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Ms Maggie Maclsaac
Integrated Care Board
1 Guildhall Square
Hampshire
Portsmouth
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03rd February 2023

Dear Ms Maclsaac,

RE: Pharmacy closures

I am writing to express my concern about the recent announcement of the closure of the Rowlands Pharmacy in Hilsea and the Drayton Community Pharmacy leading to a lack of accessible services for residents.

As a local resident and the representative of the area, I understand the importance of accessible healthcare and advice. Pharmacies are a valuable community asset and are often the first stop for people before seeing their GP. I believe that the imminent closure of the Rowlands Pharmacy in Hilsea and more recently the Drayton Pharmacy has created a significant gap in the provision of these services given the closest pharmacy is now a significant walk away in Copnor and Farlington respectively.

My office has been in contact with the previous manager of Rowlands, and he confirmed the company's decision. In my discussions with him, I was informed that the practice is profitable, but there have been several pressures on the business, specifically surrounding stock rotation and the wider picture of the company in other areas of the country. The local pharmacy is well regarded within the community and could easily be taken over by another large-scale chain or indeed any number of smaller providers, but for this to be successful, there needs support from the ICB.

From my previous correspondence with the ICB regarding pharmacies, I am aware that there is an ever-increasing number of patients choosing to receive their repeat medications from distance selling or online given the ease to have prescriptions delivered to their home on a regular basis.

The pharmacy that dispenses the highest number of Hampshire prescriptions is in Leeds.

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This will obviously cause unintended consequences that local high street pharmacies will be seeing less items and subsequently at some point there will be a business decision to make. However, pharmacies in the north of the city could be successful if certain decisions were taken by the ICB.

I understand that The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board is responsible for the commissioning of pharmaceutical services and may introduce a prescribing service in a community pharmacy as a pilot; NHS England is also considering plans for piloting National Health Service independent prescribing services nationally.

Given the need for there to be increased footfall in local pharmacies, I wonder if Rowlands or indeed any other pharmacy in the north of the city could be used as pilots to prescribe? I know that in 2026, all pharmacists will qualify with a prescribing qualification in order to take pressure off of many General Practices, but 2026 is still several years away and it would be useful to see what a pilot could achieve in terms of data and best-practice.

In the interim, I kindly request that you explore prescribing services or setting up a distribution hub given the demonstrable need within the area as a way of securing the long-term future of community pharmacies. This will ensure that residents have access to the healthcare services and advice they need. It may also persuade any potential buyer of Rowlands the benefits of setting-up shop in Hilsea.

I look forward to hearing back from you regarding this matter and would be happy to discuss this further with you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours Sincerely,



Penny Mordaunt MP