



New preventative care ‘Super Pharmacies’ to vastly improve health

Midwifery, dentistry and cosmetic surgery available in-store within a decade

**Alitam Founder and CEO
Feisal Nahaboo**

Covid-19 has placed immense pressure on the NHS and HSE. Whilst pharmacies remained open during lockdowns, many other medical professionals had to close their doors. Since then, pharmacists have seen an increasing number of them gravitate towards cooperating with, and supporting, pharmacies. This is creating an organic process whereby diverse medical disciplines don't just collaborate, they work together under one roof. It is now clear that, within a decade, we will see new medical and well-being centres, which we are labelling ‘Super Pharmacies’, transforming the healthcare system in all aspects.

As Founder and CEO of Alitam, one of the UK & Ireland's largest pharmacy groups, I have unveiled a £1 billion ‘Pharmacy of the Future’ concept, focused on integrating a range of healthcare services under one roof. Our nations of the UK and Ireland will become the first in the entire world to focus on disease prevention, rather than the more costly business of treatment. Thus improving well-being, reducing deaths and reducing our citizens' tax liability with fewer hospitals and GP surgeries needed to be built.

For the first time ever, dentists, opticians, physiologists, midwives, nurses and pharmacists will be working side-by-side across 500 ‘Super Pharmacies’. Meaning that, along with receiving prescription medication and over-the-counter treatments, customers will now be able to pre-book minor eye surgery, facelifts, liposuction, breast enlargement and routine cosmetic dentistry. And yes, even one day give birth in-store. After all, for more than 60 years women have relied on the High Street pharmacy for contraception and family health advice. The local pharmacy, and their expert midwives, would offer a familiar and trusted setting in which to give birth. I predict this will be an option for expectant mothers in ten years' time.

Without having to pre-book, customers will also benefit from walk-in eye and blood pressure tests, dental check-ups and counselling. Such ‘on demand healthcare’ will even extend to a full-body MOT, given while they wait for a prescription.

Waiting times, meanwhile, could be slashed by as much as 90 per cent as our ‘one-stop-shop’ approach to healthcare will relieve pressure on NHS and HSE secondary care services. According to NHS England, waiting lists have sky-rocketed to 6 million since the pandemic began. They also reveal that 18,500 people have been waiting for a routine operation for at least two years - seven times more than last summer.

We cannot go on like this. The time has come to speed up our roll-out of Alitam ‘Super Pharmacies’ and help people get the healthcare they so desperately need. Over the next decade we will transform more than 500 High Street premises into state-of-the-art wellness and medical centres offering cosmetic, dental, and ophthalmological procedures, primary care advice and diagnosis, living aids and medicines all under one roof. This will have a huge impact on hospital footfall, allowing secondary healthcare staff to do their job efficiently and under less stress, while people everywhere benefit from healthcare that's quick to access and cheap, too.

Significant change within pharmacy and healthcare is just around the corner. This change is inexorable and follows a pattern seen in other industries and sectors such as retail. (For example, supermarkets now integrate a wide range of offerings in-store, which - like dry cleaning and electrical goods - were formerly separate businesses on the high street.) We are proceeding at pace now, fuelled by my fervent belief in preventing disease and offering trusted, easily accessible healthcare at all times to everyone.

A new dawn for healthcare is upon us.

