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**Patient satisfaction with community pharmacy
COVID-19 vaccination in Northern Ireland**

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Introduction: Northern Ireland's community pharmacies have contributed substantially to the COVID-19 response, with over 436,000 COVID-19 vaccines administered since March 2021. Community pharmacy has an established role across the UK in delivering influenza vaccination programmes. Research has found that community pharmacy vaccination can increase vaccine availability and uptake and is highly valued by patients¹, and although European studies have demonstrated high satisfaction with community pharmacy COVID-19 vaccination services², further studies are required that are applicable to a UK context.

Aim: This evaluation aimed to measure user satisfaction with the HSC community pharmacy COVID-19 vaccination service, reasons why users chose community pharmacy for vaccination, and user attitudes towards service quality in three key quality domains of patient-centredness, professionalism, and privacy. The findings aimed to inform recommendations for service improvement for future vaccination campaigns.

Methods: Following ethical approval from Keele University School of Pharmacy & Bioengineering Research Ethics Committee, a cross-sectoral survey of individuals accessing COVID-19 vaccination from 61 participating community pharmacies was carried out between 20th September 2022 and 3rd December 2022. Voluntary participation was offered to all individuals accessing COVID-19 vaccination from pharmacies purposively chosen as representative of the community pharmacy network. Respondent views on service quality and overall satisfaction were collected anonymously via a Microsoft Forms questionnaire.

The results were analysed for overall satisfaction and across three quality domains of patient-centredness, professionalism and privacy identified from the literature as mattering most to users of pharmacy services³. The results were reported using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, skewness and measurements of central tendency. The findings informed the development of five key recommendations for future service improvement.

Results: 135 patients completed the online questionnaire. Overall patient satisfaction was extremely high, with 100% of respondents indicating they would recommend the service to friends and family and that they would return to a community pharmacy for COVID-19 vaccination. 96% of participants cited convenience, trust, ease of access and time spent at the pharmacy as reasons they chose community pharmacy for vaccination.

Respondents were very satisfied with the quality of the service provided across the domains of patient-centredness, professionalism and privacy. Over 95% of participants were very satisfied with the quality of the service, professionalism of the vaccinator and caring of the pharmacy team, however only 73.2% of respondents were very satisfied with the standard of the consultation room.

Discussion/Conclusion: Overall satisfaction with community pharmacy COVID-19 vaccination in Northern Ireland is very high. Participants largely chose to access

vaccination from community pharmacies for reasons of convenience, trust, ease of appointment and time spent at the pharmacy. Users are very satisfied with service quality in terms of patient-centredness, professionalism and privacy. Although generalisation is limited due to relatively small sample size, underrepresentation of some geographical areas and the potential for selection bias arising from voluntary participation and use of online questionnaires, this evaluation still provides a framework for continued quality improvement and a detailed perspective on user attitudes towards community pharmacy COVID-19 vaccination that has informed the development of recommendations for service improvement.

Keywords: Community pharmacy; vaccination; COVID-19 vaccination

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