



Community Pharmacy Lancashire

Annual Report
2020-21

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Chair's Report



Let's not beat around the bush, the 2020/21 year has probably been the most challenging and rewarding period for community pharmacy in its long history. We've all been, and continue to be, working under incredible amounts of pressure and are doing so with a huge amount of pride and sense of privilege that our communities have become unquestionably reliant and increasingly appreciative of.

Our teams continue to amaze us in terms of their resilience and selflessness, and it feels we have finally become synonymous with our primary care colleagues, that we are not only part of the NHS family, but rather a critical element at the front door to it, giving the millions of people daily that need it, the unrivalled access to face to face care, more often than not without the need for an appointment. Pre pandemic, this was taken for granted. In this new world, having continued to, and in many cases expanded, we have finally started to receive the plaudits we have long deserved.

We of course will look back at this period, in years to come, and for those of us in the thick of it, there will be a mixture of emotions, a sense of pride, feelings of disbelief, upset at the loved ones we sadly lost to this awful disease but the togetherness it created amongst our wonderful teams. But what is incredibly important to me, and something I believe we must all promise one another, as one big community pharmacy family, that we now build on this brilliant platform to both patients and commissioners. Sadly, now is not the time to revel in the positivity that is now being afforded to our sector, but to seize the opportunities from all angles, and leverage all the goodwill we have afforded all our stakeholders for far too long now without just reward.

My colleagues at CPL and the team supporting us have been working tirelessly throughout this year to champion every contractor across our footprint. I am enormously proud and grateful of how our team have rapidly evolved and reacted to work on your behalf ensuring both your needs and rights are met e.g., prompt access to COVID vaccinations for our teams through to capitalising and growing on the various commissioning opportunities.

As is always the case, change is inevitable. We have said goodbye to some valuable colleagues on the committee, with both Nicola Cross (CCA) and Ben Fell (CCA) leaving our board during this year, being recently replaced with Arifbhai Bhuriya (CCA) and Hamzah Hasan (CCA). I am also pleased that Ben has continued in the capacity as treasurer for the committee, providing the stability we need to ensure we navigate through these challenging times and to make the right informed financial decisions on behalf of all contractors.

As a committee and a team, we are acutely aware of the need to improve the way pharmacy contractors are supported and represented both regionally and nationally and for this reason we will continue to engage with the process of the Wright Review, as and when this gathers more appropriate momentum as we start to hopefully come out of the other side of the pandemic.

In conclusion, I would once again like to offer my sincere thanks and congratulations to every single team member across all our pharmacies in the footprint. You have all behaved like heroes and deserve all the plaudits with the wonderful achievements you have had. But do not rest on your laurels now, go out and seize the opportunities. Let's build on this next year and have our most successful year yet. I wish every one of you good health, happiness, and prosperity.

Mike Ball
Chair

View from a New Committee Member



Having joined Community Pharmacy Lancashire, its scope and variety of work undertaken has really astounded me. The professionalism of the board, its leaders and members bring together a variety of contractors who strive to achieve the best for community pharmacy in Lancashire. As an organization the transparency and resourcefulness to work towards a common goal has really impressed me and has made me proud to be a part of an organization that is inclusive in its decision making of all pharmacy businesses and their respective patients. I believe as the LPC evolves it will help community pharmacy thrive in an ever-challenging marketplace.

Hamzah Hasan

CPL Committee Member

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Welcome to the Annual report for April 2020/21 – a year when the words and phrases such as “unprecedented”, “PPE”, “The new normal”, “Restoration & Recovery”, “Reset & reform” closely followed by “COVID vaccination sites” entered our everyday vocabulary and ways of working.

No one has ever seen such a year, yet what I can say is we witnessed the community pharmacy leaders and their teams in our footprint stepping up and facing the tsunami of challenges that the COVID pandemic has presented us with and continues to do so.

It is not possible to describe all the work myself and the team here at Community Pharmacy Lancashire (CPL) have been doing over the past year in supporting you, our contractors, and your teams at the frontline of community pharmacy – in short, we have had your backs. With twelve months of adapting, upskilling, mastering online platforms, providing training, and facilitating Primary Care Network (PCN) meetings in the evenings, lunchtimes – whatever time worked for yourselves.

Swathes of emergency legislation across a broad area changed ways of working almost overnight for all of us, and we worked very hard to keep abreast of these and keep you updated; and all the time you ensured that patients continued to get their medicines in a world of supply chain issues, a sudden spike in dispensing volumes, besieged by worried patients seeking advice and reassurance, stockpiling of essential items, directed Easter Holiday openings; with a backdrop of financial uncertainty. What we do know is that pharmacies were the only primary healthcare professionals that patients could see in person on demand, and we have done our very best to support you in maintaining this access close to home.

Service Provision – Essential

Both the Healthy Living Pharmacy framework and the Discharge Medicine Service (DMS) have become essential elements of the community pharmacy contractual framework (CPCF).

For those of our contractors in Pennine Lancashire you will be very familiar with the Refer to Pharmacy scheme, that has embraced the DMS service. In terms of our other areas the Hospital Trusts in our footprint are involved in the Unified Medicines Record and Referral project. This project will adopt the approach used in Pennine Lancashire and will run across the Integrated Care System (ICS), giving access to patient records to ensure that services can be delivered with the most up to date patient information. We hope to see this rolled out across our entire footprint by Autumn 2021.

Service provision - Advanced and Locally Commissioned Services

As a team we have worked to support both contractors and our local commissioners in having to adapt service provision during the lockdowns. CPL worked with commissioners to ensure they knew the availability of community pharmacies and how service provision was being affected by the pandemic restrictions, shielding patients, and in some sectors a furloughed workforce.

Several services were extended to include more pharmacies across Lancashire e.g., end of life/palliative care, with a new palliative care one-hour delivery service commissioned in Greater Preston and Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

CPL have used every opportunity to use PharmOutcomes® to deliver services, existing and new, to make accessibility to services easier for the pharmacy, with clear audit trails. At the end of March 2021, we are still awaiting some services to be stepped up when it is appropriate, this includes the expansion of the Patient Group Direction (PGD) service in Blackburn after the success of the PGD pilot in Darwen.

The 20/21 flu vaccination programme showed once more how community pharmacies can rise to the challenge and vaccinate in a COVID secure environment. In England community pharmacies vaccinated over one million more people than last season, a 25% increase of the overall growth in the flu vaccination programme – far more than our usual share of around 10-12% ¹ of the total programme. A phenomenal achievement on its own never mind during a pandemic.

On the 1st November 2020, the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) was extended to include referrals from general practices as well as from NHS 111. Uptake has been slow up to the end of March 2021, however CPL has received funding from NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) Lancashire and South Cumbria to support both CPL and our PCN Pharmacy Leads in the implementation of this service during the summer of 2021. Conversations continue to take place with both PCNs and individual GP practices to increase uptake.

Our provider arm company, Choose Health was equally impacted by the pandemic, and an update from their Co-Chief Executives is included later in this report.

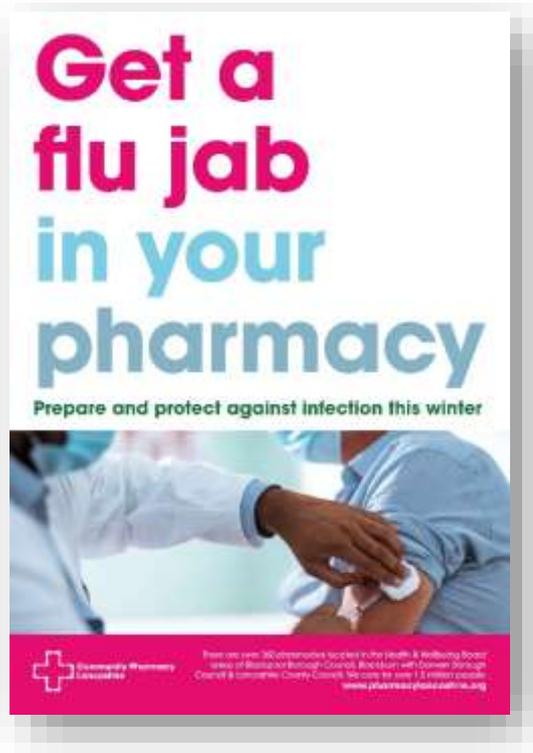
Contractor Support

The pandemic made us rethink how we keep in touch with you our contractors, and our face-to-face visits moved onto pre booked telephone calls. Our Operations and Contractor Lead began 'virtual visits' to ensure you were okay, and to make sure we kept in close contact with you.

Along with these phone calls, we continued to reach out to you via a range of channels including our weekly Bulletin (a circulation list now in excess of eight hundred people), social media - Twitter and Facebook, CPL Website, emails sent directly to your PharmOutcomes® and NHS Shared email accounts. The Pharmacy PCN Leads were supported with WhatsApp groups to assist in reaching out to the pharmacies in their individual PCNs.

Listening to your stories back in April/May we heard about the verbal and physical abuse many of you were receiving from patients. We embarked upon a marketing campaign that began with **“Care for your pharmacy so that pharmacy can care or you”** to try and help people understand the pressures we were under and ask them for forbearance. This was picked up by the social media news, local press, and radio and then nationally, as many people were astounded that pharmacy teams were being subjected to such treatment.

¹ PSNC data 20/21



As we moved out of lockdown one, we moved our message onto **“Stay safe in your pharmacy by knowing what to expect”** and as we approached the flu season **“Get a flu jab in your pharmacy | prepare and protect”**.

As part of the flu campaign, we delivered to every pharmacy via the Community Pharmacy PCN Leads a support pack including posters and badges to help support your messaging to patients.



Plate 1 – Window poster, card, and sticker, Flu Campaign 2020-21

Pharmacy Quality Scheme

We have been very active in supporting our PCN Pharmacy Leads across the year especially around the reporting time for the Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) where they had a lot of co-ordinating to do in order for all our pharmacies to qualify for payments, both bricks and mortar and distance selling alike.

At this point I would personally like to thank all our PCN Pharmacy Leads for the work they have done and are doing in supporting the community pharmacies within their PCNs. I know this was a big demand on their time. To that end CPL secured funding from the PCN Development Fund to support our Pharmacy Leads for a period of twelve months to commence late 2021 across the ICS, so forty-two PCNs, including six that sit within Community Pharmacy Cumbria. This funding sits outside of the CPCF and is there to support the leads in working in their PCNs for eight hours per month.

CPL facilitated our thirty-six PCN Leads in supporting contractors in having flu and business continuity plan meetings as part of the PQS criteria.

Our aim is always to ensure that through the timely information, resources and support we provide, as many pharmacies in our footprint meet deadlines and maximise the claims, they are able to make wherever relevant.

Training

The VirtualOutcomes® platform is proving invaluable in supporting your pharmacy teams to keep up with the requirements of the CPCF and other Regulatory changes, along with NHS Public Health Campaigns, Healthy Living Pharmacy Champions, and other services to ensure the best outcomes for patients. The courses are fully funded by CPL so are free to all contractors and their

teams, with over fifty different modules available, accompanied by a knowledge test and certificates to evidence the training. The pie chart below shows the contractor split of usage across our footprint.

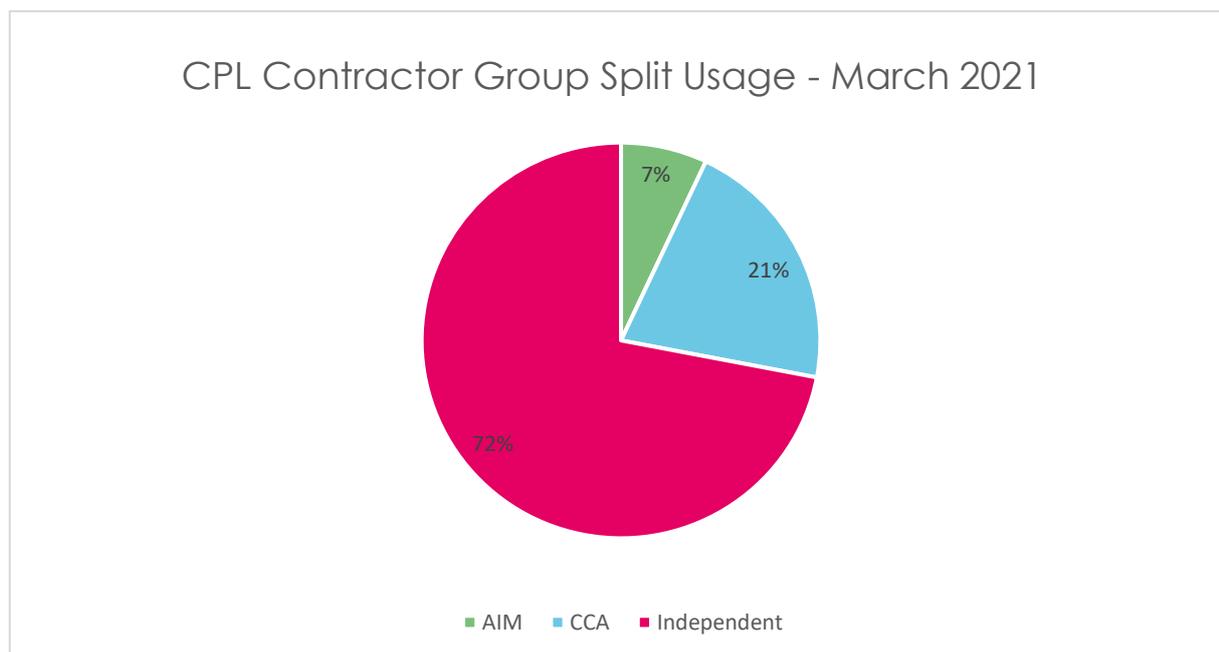


Figure 1 - usage of VirtualOutcomes@ by contractor groups across our footprint

Many of our contractors had expressed concern over the sale of Codeine Linctus and to that end during December we undertook a pilot educational event with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) via Zoom, having a lunchtime and evening session. Change Grow Live (GCL) who commission Substance Misuse Services also spoke at the event to share insights on substance abuse and the help they can provide to contractors on the subject. The pilot was very successful and is now being rolled out across England.

In December we held a virtual event on Emergency Contraception and Safeguarding Training run by one of our commissioners to support contractors. The table below shows the attendance at these CPL supported events.

Date	Event Topic	No. of Attendees
09 December 2020, 1:30pm	Sales of Codeine Linctus - is it a cause for Concern?	28
09 December 2020, 7:30pm	Sales of Codeine Linctus - is it a cause for Concern?	17
17 December 2020	Emergency Contraception Safeguarding Training	34
February – March 2021	36 PCN Flu and Business Continuity Meetings	Over 350

Table 1 – Events held for Contractors April 2020 – March 2021

What we learnt from hosting these virtual events is that a lunchtime option is proving quite popular, along with evenings, and that a virtual event allows us to record it so contractors and pharmacy teams can also access the event at times that are convenient to them. New ways of working that have been driven by the pandemic.

Collaborative working

The pandemic has accelerated many good ways of working and we found very quickly that we were working far more closely with other Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs) in the North West. As a collective we have combined weekly meetings with our local NHSE&I regions and the GPhC.

The Chairs of CPL, Bolton & GM LPC and Senior Team members of each LPC meet on a weekly basis with our Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) Regional Representative to feedback to PSNC news from the front line and share best practice between us.

At a North West level, CPL represents the seven neighbouring LPCs in the North West at the Primary Care, Public Health, Health and Justice COVID subgroup, an operational group that looks at the primary care COVID response across the North West, and we represent your views and help needed to ensure you keep your door open. Examples included how community pharmacies had to source our own personal protective equipment for our teams – feeding this back directly into the NHS hierarchy; raising the profile of the pandemic delivery service with partners in primary care, and the difficulties contractors were having in getting their staff vaccinated at the Mass and PCN vaccination sites; this intervention prompted the ICS to give access to these sites for you and your staff to ensure you were offered vaccinations.

Other LPCs have been involved in the PSNC Rapid Action Team that was established to get messages backwards and forwards quickly from PSNC in the early stages of the pandemic as to what was happening on the ground and how they could help; this has now evolved into the PSNC/LPC Operations Team and the LPCs in the North West Region take it in turns to attend these meetings, sharing the workload.

Your safety

Your safety is of paramount importance to us, and we worked with Lancashire Constabulary to raise the awareness of the needs of pharmacy, and to give you relevant support. Forgive me if I don't list those actions here – they were sent to your secure NHS email addresses.

Our bulletin signposted contractors to where you could find support for completing your COVID risk assessments in protecting your teams and patients, and my team worked tirelessly to ensure that your pharmacy staff were given access to COVID vaccinations once they became available in December 2020.

Many of you were worried about having to close temporarily your pharmacy due to COVID. The emergency provisions in the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 enabled this to happen, and we supported many of you with telephone advice and updated our website to make it very easy to find support on what to do if you found yourself in this difficult situation.

Pharmacy Representation

During the summer PSNC published the Report from the Wright Review. The Wright Review is an PSNC initiated Independent Review of Contractor Representation and Support, that explores efficiencies and better ways of providing value for money support to front-line contractors, at both local and national levels.

Your committee members have been involved in and contributed to every step of this review process throughout, and at the end of 2020 we saw the establishment of the Pharmacy Review Steering Group (RSG) to move this work on, holding their first engagement events with Contractor Forums and LPCs in March 21.

Our thanks to those of you who completed both national PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audits in July and again at the start of 2021. One hundred and forty-seven of you participated in the audit and helped PSNC calculate that in England that the average pharmacy carries out around 17 consultations per day or more than 100 per week.

In late 2020 we heard the great news of a COVID vaccine becoming available and to that end CPL has been working with NHSE&I in ensuring that the community pharmacies within our footprint were well represented in the conversations that ensured having an involvement in the national wider primary care COVID vaccination programme. The work continued with NHSE&I as we saw surge planning put into place to cover 'hard to reach' patients.

Members of Parliament

In our footprint we have eighteen Members of Parliament (MP). We contact them on a regular basis; this year we have raised issues such as the abuse faced by our pharmacy teams, the lack of funding for the pharmacy sector, the ambiguity around the Advanced Payments of £370m, and have worked with the MPs in raising these matters as questions either with the Minister or in the House. We held two virtual meetings for our MPs, one for the Conservative MPs and one for Labour MPs.

We shall continue to work with our MPs and if any of you would like to host a MP visit to your pharmacy, we would be more than happy to support you in delivering this, simply let us know.

Market Entry

With respect to Market Entry applications, the last year has seen a lot of activity, with twelve of our community pharmacies ceasing to trade; four of which were consolidations, along with six No Significant Change Minor relocations and twelve Change of Ownerships as well one further which was a combined Change of Ownership and Relocation, and three new openings. We have provided support to several contractors with market entry issues, as the normal market entry processes were impacted on and delayed by the pandemic. The pandemic has also led to a delay in the revisions of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments by our three Health & Wellbeing Boards.

Your committee

The committee of fifteen members has met twelve times this year, this included seven full meetings, the Annual General Meeting and four smaller extra ordinary meetings to discuss matters such as the Wright Report. Some Members have individual responsibilities in sub committees e.g., Governance and the Staff Committee.

We believe our operational efficiency as a committee produces real value for money for you, the contractors who fund us. We will continue to ensure that CPL remains fit for the future, able to continue and sustain the effort to engage and influence on your behalf keeping pharmacy firmly in the picture everywhere across NHSE&I Lancashire and South Cumbria, the ICS, the eight Clinical Commissioning Groups and three local authorities and Health and Well Being Boards to name a few of the groups that we represent you on.

If any of you want to see what CPL is about, you are welcome to join us at our meetings with prior arrangement with myself or a member of the committee/team simply in order to manage the logistics. We will continue to keep in touch and update you in our normal way, through e-mails, telephone calls, Bulletin, via Twitter as well as our website. We always welcome any feedback you have and are always keen to hear of your ideas for how we may be able to support you better.

On behalf of CPL, I wish you and your team all the very best for the forthcoming year.

Kath Gulson

Chief Executive Officer

Finance

CPL is funded by a fixed statutory levy which NHS England (managed through the NHS Business Services Authority) is empowered by regulation to deduct from the remuneration paid to community pharmacy contractors. The annual accounts year ended 31st March 2021, can be found on our website www.pharmacylancashire.org.

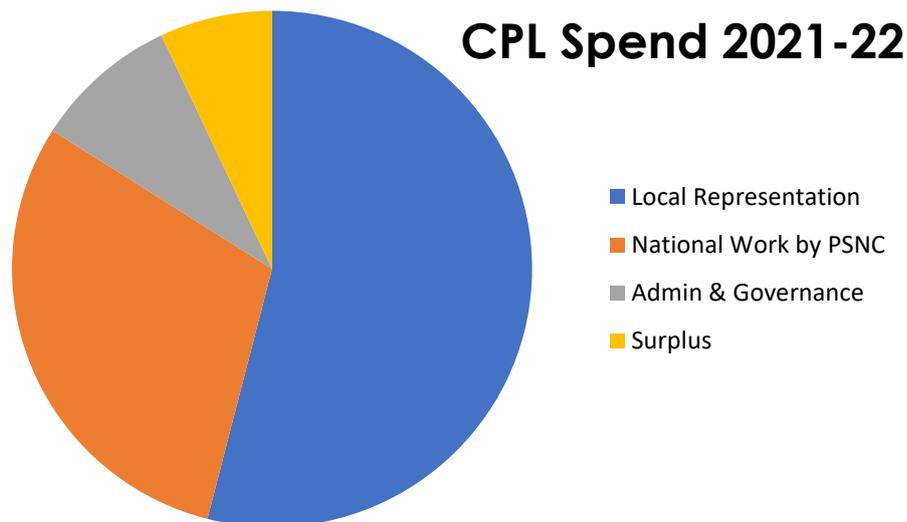
Income Sources

CPL income for 2020/21 raised from pharmacy contractors via the levy was £360,000, an average of £984 per NHS pharmacy contract for the year. This benchmarks CPL roughly in the middle of other LPCs for levy according to the Wright review in 2019 (range £500-£1400). Smaller incomes were made through external bodies (e.g., CCGs) paying for our input in their meetings or for providing training services (e.g., Health Education England). Towards the end of the financial year the committee agreed to allow selected Pharma companies to sponsor committee meetings so that costs could be offset [Please note that spending of contractor funds is not influenced by these companies and all staff and members annually sign declarations of any conflicts of interest].

Spending

For every £1 of levy income raised:

- ✓ 54p was spent directly supporting and representing contractors locally (via Community Pharmacy Lancashire and some LPC members undertaking local representation).
- ✓ 30p was sent to PSNC to fund their work nationally for contractors in Lancashire.
- ✓ 9p was spent on administration and governance costs (making sure that we are a well-run, accountable organisation that meets its constitutional duties) – more than half of these costs being committee meetings.
- ✓ 7p was unspent as some of our costs reduced because of Covid-19 restrictions. We have already started giving this back to contractors by way of reduced levy over 2021/22.



Notable Spending

During the Autumn/Winter of 2020/21 we commissioned a £25,000 marketing campaign for flu which was followed by the largest NHS and private flu vaccination numbers ever administered by pharmacies in Lancashire. Following the Wright review in 2019, CPL took significant time feeding

into the review and in implementing the relevant outputs from the review for our organisation. The direct costs attributed to this were in excess of £8,500.

As highlighted earlier, CPL responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by supporting both contractors (e.g., by safety and promotional media campaigns) and staff (by providing adjustments for home-working and remote activity). Like many other organisations, although safety and necessity took precedence initially, we found that some of these ways of working could be adapted to increase both effectiveness and reduce costs. This has meant that by the year end we were able to not only achieve our goals within our budget but actually produce surplus which is being returned to contractors through a reduced levy for 2021/22.

Outlook

In budgeting for 2021/22 we took a view that restrictions would slowly be lifted through the year, resulting in a partial return to 2019 activity but recognising that many meetings would remain digital. This meant that we could still reduce the contractor levy from April 2021 however we continue to review this regularly given the uncertainty of the easing of restrictions.

Benjamin Fell

Treasurer

Governance



CPL has a Governance subcommittee comprising of three members who meet regularly. The purpose of the Governance subcommittee is to assure CPL's adherence to the LPC's governance framework and duties under the LPC constitution. The subcommittee also reviews the PSNC's governance framework, promotes and demonstrates good governance and considers any complaints about an alleged breach of governance by any member of the committee.

Key activity 2020-21:

- ✓ CPL has performed a full health and safety review in conjunction with Ellis Whittam, our employment, law, and HR specialists.
- ✓ As a requirement of the health and safety review, all executive team staff have completed their annual health and safety training.
- ✓ The Governance subcommittee has ensured CPL is fully compliant with all aspects of GDPR.
- ✓ CPL has established a complaints policy which is published on our website.
- ✓ Completed the PSNC LPC Annual Governance Review Self-Assessment. Criteria is broken down into three levels: amber - potential concerns, green - good and purple - exemplary. CPL is pleased to report all criteria are green and above.

Governance Subcommittee

Choose Health



Choose Health, CPL's provider company have experienced a significant impact on service delivery during the COVID pandemic. Contractors' ability to deliver services was inevitably impeded and prevented due to the pandemic itself, and the resources required to mobilise the pharmacy response to COVID 19.

Choose Health was able to secure an interim payment model for the NHS Health Checks contract which allowed Choose Health to retain its core funding through the support of Lancashire County Council (LCC) Public Health.

During the period of no activity, staff were furloughed until able to return safely to develop and execute COVID Recovery Plans. This is the phase the organisation is still in and is working with LCC on their ambitions for a new service specification from 2022.

Suzy Knowles and Sophie Smith

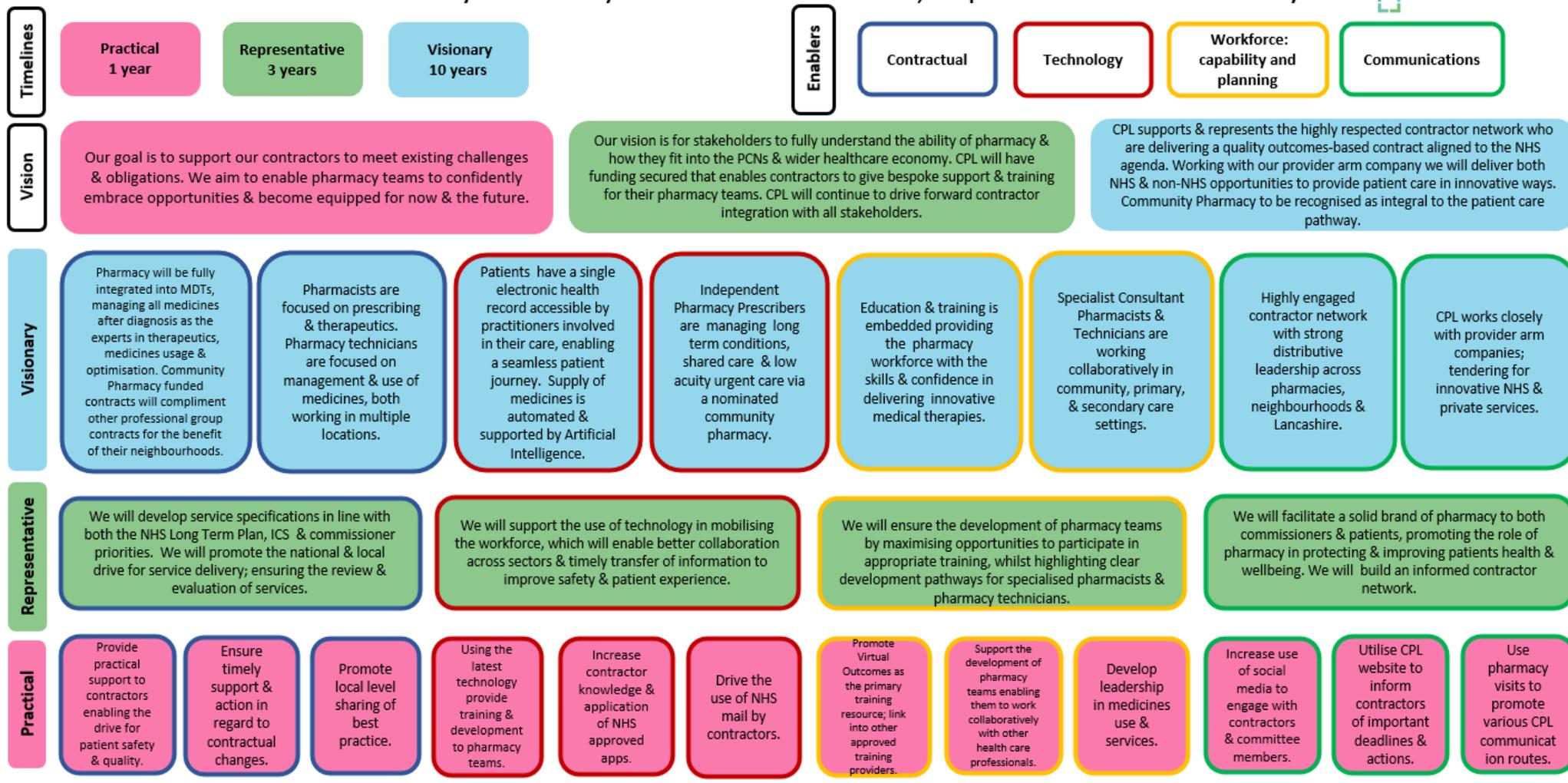
Co-Chief Executives, Choose Health

CPL Membership 2020-21 and Team

CPL Member	Representing	Attendance
Michael Ball Chair, Staff Sub-Group	Independent	6 out of 7
Richard Wood Vice Chair, Staff Sub-Group	CCA	7 out of 7
Ben Fell Treasurer	CCA	4 out of 4 (resigned Summer 2020)
Asif Adam Governance Sub-Group	Independent	7 out of 7
Mubasher Ali Staff Sub-Group	CCA	7 out of 7
Roger Balshaw	CCA	7 out of 7
Arifbhai Bhuriya	CCA	2 out of 3 (joined Summer 2020)
Conor Coyle	Independent	6 out of 7
Nicola Cross	CCA	5 out of 6 (resigned January 2020)
Hamzah Hasan	CCA	0 out of 0 (joined mid-February 2021)
Riaz Hinglotwala	Independent	7 out of 7
Tahir Hussain	AIM	7 out of 7
Khalid Khan	Independent	6 out of 7
Aisling O'Brien Governance Sub-Group, Staff Sub-Group	Independent	6 out of 7
Yusuf Oomer	CCA	3 out of 7
Martin Smart Governance Sub-Group	AIM	4 out of 7
Mari Williams	CCA	6 out of 7
Team Member	Role	
Kath Gulson	Chief Executive Officer	
Nicola Feeney	Services and Development Manager	
Laura Dunkley	Operations and Contractor Lead	
Barbara Bentwood	Administrator	

CPL's Vision

Community Pharmacy Lancashire – Practical, Representative & Visionary



Abbreviations: CPL - Community Pharmacy Lancashire, PCNs - Primary Care Networks, NHS - National Health Service, MDTs - Multi-Disciplinary Teams, ICS - Integrated Care System