

Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter: Information for Organisations

‘A city where older people live life to the full’



1. What is Age-Friendly Belfast?

An age-friendly city or community is a good place to grow old. Age-friendly cities and communities foster healthy and active ageing and thus enable well-being throughout life. They help people to remain independent for as long as possible, and provide care and protection when they are needed, respecting older people's autonomy and dignity (WHO, 2015)

What is the Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter?

The Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter is a statement of commitment by participating pharmacies to work together towards a more age-friendly city. Our shared principles and standards will lead to a more supportive and inclusive city for older people in Belfast.

This charter will help us to realise the vision in our Age-Friendly Belfast Plan that

'Belfast will be a city where older people live life to the full'

The plan describes how Age-Friendly Belfast will work with older people, community, voluntary and statutory organisations as well as non-profit and businesses to ensure our city is ready to meet the needs of our changing population. A copy of the plan can be found here:

<https://www.makinglifebettertogether.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/9598-Age-friendly-plan-2018-21-28SEPTWEB.pdf>

The Age-Friendly principles

- **Customer care** that presents opportunities for older people to provide feedback and shape services recognising and promoting a positive view of ageing
- **Communication**, which provides accessible information and respects diverse decisions and lifestyle choices of older people
- **Accessibility and signage** which anticipates and responds flexibly to diverse ageing related needs/preferences and
- **Valuing a diverse workforce** by recognising the wide range of capabilities and resources for people of every age.

Population ageing is one of the major successes of the 20th Century and Belfast, along with most developed nations, has an ageing population. We have seen a 17% increase in the numbers of people age 85+ since 2001. Currently 19% of the population is over 60 and this is expected to increase to 36% by 2050.

2. Why have an Age-Friendly Charter?

By committing to the shared principles and standards in this charter organisations will support older people to reach their full potential. Some simple actions can improve the accessibility and design of our City.

Our City relies heavily on the contribution older people make to their families, their communities and the economy. We have found that older people are a diverse group involved in a wide range of activities including; seeking employment, caring for family members, volunteering, taking part in lifelong learning, participating in community groups and using parks and leisure centres.

The charter outlines straightforward standards of customer for older people. Older people tend to be loyal customers. If your business is age-friendly you can attract and keep customers within a large and expanding demographic.

According to 'Appreciating Age: Valuing the positive contribution made by older people in Northern Ireland'; the total value of financial contributions made by older people in Northern Ireland in 2012 was almost £1.4 billion

3. Why should my organisation get involved?

By signing up to the Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter you will have:

Better representation

Enhancing your brand and reputation

Being an age-friendly organisation serves as a powerful expression of responsibility. Your efforts will demonstrate a clear commitment to supporting your community that will be noticed and appreciated by the citizens of Belfast.

Better work

Gaining from the skills and experience of older workers

Many NI organisations are recognising that the workforce is changing. A good mix of older and younger employees often make the highest performing teams and learning from older staff is often the best way to develop younger employees.

Better Business

Developing an age diverse workforce makes good business sense

An age diverse workforce will reflect an age diverse customer base offering better customer service and driving customer loyalty. The contribution of workers of all ages to business planning is likely to greatly enhance future business success.

Better Learning

Experiences of older people in Age-Friendly pharmacies

The experiences of older people when visiting pharmacies can be varied. In those people consulted the general consensus is that staff who are trained in dementia awareness are very much appreciated. Below are some examples of good and bad experiences and comments that older people have provided:

Feedback from older people on good pharmacy services

- *“The Doctor sending the prescription to the chemist and the chemist delivering to home is very helpful”*
- *“Sometimes people can’t ring for repeat prescriptions at their GPs – as this has to be requested online. I can’t access the internet, but the pharmacist phones the GP surgery to arrange my repeat prescription and this works great for me”*
- *“It’s nice to have a good rapport with the chemist, especially when they are someone who is friendly”*
- *“Having seating for people to wait is essential for those of us that can’t move around as well as we used to”*
- *“Having a space where you can talk privately to people is helpful”*
- *“Pharmacist talking clearly to people”*
- *“Going to the pharmacist for a cold or sore throat is much quicker and easier than visiting the GP”*
- *“Blister packs are very helpful”*

Feedback from older people on difficulties with pharmacy services

- *“Changing tablets all the time is confusing - different makes have different colours and shapes and this can cause confusion”*
- *“Easy access is needed – like parking outside, being close to bus services and wide entrance doors”*
- *“Cluttered isles make it difficult to get through with a walking aid. Baskets, hairbrushes and things like that should be moved to somewhere safer”*

There are many other reasons to take part in this initiative – including:

- The opportunity to be nominated for an annual Age-Friendly Belfast Business Award as part of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce annual business awards.
- Contributing towards annual Continuing Personal Development (CPD)

- Receiving a certificate of participation in the initiative alongside display signage to show that you have gained 'Age-Friendly status'
- The name of your organisation will be added to Age-Friendly Belfast website and you can provide information for the age-friendly update
- The opportunity to be nominated for an annual Dementia Friendly award from the Alzheimer's society

4. Who can take part in this initiative?

Any public, private, voluntary or community organisation who commits to the Age-Friendly principles can take part in the overall age friendly charter initiative; however the Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter is aimed at pharmacies in the Belfast area.

5. What Support will be available?

Training to become an Age-Friendly Pharmacy

The Age-Friendly team will work with you to ensure that required training can be undertaken as efficiently and effectively as possible with no cost and minimal hassle to your business. Completion of combination of the training provided both in health literacy and in dementia awareness alongside a short e-learning module will enable your workforce to develop and enhance the skills required to become an Age-Friendly Pharmacy.

Dementia Awareness Training

The Alzheimer's Society provides a two hour Dementia Awareness workshop that can be rolled out to organisations who wish to work to become Dementia Friendly. The workshop is aimed at raising awareness within communities in relation to dementia and is aimed at all sections within our society. The two hour workshop is free and is delivered by the Dementia Friendly Community team. After undertaking this training, your pharmacy will be formally recognised as 'Dementia Friendly'. This is the first step in becoming an Age-friendly Pharmacy.

Many pharmacies have already committed to become Dementia Friendly and this is recognized in the process of becoming Age-Friendly. Those who have completed the Dementia Friendly training workshop previously will not need to undertake this training again in order to become Age-Friendly. Further to the workshop, you will also have access to a two day training course which will allow staff to become a 'Dementia Friend' which means that training could be provided by those staff members directly to other members of staff in your pharmacy.

Further details in regards to the Dementia Awareness training sessions will be provided once your self-assessment has been completed.

Health Literacy

Health Literacy is linked to literacy levels. Low health literacy has real effects on health and illness; people with low health literacy levels make more mistakes with medication or treatment. Fundamentally health literacy is a way to help and support people to make use of information. Improving health literacy in an ageing population is a priority to support self-management and maintain quality of life.

As part of your participation in the Age-friendly Pharmacy Charter initiative, you will be required to undertake a quiz around the key health literacy messages which will be delivered to you in a short video. Although not essential to becoming Age-friendly, we do recommend that where possible relevant staff within your organisation are given the opportunity to further develop the health literacy skills of your workforce by attending Health Literacy Communication Training for Health Professionals which is delivered by Belfast Healthy Cities in partnership with the Community Development and Health Network.

This one-day training will support health professionals and wellbeing advisors to enhance skills in health literacy communication; ensuring health information is understood and people can use this information to make informed decisions about their health. The training will explore methods such as teach back and chunk and check.

Further information on this training can be found at:

<https://www.belfasthealthycities.com/health-literacy-events-and-training>

or by contacting

anne@belfasthealthycities.com or kathymartin@cdhn.org

Other types of support include:

Funding opportunities through CDHN's Building the Community-Pharmacy Partnership Programme (BCPP). Pharmacists can avail of funding up to £10,000 to engage with local communities and address a health issue. The BCPP programme has proven to be a very effective way for pharmacy to engage with and support older people. As demonstrated in this example from [MEEAP and Health Centre Pharmacy, Carrickfergus](#)

6. Signing up to the Age-Friendly Belfast Pharmacy Charter

Signing up is straightforward – you just need to confirm your agreement to taking part in the initiative online at:

<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/bhdu/6ec65228/>

Once online, you will be asked to complete a checklist which will determine how many of the Age-Friendly measures you currently adhere to and what, if any, training would be beneficial for you and your staff to undertake to allow you to build the skills required to further develop your Age-Friendly potential. You will also be asked to identify what, if any, improvements you will make within your

organisation over the course of the next 12 months which will then form the basis of an action plan which will be revisited and re-assessed in 12 months' time.

What happens next?

- Once you have given your agreement to take part, you will be advised of any beneficial training that is available to you. The training is designed to be straight forward and will not take up much of your time, will help to further enhance the skills of your workforce and will be available to any member of staff that you think could benefit and/or take this forward for your business.
- The Age-Friendly Belfast Team will issue a certificate and window sticker once the online checklist and improvement actions have been confirmed signed agreement is received.
- The name of your organisation will be added to Age-Friendly Belfast website and you can provide information for the age-friendly Belfast update.
- Ongoing monitoring will be undertaken by older people from the seniors' forums in Belfast who will carry out mystery shopper visits and provide feedback.

How will improvements be recorded?

After 12 months we will send you a link to repeat your self-assessment checklist. At this stage, providing you still meet the required standard, you will be issued with a new Age-friendly sticker for the corresponding year.

How can your commitment be celebrated and recognized?

- You can be nominated for the annual Belfast Chamber of Commerce 'Age-friendly Business Award'
- You can be nominated for the annual Alzheimer's Society 'Dementia Friendly Award'
- Your actions will be recognized through our Age-friendly Belfast events and publications <https://www.makinglifebettertogether.com/age-friendly>

Useful Links

Hidden Carers Service

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2771.htm>

Health+

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2443.htm>

Alzheimer's Society - Dementia Friendly

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-friendly-communities>

Belfast Healthy Cities

<https://www.belfasthealthycities.com/>

Health Literacy (WHO)

<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/blog/health-literacy-belfast-who-healthy-city>

Age Friendly Belfast

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/Seniors/age-friendly-belfast.aspx>

CDHN – Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership Funding

<https://www.cdhn.org/bcpp>

Age-friendly Belfast Team

Belfast Health Development Unit
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP

Telephone:
028 9050 2073

Email:
elma.greer@bhdu.org

Age-friendly Checklist



The following checklist helps you to identify how age-friendly your organisation is.

It will be unusual for you to be able to tick all measures on initial assessment

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Customer care/staff training | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older people are treated respectfully by staff.• Staff are courteous, helpful and speak clearly• Staff give extra time or there is a quiet space for older people who have dementia or are anxious• Staff are trained to listen and respond to the varying needs of older people-for example disability or dementia awareness training• Discounts or special offers for older people are promoted when possible |
| Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older people can easily find information about your organisation and services• You prepare your workforce to take on board health literacy issues when communicating with customers• Printed information is clear and straightforward• Older people are visible in advertising and are depicted positively and without stereotyping• Telephone answering services give instructions clearly and tell caller how to repeat message at anytime• You moderate excessively loud music and consider use of music in your premises |
| Accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrances are kept free of dirt, leaves, snow or other obstacles• People in wheelchairs or with walking aids can easily navigate spaces in your premises or services• Products are placed on shelves that are reachable or help is offered to reach items• There is a place where clients/customers can sit and rest on the shop floor• You provide or sign post to toilet facilities• Provide adequate lighting at entrance and throughout your premises• You avoid heavy doors or offer electronic doors |
| Signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large clear font is used on signage, with good contrast between text and background• There is good contrast between signs and the surface they are mounted on• Signs for toilets and exits are clear• Glass doors are marked• Signs are at eye level and are well lit |
| Valuing an ageing workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Older employees have equal opportunities• Policies and procedures are in place for supporting staff members with caring responsibilities• The business is committed to working flexibly; support is available for all ages joining, employed and leaving employment |