

Our Ref: Healthy Start

Date: 10/05/2019

Tel: 01904 554513

Email:

[Publichealth.contracts@york.gov.uk](mailto:Publichealth.contracts@york.gov.uk)

Dear Colleague,

**RE: Call for expression of interest to distribute Healthy Start Vitamins to York residents eligible for the scheme**

I am writing to invite you to submit an expression of interest to distribute Healthy Start Vitamins to eligible pregnant women, new mothers and young children on behalf of the City of York Council.

Healthy Start is a UK-wide, means tested, statutory scheme which aims to provide a nutritional safety net for low-income pregnant women, new mothers and children under the age of 4 years, who are in receipt of qualifying income-related benefits or tax credits. They can also qualify if they are under 18 and pregnant, even if they do not get any of the above benefits.

One of the recommendations from the Public health guideline [\[PH56\] \(published November 2014 and updated August 2017\)](#) is to improve access to Healthy Start supplements by increasing the number of outlets they are available at.

Healthy Start vitamins are important because:

- 8% of children under five in the UK don't have enough vitamin A in their diet;
- families in lower-income groups tend to have less vitamin C in their diet;
- Certain groups of the population who are at risk of vitamin D deficiency, are advised to take a daily supplement: these include pregnant and breastfeeding women; infants and children aged

under 4years; adults aged 65years or above; and those with limited exposure to the sun (e.g., if they cover their skin for cultural reasons or are housebound) and women and children of Asian origin.

It is well documented that community pharmacies allow the general public to access healthcare advice and the Department of Health and Social Care have acknowledged that, “one of pharmacies’ strengths is the ability to communicate health messages to people who are well, in addition to the sick”.

City of York Council would like to increase access for pregnant women, new mothers and young children by making Community Pharmacies exchange points for Healthy Start Vitamin vouchers and subsequently distributing the vitamins to the eligible population.

Pharmacies will be expected to:

- Store the vitamins in line with current regulations
- Exchange coupons for the Healthy Start Vitamins at no cost to the woman/family
- Agree to promote the Healthy Start Scheme and distribute application forms
- Display Healthy Start literature and actively promote the vitamins/ scheme
- Complete PharmOutcomes following the exchange of vitamins in a timely manner to enable Public Health to be reimbursed by the Department of Health and Social Care
- Order a ‘start-up’ supply of initial *Healthy Start* vitamin stock through NHS Supply Chain and any stock for replenishment thereafter on a monthly basis (numbers to be agreed and specified);
- Allow Public Health (as the commissioner) to complete a stock audit quarterly

Public Health will pay pharmacies:

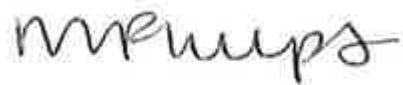
- £1.50 per coupon exchanged
- A one off training fee of £125 to enable pharmacists to get locum cover to attend training

This scheme will be run as a 3 year pilot to assess the effectiveness of the model and collate uptake figures.

At this stage we are simply asking for expressions of interest. In order to put your pharmacy forward, and to assist us in any selection process

with Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire, please submit the attached form by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019 to Karen Robinson at [Publichealth.contracts@york.gov.uk](mailto:Publichealth.contracts@york.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely



Natalie McPhillips  
Public Health Specialist Practitioner Advanced

**Expression of interest for distribution of Healthy Start Vitamins by  
Community Pharmacies in York**

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|---|--|
| <b>Pharmacy Name:</b>   |  |
| <b>Pharmacy Address:</b>  |  |
| <b>Days and times during which appointments could usually be offered:</b> |  |
| <b>Contact Number:</b>  |  |
| <b>Contact email address:</b>   |  |