



Healthy Start Vitamins

Service Specification

2023

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SERVICE SPECIFICATION

1. Context

1.1 National Healthy Start scheme

[Healthy Start](#) is a statutory UK-wide government means-tested scheme which aims to improve the health of pregnant women and young children on benefits or low incomes.

Healthy Start supports eligible low-income families with young children in eating healthily, by providing them with a pre-paid card to spend on cow's milk, plain fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk. Women and children eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme are issued with a pre-paid card to get free healthy food and milk, and to get free *Healthy Start* vitamins, which are specifically designed for pregnant and breastfeeding women and growing children. In this way, *Healthy Start* aims to improve and promote health in the families most vulnerable to poor diets.

To be eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme a woman must be at least 10 weeks pregnant, or have a child under four, and be in receipt of:

- Income Support; or
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; or
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; and/or
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Applicants also qualify if they are under 18 and pregnant, even if they don't receive any of the above benefits.

1.2 Manchester's Universal Offer

Due to high levels of need in the population of Manchester, there is currently a universal offer for free *Healthy Start* vitamins for Manchester residents who are clinically eligible. To be eligible for the Manchester universal offer of free *Healthy Start* vitamins a woman must be at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a baby under the age of one to receive free vitamin tablets for women. If the family lives in Manchester, all babies and children up to their 4th birthday will receive free *Healthy Start* vitamins drops.

In Manchester, women and families DO NOT have to be in receipt of benefits or have a low income to receive free vitamins

1.3 National context

Healthy Start vitamins are important because:

- 8% of children under five in the UK don't have enough vitamin A in their diet¹
- families in lower-income groups tend to have less vitamin C in their diet²

¹ Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (2008) *The Nutritional Wellbeing of the British Population*. London: TSO Cited in <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/>

² As 1 above

- all pregnant and breastfeeding women and young children are at risk of vitamin D deficiency³ (teenagers, younger women and those from ethnic minorities are particularly at risk).

Vitamin A helps with vision in dim light and helps immunity, as well as supporting healthy skin. Vitamin C protects cells; helps keep them healthy and may assist the body to absorb iron from food. In a balanced diet most of it can be sourced from fruit and vegetables such as broccoli, oranges and kiwi fruit. However, a supplement will help ensure that children get enough – particularly as it isn't stored by the body. People who are not exposed to much sun, for example those who cover their skin for cultural reasons, who are housebound or stay indoors for long periods are also at greater risk of vitamin D deficiency. People who have darker skin, such as people of African, African-Caribbean and South Asian origin, are also at risk of vitamin D deficiency because it takes their skin a longer time to produce as much vitamin D as it does for someone with lighter skin.

Vitamin D has a number of important functions. For example, it helps to regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body, needed to help keep bones and teeth healthy. Infants who don't get enough vitamin D can get softened bones which can lead to rickets. The best source of vitamin D is summer sunlight, but most people in the UK have limited exposure to it. Two NHS *Healthy Start* branded products are available:

Healthy Start children's vitamin drops (containing vitamins A, C and D)
Healthy Start vitamins (tablets) for women (containing folic acid and vitamins C and D).

The *Healthy Start* scheme is run by the NHS Business Services Authority and [legislation](#)⁴ requires organisations which commission maternity services, or services for children, to make free supplies of these vitamins available to *Healthy Start* beneficiaries. [NICE](#)⁵ [Guidance](#) recommends improving access to *Healthy Start* vitamin supplementation.

This service specification covers the distribution of the *Healthy Start* vitamins only.

1.4 Local Context

The Public Health responsibilities are to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people in the city. The local authority works with key partners and stakeholders to improve health in both our statutory functions and in addressing the social and wider determinants that affect the health of our population.

Manchester is [ranked](#)⁶ as one of the most deprived cities in the country and significant action is underway to improve health outcomes for our residents and to achieve the visions outlined in the [Manchester Strategy](#)⁷ and the [Greater Manchester Population Health Plan](#)⁸

³ Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (2007) *Update on Vitamin D*. London: TSO. Cited in <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-statutory-arrangements-for-healthy-start-vitamins>

⁵ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph56/chapter/1-Recommendations#recommendation-6-improve-access-to-healthy-start-supplements>

⁶ https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200088/statistics_and_census/2168/deprivation_statistics

⁷ <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/mcrstrategy>

⁸ <https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Population-Health-Plan-2017-2021.pdf>

Understanding the needs of our population is key to tackling the scale of health inequalities found in Manchester. The Public Health Team in Manchester undertake research and intelligence activities to support practitioners in service provision and commissioning functions. The [Manchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)⁹ (breastfeeding) clearly outlines the need to upscale activity in improving access to the *Healthy Start* scheme.

Local authorities can make their own decisions about how to implement the *Healthy Start* scheme and how to distribute the vitamins, but typical distribution outlets include locations where pregnant and post-natal women frequent with their children, such as ante-natal settings and consultations, child health consultations, and children's centres.

2. Service Design

Improving maternal and child nutrition for those most in need in our communities is a key priority for reducing health inequalities and giving children the best start in life. The national *Healthy Start* scheme supports and promotes health and nutrition so that eligible beneficiaries can get free healthy food and *Healthy Start* vitamins. Since 2021 the Manchester delivery model supplies free vitamins to all women and children who are clinically eligible.

This commissioning service is delivered by selected community pharmacies who supply *Healthy Start* vitamins to all women and children clinical eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme. The model:

- Works in an integrated way to standardise the approach in the supply of *Healthy Start* vitamins, manage the quality of community interventions and improve care and outcomes.
- Takes a strength based approach that builds upon existing good practice in community self-care.
- Delivers a person centred and whole families approach to the delivery of *Healthy Start* and all aspects of health.
- Works in partnership with wider health care professionals to promote maternal and child nutrition and increase take-up of vitamin supplementation via *Healthy Start*.

2.1 Aims and Objectives

Aims

The aims of commissioning the *Healthy Start* vitamins via community pharmacy are to:

- remove or reduce barriers to uptake of *Healthy Start* vitamins in the clinically eligible population of the city of Manchester.

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https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500230/joint_strategic_needs_assessment/6797/children_and_young_peoples_jsna

- Supply vitamins with a universal offer to all those clinically eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme (women and families who live in Manchester do not have to be in receipt of benefits to receive free vitamins)
- Contribute towards improving the health of pregnant women, infants and children of families in Manchester, particularly those in receipt of state benefits or on low incomes

Objectives

The objectives of commissioning the *Healthy Start* vitamins via the Community Pharmacy Service are to:

- substantially increase the number of locations where *Healthy Start* vitamins are available in Manchester, targeting areas of greatest deprivation, and going beyond that to ensure widest distribution of the messages regarding vitamin D for maternal and child health.
- Increase the awareness of *Healthy Start* vitamins and where they are available.
- Actively promote and improve uptake of *Healthy Start* Vitamins and record details of proactive interventions and responsive interactions (supplies) made using PharmOutcomes.

3. Evidence Base and Volume

The NHS Business Services Authority provide figures on the numbers of *Healthy Start* beneficiaries, that is those people entitled who have registered on the scheme, and the numbers of people who are eligible for *Healthy Start* but not yet registered on the scheme. Beneficiaries become entitled once their completed *Healthy Start* application form has been processed and approved by the *Healthy Start* Issuing Unit.

Take-up is calculated as a percentage of entitled beneficiaries over eligible beneficiaries. The table below does not include eligible pregnant women as they are not in receipt of a specific benefit. With this exception, the table shows a combined total of women and children who are entitled and eligible. In England, Manchester is the area with the third highest number of people eligible for the *Healthy Start* scheme, which illustrates the level of need. The figures below are snapshots taken at a single point during a four week cycle.

Local authority	Date	No. Entitled	No. Eligible	Take up
Manchester	March 2022	6101	8327	73%

PharmOutcomes system is used to capture the necessary data for the future service planning and delivery of *Healthy Start*, and is a robust system for recording the supplying of *Healthy Start* vitamins to entitled beneficiaries (broken down into pregnancy, post-natal or under 18s).

4. Service Description

4.1 Service Overview

The *Healthy Start* in community pharmacy service will operate within and support the requirements and recommendations of both Department of Health and Social Care, and relevant NICE guidance. The scheme actively contributes to improving local maternal and

infant health outcomes, reducing health inequalities, and to the wider starting and developing well agenda.

Health professionals, community pharmacists and their staff can make a significant difference to the health of our local population, by making sure those people most at risk are aware of the implications of vitamin D deficiency, and most importantly what they can do to prevent it.

Service outcomes have been identified and are outlined below:

- Selected community pharmacies who are contracted with Manchester City Council to deliver this service will provide free *Healthy Start* vitamins to beneficiaries who are clinically eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme but who do not have to be on benefits or have a low income.
- Facilitate the opportunity for a consultation with beneficiaries on maternal and child nutrition and health.
- Effectively signpost beneficiaries who are eligible for the *Healthy Start* national scheme (if they are in receipt of benefits or have a low income) so that they can receive free healthy food and milk.

4.2 Service Approach

In order to successfully provide *Healthy Start* vitamins to the eligible population in Manchester with a universal offer, Community pharmacies must follow the approach outlined below:

- Manage the process of receipt, storage and supply of the *Healthy Start* vitamins within the pharmacy setting, in a suitably safe and secure manner and in accordance with principles of good pharmaceutical practice and wider clinical and organisational governance. The vitamins are classified as food supplements not medicines.
- Maintain suitable stock levels to avoid both waste and 'out-of-stock' situations, whilst maintaining availability. Contact the Public Health Team to order new stock using online form <https://forms.office.com/r/xSTVkjFkqi>
- Register beneficiaries of the universal *Healthy Start* scheme on to the PharmOutcomes systems, in accordance with suitable standards for confidentiality and consent.
- Make 'every contact count' in offering a consultation to the client on child and maternal nutrition, as appropriate outlining the importance of breastfeeding, a balanced diet and appropriate vitamin supplementation to support this.
- Supply *Healthy Start* vitamins (free of charge and on a repeatable basis) in accordance with the appropriate clinical eligibility criteria for women and children. Manchester has a universal offer and presentation of the national *Healthy Start* pre-paid card is not required.
- To facilitate the on-going supply of vitamins for as long as the individual remains clinically eligible.
- To record details of supply and associated transactions electronically using PharmOutcomes to ensure collation of data required for the Council's return to the

Department of Health and additional local data requirements, as outlined in section 12 and as and when the commissioner requests it.

- To ensure appropriate communication with commissioners and general practice where necessary, such as informing about the general operation of the service and to support update of patient records related to any prescription interventions that are related to *Healthy Start* vitamins.

5. Eligibility and national scheme

5.1 Eligibility

There are three specific population groups covered by this service specification. Manchester has a universal offer and people only have to reach one of the following criteria, they do not have to be in receipt of benefits.

- Pregnant women (from 10 weeks pregnant)
- Women with a child under one year of age
- Children from birth to four years old

All pharmacies commissioned to deliver this service will be within the boundaries of Manchester City Council local authority.

Pregnant women, new mothers and children from birth to four years of age, must be resident in the city of Manchester.

Women will provide their date of birth and their baby's estimated due date (and thereafter date of birth) to allow the last eligible date to be calculated.

Parents/carers will provide a child's date of birth to ensure clinical eligibility for the free supply of vitamins. Eligibility is for children from birth until their fourth birthday, **children who are receiving less than 500ml (about a pint) of infant formula a day are eligible. Children receiving 500ml or more of standard formula milk a day do not need *Healthy Start* vitamins.** Pharmacies should remind parents/carers that children should not be given prescribed vitamins, or other self-purchased vitamins, at the same time as *Healthy Start*.

If the baby is receiving mixed feeding and the parent is unsure whether their child receives 500ml or more of standard formula milk, the pharmacist should make the decision that the baby is eligible for vitamin drops. Babies should be given the vitamin drops from birth if they are breast fed or mixed fed with less than 500ml of formula per day. New *Healthy Start* products and revised recommendations on the levels of vitamins were produced in 2019.

5.2 Free healthy food and milk

Eligibility to receive free healthy food and milk under the national scheme is determined by the national *Healthy Start* scheme. To be eligible for the national *Healthy Start* Scheme a woman must be at least 10 weeks' pregnant, or have a child under four, and be in receipt of either:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (family income not exceeding £16,190)
- Universal Credit

Applicants also qualify if they are under 18 and pregnant, even if they are not in receipt of any of the above benefits.

Community pharmacies should ensure that beneficiaries eligible for free food and milk know how to register for the national *Healthy Start* scheme <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply>

Families who are on low income but cannot claim public funds may apply by either emailing healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or phoning 0300 330 7010

6. Care Pathways

6.1 Pregnant women (and new mothers)

Pregnant women should receive an early intervention from a midwife regarding the importance of taking suitable vitamins throughout pregnancy. All pregnant women should be signposted to participating pharmacies to register for their free vitamin supply, or they can receive their supply of vitamins from a children's centre, community midwife or health visitor. A list of participating pharmacies and other suppliers in Manchester is available on the Manchester City Council website <https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/kb5/manchester/directory/service.page?id=Qdk7i1o5ulE&directorychannel=0>

Pregnant women will present at a pharmacy, who will reinforce the importance of the vitamins, carefully explain the service and, with written consent, register them. All pregnant women will be advised:

- that participating pharmacies will be able to provide the vitamins free of charge.
- They should register with a particular pharmacy and preferably remain registered with them, usually for the duration of their eligibility for the vitamins.
- Children's centres, health visitors and community midwives can also provide free vitamins.

Whilst it is preferential for women to continue to collect their vitamins at the same pharmacy, it is possible for women to collect vitamins from a different participating pharmacy. Beneficiaries should be informed that they may need to re-register if they wish to collect their vitamins from an alternative pharmacy, however this should be accommodated and facilitated. This may occur if the woman has moved to different accommodation, which may be temporary accommodation.

Women are entitled to *Healthy Start* vitamins until their child is 12 months old; unless they display symptoms of Vitamin D deficiency when they should then be referred to their GP.

6.2 Babies and children

The parents/carers of babies and young children will receive an early intervention from a health visitor regarding the importance of taking suitable vitamins in early childhood. Health visitors will continue to support women and families to register for *Healthy Start* if they are eligible for the national *Healthy Start* scheme (i.e. for the free food and milk as well as vitamins).

Children's centre workers will also encourage eligible parents/carers to register for the *Healthy Start* scheme as part of their early help strength-based family engagement, by providing them with the necessary information and support.

- Parent/carers will need to register with a participating pharmacy and can either receive vitamins from the same pharmacy for the duration of their eligibility for the vitamins, or from another participating pharmacy.
- Parents/carers will present at their chosen participating pharmacy, where pharmacists will reinforce the importance of the vitamins, explain the service, establish clinical and age eligibility, and with the consent of the parent/ carer, register the child.
- Pharmacies will supply the vitamins, ensuring understanding of dose, frequency and need in relation to formula milk.
- Parents/carers will return to the same or another participating pharmacy to receive vitamins until their child is no longer eligible (up to their fourth birthday).

7. Access and Distribution Process

7.1 Access

Pregnant women (from 10 weeks), new mothers, and children from birth and up to four years of age can access the vitamins from selected community pharmacies in the Manchester local authority area. Parents/carers need to register and should preferably return to the same pharmacy, to continue to receive vitamin supplies, until their child is no longer eligible (up to their fourth birthday). Pregnant women will choose a suitable pharmacy to register with from a list of those commissioned. It is expected that people will chose to return to their registered pharmacy to collect their vitamins, but they may choose to collect their vitamins from other participating pharmacies.

7.2 Distribution Process

Pharmacies commissioned by Manchester City Council will supply *Healthy Start* vitamins to the appropriate client groups as described in this specification. *Healthy Start* beneficiaries are not required to show their *Healthy Start* card as there is a universal offer in Manchester.

Using the training documentation provided, pharmacies providing the service will:

- Ensure all pharmacy staff (including locums) involved in providing *Healthy Start* review the *Healthy Start* training presentation uploaded onto PharmOutcomes.
- Ensure adequate supplies of both women's and children's *Healthy Start* vitamins are in stock so that customers can always be supplied with vitamins. Supplies should be ordered by contacting Manchester's Public Health Team, who will act as a central ordering point and arrange delivery of the vitamins to participating pharmacies. The online form can also be used to order supplies at <https://forms.office.com/r/xSTVkjFkqi>
- On receipt of the vitamins, store the vitamins in a suitable place in accordance with good pharmacy practice and in such a way that sales or supplies will only be made in accordance with the terms of this commissioned service.

- Stock supplied by Manchester City Council cannot be sold to people who are not eligible to receive free vitamins. If pharmacies wish to sell Healthy Start vitamins to non-eligible customers they must order and pay for further stock.
- Manchester currently has a universal offer for Healthy Start vitamins, so pharmacies may supply vitamins free of charge to women and families in the clinical criteria, even if they are not on benefits. All supply transactions should be recorded on PharmOutcomes and the usual payment to pharmacies for this service will be made.
- Efficiently manage stock levels in accordance with demand and expiry dates of the vitamins. If pharmacies are out of stock when asked for the Healthy Start vitamins, they should direct women and families to a children's centre or another participating pharmacy. Children's centres, health visitors and midwives can also supply Healthy Start vitamins.
- Keep good records (using PharmOutcomes) of supplies made and dispose of any 'out-of-date' stock.
- All transactions to be recorded on PharmOutcomes within seven to ten days.
- All data entries relating to interventions and supply should be recorded accurately and promptly in PharmOutcomes to facilitate real-time audit and pharmacy payment.

8. Acceptance Criteria and Exclusions

8.1 Acceptance criteria

Women and families attending the pharmacy should be encouraged to register for the national Healthy Start scheme if they are eligible (in receipt of benefits or on low income) so that they can claim free healthy food and milk. Women who are confirmed to be pregnant should be asked if they are on the scheme and made aware of Healthy Start.

To receive free vitamins under this scheme, pregnant women, new mothers and children from birth and up to four years of age, must be resident in the city of Manchester.

Registration information will be provided by women or parents/carers of children at the time they provide their consent for the pharmacy to hold their information, to allow free vitamins supplies to be given, and all data recorded electronically on PharmOutcomes.

If a *Healthy Start* vitamin product is unavailable when the pharmacy is asked to supply, the pharmacy must use the [information](#) on the Manchester City Council website or the *Healthy Start* website <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk> to signpost the person to the nearest available alternative pharmacy or children's centre. Pharmacies should ring ahead to check stock levels in the other pharmacy before signposting. Children centres, health visitors and midwives should also be able to supply women and children with Healthy Start vitamins.

8.2 Exclusion criteria

The following criteria exclude certain individuals from free vitamin supply:

- non Manchester residents
- women whose youngest child is over one year old (for women's vitamins)
- children four years old or over (for children's vitamin drops)

9. Interdependencies with other services

Midwifery and health visiting services will continue to fulfil their duty to advise women and families about the importance of vitamins in pregnancy and the early years and promote the *Healthy Start* Scheme. They will advise how to register for the national scheme if they feel people will be eligible.

Commissioners will promote the *Healthy Start* scheme to GPs so that they can signpost their patients to places which supply *Healthy Start* vitamins. Some GP practices may also supply free vitamins themselves.

As a result of wholesale supply restrictions, the branded *Healthy Start* vitamins have not been made available via pharmacy wholesalers. They cannot be prescribed on FP10 and are not usually available for over the counter sales in community pharmacies. NHS Supply Chain are currently responsible for contracting the manufacture of *Healthy Start* vitamin products, for processing orders, and for delivering stocks of the vitamins to distributing bodies.

Organisations which provide free *Healthy Start* vitamins may sell *Healthy Start* vitamins to people not eligible for Manchester's universal offer (see Appendix A). The sale of *Healthy Start* vitamins is outside the scope of this service specification. People who are not eligible beneficiaries of the national *Healthy Start* scheme due to their income, may be supplied with free vitamins as Manchester currently has a universal offer. Vitamins supplied to pharmacies by Manchester City Council free of charge must not be sold to customers.

10. Remuneration

Pharmacies will be reimbursed for costs incurred for delivering the *Healthy Start* service to eligible clients, by following the below process:

- All pharmacies will be paid a single one-off and fully inclusive fee of £100 at commencement of the service. This will be claimable after satisfactory submission of the self-validation service implementation on PharmOutcomes and will be to ensure the online training presentation is viewed and cascaded to staff.
- When available pharmacies in the scheme will receive free promotional resources from commissioners, such as posters and leaflets. Promotional information can also be downloaded at <https://media.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/resources/f/nhs-healthy-start-scheme>
- A £2 consultation payment can be claimed each time vitamins are supplied (payment is dependent on the transaction being fully recorded on PharmOutcomes).

Fees Information

Manchester City Council reserve the right to revise fees at any time. All commissioned pharmacies must be registered on the PharmOutcomes system, prior to service commencement, in order to receive payments. All activity for eligible clients must be entered on to the PharmOutcomes system. Claims will be processed for payment in accordance with the following schedule:

Example activity periods	Last date for data entry	Payment due
1 March – 31 March 2023	5 April 2023	30 days after 6 April 2023
1 April – 30 April 2023	5 May 2023	30 days after 6 May 2023

1 May – 31 May 2023	5 June 2023	30 days after 6 June 2023
As above on a monthly basis for the duration of the current contract		

11. Application Service Standards

11.1 National standards for pharmacy premises and clinical governance

The pharmacy provider will be operating to appropriate standards of clinical governance as detailed in the Essential Service Specification section of the national Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF). The pharmacy will make a self-declaration on the *Healthy Start* vitamin Community Pharmacy Service self-validation documentation (via PharmOutcomes) submitted prior to service commencement.

The commissioner reserves the right to request that the pharmacy provides confirmation from NHS England of satisfactory assessment performance in the most recent CPAF exercise. Pharmacies should be aware of GPhC premises standards and be operating to those standards.

Pharmacies should protect patient confidentiality and handle sensitive information within the constraints of the usual Caldecott principles, and legislation including the Data Protection Act, and NHS and GPhC principles of good practice in relation to confidentiality and consent.

Staff should be aware of, and operate within, policies and processes which support safeguarding.

11.2 NICE Guidance

Maternal and Child Nutrition <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs98>

Antenatal care <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs22>

11.3 Other Guidance

Annual report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012: Our children deserve better: prevention pays <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2012-our-children-deserve-better-prevention-pays>

Department of Health (2012). Vitamin D - advice on supplements for at risk groups - letter from UK Chief Medical Officers <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vitamin-d-advice-on-supplements-for-at-risk-groups>

Vitamin D. Information for Health professionals.

Healthy Start <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals>

11.4 Applicable Local Standards

One pharmacist and one other member staff from each pharmacy must be identified as the Service Governance Leads for the *Healthy Start* Community Pharmacy scheme. The lead pharmacist will be responsible for establishing the systems and processes in the pharmacy

within the constraints of the commissioned service. Standard operating procedures should be in place to support this and ongoing service delivery to suitable standards.

The identified lead staff member for service governance will support the cascade of training and documentation protocols to the remaining pharmacy staff. In accordance with good pharmacy practice and accepted principles and standards of clinical governance, staff delivering the service must be suitably trained, and have appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skills to undertake their own specific tasks, roles and responsibilities in relation to this service. All frontline staff should be competent or developing competencies in using behaviour change techniques, strategies and interventions towards 'Making every Contact Count'. This supports the proactive approach required of this service.

A consultation room to national standards should be available; however the need to use the consultation room should be assessed at each client visit, taking the individual's needs and preference into account. Where a consultation does not take place in a confidential space, the provider should ensure that suitable levels of privacy are maintained for the supply of *Healthy Start* vitamins. This will be particularly relevant during the registration process when personal information is collected and consent to hold that data is obtained.

If a woman informs the pharmacy that she is pregnant whilst obtaining other products, staff should ascertain whether the woman is receiving *Healthy Start* vitamins and encourage her to register if she is eligible, or to collect vitamins from a pharmacy, children's centre, midwife or health visitor via the universal offer if she is not eligible for the national scheme.

Pharmacies should complete and submit (via PharmOutcomes) a self-validation/assessment document for the service before the service commences. This will include reference to a suitable declaration, and on policies and processes in place for managing risks, incident reporting and the handling of complaints.

Complaints and incidents related to the service should be resolved locally within the pharmacy or any wider parent organisation where possible. However the commissioner should be kept informed of any incidents to be able to understand and manage any risks and share any learning with other providers.

12. Performance and Quality Monitoring

PharmOutcomes will be the main tool for reviewing the demand, reach and cost effectiveness of the service within the locality, and this will be done on a regular basis, aligned to the PharmOutcomes payment schedule. To ascertain the efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivered at each pharmacy, commissioners will particularly look at high levels of wastage and low take up.

The data on PharmOutcomes will be used to help inform service delivery in terms of where the scheme needs further active promotion to encourage take-up of eligible beneficiaries.

13. Training standards

A *Healthy Start* training presentation is available on PharmOutcomes which pharmacies should view and confirm via PharmOutcomes. All training should be cascaded to pharmacy staff to ensure all members of the team understand their roles and responsibilities in delivering this service.

Training will provide an opportunity for knowledge-based learning and to support safe and effective operation of the service. Further training, learning updates or contract changes will be shared with pharmacies via PharmOutcomes. Pharmacies should regularly read and act upon PharmOutcomes messages as well as enter service data accurately and promptly. All training will be delivered in conjunction with and support from the Local Pharmaceutical Committee (GM LPC)

14. Withdrawing Service provision

Any intention for a commissioned community pharmacy to withdraw from delivering the *Healthy Start* service, should first be discussed with the commissioner in order that the any challenges or barriers can be addressed at the earliest opportunity. Commissioned pharmacies should provide at a minimum three months written notice to the commissioner to withdraw provision. This will allow time for the commissioner to implement alternative arrangements to ensure that there is still a service within the locality, and that alternative arrangements can be communicated to both partners and eligible beneficiaries.

Commissioners reserve the right to withdraw the service from a participating pharmacy with at least three months notice, for example: where demand is low, the cost of waste is high, or the contract is not being adhered to.

15. Location of Provider Premises

To be completed after commissioned service has been agreed.

16. Required Insurances

Refer to standard contract.

17. Reimbursement

PAYMENT TO PHARMACIES	
Consultation payment paid each time vitamins are supplied	£2
Single one-off payment at commencement of the service, after staff have completed training provided	£100

Payment is dependent on the transaction being fully recorded on PharmOutcomes.

Manchester City Council reserve the right to not pay late claims.

Appendix A – Selling Healthy Start Vitamins



Selling Healthy Start vitamins

April 2018

The Healthy Start Vitamins Charging (England) Regulations 2014 came into effect on 5 January 2015. This means that a body providing services or facilities for the care of pregnant women, women who are breastfeeding and young children (Section 3(1)(d) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012) may make a charge for Healthy Start vitamins.

That charge –

- Must comprise or include the cost price (i.e. £1.52 for children’s drops and 74p for women’s tablets)
- May include an additional handling charge up to 50%
- Must be rounded up to the nearest 5p

The maximum charge if sold by an NHS organisation in England is £2.30 for children’s drops and £1.15 for women’s tablets.

The Department of Health (DH) with NHSBSA has made arrangements so that community pharmacists can sell Healthy Start vitamins if they choose to do so. Pharmaceutical wholesalers can purchase both Healthy Start vitamin products from NHS Supply Chain and in turn supply community pharmacists.

The community pharmacist determines the price that they sell them in their pharmacy, DH cannot insist they are sold at a particular price.

DH cannot insist that community pharmacies issue Healthy Start vitamins, free of charge, in exchange for the Healthy Start vitamins coupon. Local arrangements may be commissioned by Local Authorities or Clinical Commissioning Groups for community pharmacists to exchange the Healthy Start vitamin coupons.

Email: nhsbsa.healthystart@nhs.net