

## **It's Ask Your Pharmacist Week!**

**It's national Ask Your Pharmacist Week (11-18 November). Deborah Crockford, Chief Officer from Community Pharmacy South Central, urges you to make the most of the clinical advice available on your doorstep at your local pharmacy.**

The NHS says it wants to “make greater use of community pharmacists’ skills and opportunities to engage patients.” (NHS Long Term Plan)

You can already consult your pharmacist about a wide range of health and healthcare issues, not just about medicines. Yet sometimes people go to a doctor or even a hospital for things that could be sorted out more conveniently at the pharmacy.

I encourage you – during Ask Your Pharmacist Week and all year round - to visit your local pharmacy if you want clinical advice and prompt treatment for common illnesses like coughs, colds, eye infections and earaches.

Every pharmacist trains initially for five years in the use of medicines, managing minor illnesses and providing health & wellbeing advice. As regulated health care professionals, pharmacists continue to develop their professional skills throughout their career.

Sometimes your local doctors’ surgery will suggest you see your pharmacist for convenient, professional advice and treatment for minor illnesses. Or your pharmacist may refer you to the GP, if it’s something that can’t be sorted out in the pharmacy or requires further investigation. We work together so you get the right health care advice and support in the right place, from the right people.

So, remember to Ask Your Pharmacist for:

- ✓ Advice and treatment for minor illnesses such as coughs, colds and earache
- ✓ Advice on staying well and preventing disease
- ✓ Support to maintain good sexual health
- ✓ Help to quit smoking
- ✓ Personalised support to get the most from your medicines
- ✓ A consultation area, where you can talk without being overheard

Please make the most of the prompt, professional health care advice available to you locally as an NHS service.