

# Community pharmacy in Wales reaches net-zero emissions

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JDS Evans in Newport, Wales, was the only pharmacy to achieve a gold award as part of the first Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme.

Green pharmacy

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By **Tammy Lovell**



Andy Evans, owner of JDS Evans Pharmacy, paid an environmental charity to plant trees to offset emissions from the pharmacy

Tom Martin © WALES NEWS SERVICE

A community pharmacy in Newport, Wales, has been awarded for achieving net-zero carbon emissions.

Pharmacist Andy Evans, owner of JDS Evans Pharmacy, received a gold award from the Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme, run by Primary Care Wales.

The voluntary scheme, which launched in 2022 following a pilot of the scheme the previous year, encourages community pharmacies, GP surgeries, primary care dental practices and community optometrists to complete 30 actions to reduce their carbon footprint.

Participants in the scheme upload evidence onto an online portal to prove they have completed the actions and can receive gold, silver or bronze awards depending on their progress.

JDS Evans was the only pharmacy in Wales to receive one of the eight gold awards achieved across primary care in the scheme, which was launched in 2022.

Boots Ty Glas pharmacy in Cardiff received a silver award and two other pharmacies were acknowledged for “working towards” awards, with Primary Care Wales acknowledging that they had taken some actions but not enough to achieve bronze.

The changes Evans made to reduce his pharmacy’s carbon emissions include installing solar panels, using LED lightbulbs, insulating the pharmacy with recycled lagging and replacing the petrol van used to deliver customer prescriptions with an electric vehicle.

In addition, he paid an environmental charity to plant trees to offset the pharmacy’s remaining carbon footprint and achieve net-zero status.

Evans also completed a healthcare sustainability project, which saw him hold 30 consultations with patients over a two-month period, advising them on the clinical and environmental benefits of changing from metered-dose inhalers (MDIs) to dry-powder inhalers (DPIs), which do not use greenhouse gases as propellants. This is work he continues on an ongoing basis.

“I’m very passionate about this, but I think a lot of people have other priorities, which is disappointing,” he said. “The uptake in Wales for this framework hasn’t been great, because many community pharmacists are in survival mode at the moment.”

In 2022, just 8 community pharmacies across Wales took part in the initiative, compared with 26 dental practices, 20 community optometrists and 54 GP practices.

Sian Evans, a consultant at Public Health Wales and registered pharmacist, who is involved in running the scheme, said that the consultancy organisation [Local Partnerships](#) had been commissioned to undertake research to explore the reasons for the low uptake in community pharmacies.

“Out of all the contractors, the uptake in pharmacy was considerably lower. I think there’s a lot of awareness raising needed with the profession,” she told *The Pharmaceutical Journal*.

Evans urged pharmacists to “do their bit and get involved” in the Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme next year, which is due to open for registration in January 2024.

“This is about climate change, but many of the actions also make good business sense because they’re about using less and consuming less,” she said.

“Also, it is about improving the health of the population, which is our professional duty as healthcare professionals. It’s a no brainer because you save money, give good advice to patients and contribute to environmental sustainability.”

Evans said she would also like to see environmental sustainability featured in a future Welsh community pharmacy contract.

Measures relating to decarbonisation of inhalers were included in the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework [for 2023/2024](#), in line with the ambitions of NHS Wales’ [‘Decarbonisation strategic delivery plan’](#).

Elen Jones, director for Wales at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), said that Andy Evans had shown “true leadership with his trailblazing work” in reaching net zero.

She added: “We know that medicines account for around 25% of all NHS carbon emissions. It’s therefore so important that we in pharmacy take the lead in climate action within the health service. There’s no doubt that Andy has well and truly done exactly that.”

The RPS [launched a consultation on greener pharmacy guides](#) for community and hospital pharmacies on 11 October 2023.

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