-out, looks run down. They used to have a water dispenser. I have diabetes, so water is important."*
- *"Very good, but they run out of stock (medicine) often, so I have to chase constantly."*
- *"Pharmacy staff are fine. Been coming for the last 35 years. I used to be a member of the staff."*
- *"Staff are good people, very helpful."*



4.3 Service Efficiency and Areas of improvement

Most patients found their issues resolved immediately, with minimal waiting times. Many reported that prescriptions were prepared efficiently, and interactions with pharmacists were clear and well-explained. However, a few patients experienced delays in receiving their medication due to stock issues.

Selected Patient Feedback



- *"The service is quick"*
- *"Issues are resolved immediately."*
- *"I come to this pharmacy regularly, so I know the process."*
- *"Yes, had a good conversation with the pharmacist about next steps."*



4.4 Feedback and Complaints Process

While Nash Pharmacy has a notice displayed regarding feedback and complaints, some patients mentioned that they were unaware of how to submit feedback. There was no visible feedback box, and many patients felt that a more accessible feedback system would improve engagement.

Staff noted that patients are encouraged to leave Google reviews or speak directly to the manager. However, not all patients were aware of these options, and some suggested that having a digital or physical feedback box would be more convenient.

Selected Patient Feedback



- *"Wouldn't know how to make a complaint but happy to ask staff."*
- *"No, but can leave reviews on Google."*



5. Conclusion

Overall, our visit to Nash Pharmacy was positive with some areas for improvement identified. We have highlighted our recommendations for improvement based on the observations and the feedback received from both staff and patients.

Summary of recommendations:

- 1. Improve feedback accessibility** – Introduce a visible feedback box or digital feedback system to make it easier for patients to share their experiences.
- 2. Enhance seating in the waiting area** – Replace or refurbish worn-out chairs to improve patient comfort.
- 3. Address stock shortages** – Improve stock management to reduce the need for patients to return multiple times for medications.
- 4. Optimize signage and displayed information** – Ensure services, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets materials, and updated COVID-19 guidance are clearly visible.
- 5. Fix infrastructure issues** – Repair automatic door sensors and evaluate whether the out-of-service health check machine should be removed or replaced.
- 6. Reduce clutter** – Keep the entrance and waiting area clear of storage crates to improve accessibility.
- 7. Streamline service efficiency** – Consider additional computers and soft skills training for staff to better manage high patient volumes and interactions.

Recommendations

1. Feedback Accessibility

During the visit, it was noted that while a printed notice about feedback and complaints was displayed within the pharmacy, there were no visible feedback forms or feedback box for immediate input. A few patients expressed uncertainty about how to provide feedback or make a complaint. While staff stated that patients are encouraged to leave Google reviews or speak directly to the manager, this method may not be accessible or ideal for all patients.

"Wouldn't know how to make a complaint but happy to ask staff."

Our Recommendations:

- To ensure patient voices are heard, Nash Pharmacy should consider placing a dedicated feedback box in a visible and accessible location within the pharmacy.
- The implementation of a digital feedback system, such as QR codes linking to an online feedback form, may encourage greater participation.
- Staff should actively inform patients of the feedback process when providing services, ensuring they are aware of the available avenues for submitting comments and complaints

Manager Response:

We have already implemented a suggestion box on receipt of the report. We will ensure that this emptied weekly and the suggestions discussed with the team.

2. Waiting Area and Seating

The waiting area was observed to be sufficient in size, allowing for comfortable movement and seating. However, some chairs were noted to be worn and in need of refurbishment, which may improve patient comfort. Additionally, a patient highlighted that access to drinking water was no longer available, which was previously a helpful provision.

"The standard is okay, but the seating area is worn-out, looks run down. They used to have a water dispenser. I have diabetes, so water is important."

Our Recommendations:

- Nash Pharmacy should consider refurbishing or replacing worn-out seating to ensure a comfortable waiting experience for patients.

- The reintroduction of a water station in the waiting area could support patients, particularly those with medical conditions requiring regular hydration.

Manager Response:

We will look into the wear and tear of the seating with a view to replace or refurbish the waiting area.

We will also re-introduce a water station with cups for patients to use.

3. Stock Availability

A recurring concern raised by both patients and online reviewers was stock shortages, which resulted in delays in receiving medications and multiple visits to the pharmacy. While the pharmacy aims to manage stock efficiently, patients noted the inconvenience of having to return frequently to check for availability.

"Almost every single week my prescription delivers late or missing all week. Two months ago I was going away and called the pharmacy that my medication didn't arrive they told me it will be with me shortly unfortunately I had to go away for two weeks without my med"

"Very good, but they run out of stock (medicine) often, so I have to chase constantly."

Our Recommendations:

- Nash Pharmacy should review its stock management processes to minimize shortages and ensure that patients can receive their prescriptions in a timely manner.
- Consideration should be given to implementing an SMS or call notification system, allowing patients to be informed when their medication is ready for collection, reducing unnecessary visits.
- Staff should provide clear communication on stock arrival times, so patients can plan accordingly and avoid unnecessary delays or multiple visits.

Manager Response:

At the time of the visit, the national outlook for medicines supply was very poor. Pharmacies across the country were affected by shortages of medicines and we were not immune to a UK-wide problem. The availability of medicines are better now but we have already implemented extensive SMS messaging to patients (if we can obtain consent from them) which informs them of drug shortages with requests to contact the pharmacy so we can discuss the options for patients. The SMS messaging service also allows them to be notified when their prescriptions are ready for collection.

4. Signage and Displayed Information

While external signage was clear and visible, promotional materials and informational posters inside the pharmacy were limited. Additionally, COVID-19 guidance was still displayed at the entrance, but it was unclear if this information remained relevant as it had not been updated or removed.

Some informational posters displayed in the pharmacy were torn or worn out, making them difficult to read. Additionally, while there is COVID-19 guidance at the entrance, it is unclear whether this information is still relevant, as there have been no updates or removal of outdated notices.

Our Recommendations:

- To improve patient awareness, Nash Pharmacy should ensure that displayed materials, including health information and available services, are regularly updated and maintained.
- Posters and leaflets should be regularly reviewed and replaced, ensuring a wider variety of health topics are available for patients.

Manager Response:

We have recently installed a large screen TV which shows videos of our health promotions and information. We have removed older posters and new leaflets have been ordered where appropriate.

5. Infrastructure Maintenance and Space Management

During the visit, several infrastructure and space management concerns were observed that may impact the efficiency and accessibility of the pharmacy. The automatic sliding door was noted to be malfunctioning, frequently opening unnecessarily, which could cause distractions for staff and customers and lead to unnecessary energy consumption. Additionally, a health check machine was marked out of service, occupying valuable space without serving a function.

Furthermore, crates were stacked near the entrance, potentially creating an obstruction for individuals with mobility impairments. Keeping storage areas free of clutter would help maintain accessibility and provide a more organised environment for patients.

During the visit, the automatic door was observed to be malfunctioning, frequently opening unnecessarily. Additionally, an out-of-service health check machine was taking up space, and crates were stacked near the entrance, contributing to clutter and potential obstructions.

Our Recommendations:

- Nash Pharmacy should assess the automatic door sensor to prevent it from opening unnecessarily and improve its efficiency.
- The out-of-service health check machine should be either repaired or removed if it cannot be restored to full functionality.
- Storage areas should be organised to ensure that crates and other materials are kept out of public spaces, maintaining a clutter-free and accessible environment for all patients.

Manager Response:

The handyman will visit soon to inspect the automatic door. If there is a problem which he is unable to fix, we will call the people who installed the door to adjust the sensitivity of the sensor.

The Healthpoint machine was removed a few months ago and we are in the process of sourcing a replacement.

We have started to organize the boxes and crates to reduce clutter and moved them to the back of the pharmacy.

• • •

We would like to extend a thank you to Nash Pharmacy for their contributions and our intern, Jannah Zulkifli, for producing this Enter and View Report.

6. Appendix

This section displays additional photos taken during the Enter and View Visit to Nash Pharmacy on 11th September 2024.



Appendix A: Clutter Near the Entrance

Crates were observed stacked near the entrance, which could obstruct pathways and create accessibility issues for individuals with mobility impairments. Keeping public areas clear would enhance patient accessibility and overall organisation.

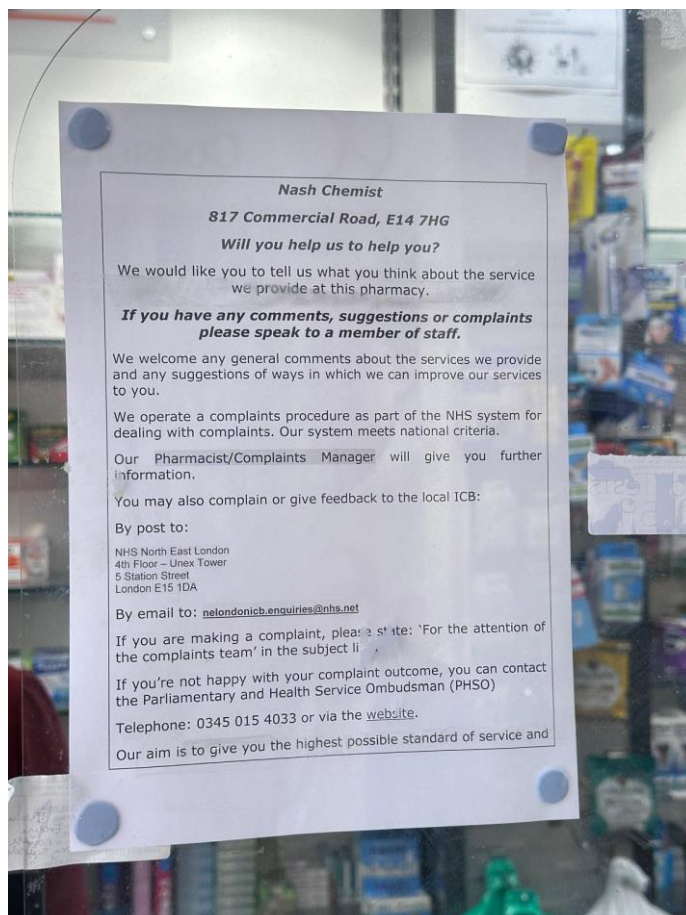


Appendix B: Pharmacy Counter and Service Area

The main counter area was observed to be well-organised. However, feedback forms and complaint procedures were not visibly displayed, which may limit patient awareness of how to provide input.

A printed notice regarding feedback and complaints was displayed in the pharmacy, providing information on how customers can raise concerns. However, there was no dedicated feedback box visible in the waiting area, potentially limiting patient engagement in providing direct feedback.

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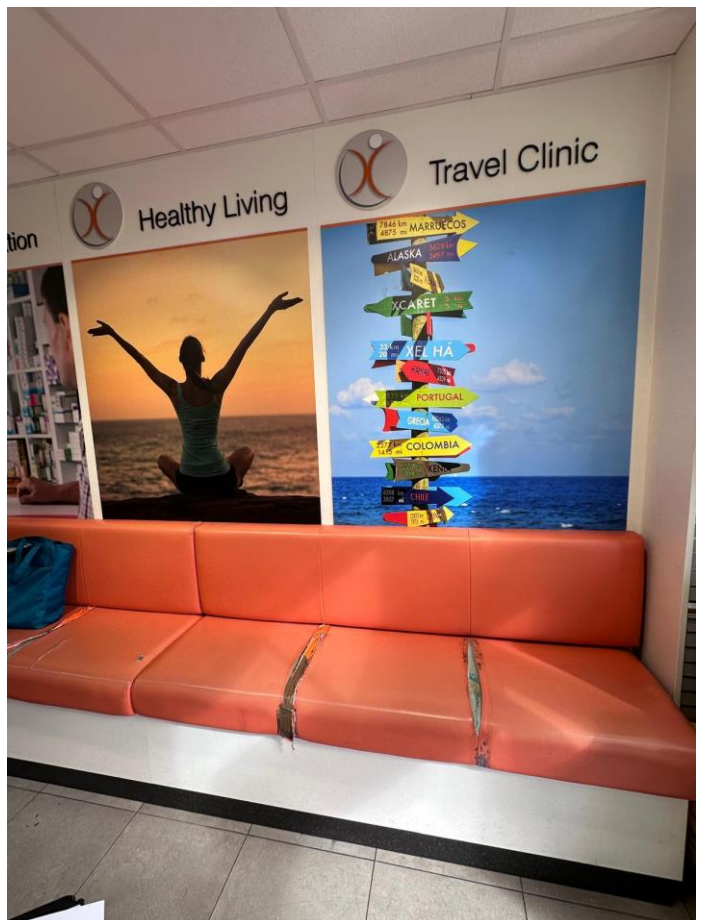


Appendix C: Leaflet Display

The pharmacy provides a range of health-related leaflets, however, some of the selection was limited, and topics lacked representation. The leaflet holders were empty, reducing access to essential information.

Appendix D: Seating Area Condition

The seating area provided for patients was sufficient but showed signs of wear and tear. Some of the seats were damaged, with visible tears on the cushions. Ensuring that seating remains in good condition would enhance patient comfort while waiting.



Appendix E: Worn-Out Posters

Some informational posters displayed in the pharmacy were torn or worn out, making them difficult to read. Regular maintenance of displayed materials would improve the overall presentation and accessibility of health-related information for patients.



Some of the displayed health information posters were outdated, and key public health messages were missing or not prominently displayed. Regular updates to these materials would ensure patients have access to accurate and relevant information.



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