



PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF GHANA

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS | P.O.BOX GP 2133, ACCRA-GHANA

Tuesday, 14th July 2026

PRESS RELEASE

PSGH CONDEMNS THE CLOSURE OF A COMMUNITY PHARMACY DURING THE NATIONAL CLEAN-UP EXERCISE AND CALLS FOR THE PROTECTION OF ESSENTIAL PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

1. The Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana (PSGH) has taken note with grave concern of a widely circulated video showing the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) for Cape Coast directing the closure of **Cape Coast Pharmacy** on Friday, 10th July 2026, during the National Sanitation Day exercise, and ordering members of the public who had visited the pharmacy to leave the premises.

The PSGH unequivocally condemns this action.

2. While we wholeheartedly support the Government's commitment to improving environmental sanitation and applaud the President's call for a national clean-up exercise, we are deeply concerned that the implementation of this directive, in this instance, resulted in the disruption of an essential healthcare service and denied patients timely access to pharmaceutical care.
3. Community pharmacies are **essential health facilities** and should not be subjected to blanket closures during national exercises without due consideration of their indispensable role in healthcare delivery. Every day, thousands of Ghanaians depend on community pharmacies for immediate access to medicines, professional pharmaceutical care and emergency health advice. Unlike many other businesses, community pharmacies are often the first point of contact for patients seeking healthcare, particularly outside normal working hours and during weekends.
4. Patients visit community pharmacies to obtain urgently needed medicines for acute illnesses, refill medicines for chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes and asthma, receive emergency contraception, obtain life-saving medicines for children and adults, access first aid services, receive treatment for minor ailments and seek professional advice on the safe and appropriate use of medicines. Interrupting these services, even for a few hours, may delay treatment, worsen medical conditions and, in some circumstances, place lives at risk.
5. The Health Professions Bodies Act, 2013 (Act 857), together with the regulatory framework governing pharmacy practice in Ghana, (857) recognises community pharmacies as licensed healthcare facilities operating under the direct superintendence of pharmacists who bear statutory responsibility for the safe and lawful delivery of pharmaceutical services. Their primary obligation is to ensure that patients have uninterrupted access to quality pharmaceutical care.
6. Importantly, community pharmacies have also been included by Government in the list of **Primary Healthcare (PHC) Providers**. This recognition is not merely symbolic; it reflects the critical role community pharmacies play in the delivery of frontline healthcare services, health promotion, disease prevention, medicine access and patient counselling. It is therefore essential that this policy recognition

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be clearly understood and respected by all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), as well as all officers involved in the enforcement of public directives. Any action that disregards this status risks undermining access to care and contradicting Government's own health delivery framework.

7. Indeed, Ghana has already established a clear precedent for the exemption of essential service providers, including community pharmacies, during periods of public restriction. During the COVID-19 pandemic, movement restrictions and corresponding exemptions for essential service providers were governed by the **Imposition of Restrictions Act, 2020 (Act 1012)**. The enforcement of those restrictions and the specific parameters of who was exempt were outlined in Executive Instruments, most notably **E.I. 64 and E.I. 65**, issued by the President during the public health emergency. Under that framework, essential health services, including pharmacies, were permitted to continue operating so that the public could maintain access to medicines and pharmaceutical care. This precedent is both legally and practically instructive and should guide the implementation of any future public restriction or national exercise.
8. Global best practice and emergency preparedness principles consistently recognise pharmacies as essential services that should remain operational during public emergencies, disasters and other national interventions, except where specific public health risks necessitate otherwise.
9. The PSGH is therefore of the firm view that the closure of Cape Coast Pharmacy and the removal of clients from the premises were unnecessary, disproportionate and inconsistent with the essential healthcare role performed by community pharmacies.
10. We respectfully urge the Municipal Chief Executive to exercise greater restraint in the enforcement of future directives involving healthcare facilities. Public officials have an important responsibility to enforce government policies, but such enforcement must always be guided by the principles of proportionality, legality, consultation and an appreciation of the unique role played by essential service providers. Healthcare delivery requires collaboration—not confrontation.
11. The Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana also wishes to advise proprietors of community pharmacies, superintendent pharmacists and pharmaceutical support staff to continue demonstrating their commitment to national development by actively participating in community sanitation initiatives. Where national or local clean-up exercises are organised, pharmacies should, as far as practicable, develop staff duty rosters that allow some members of staff to participate in the exercise while ensuring that the pharmacy remains operational to provide uninterrupted pharmaceutical services to the public. Such arrangements will enable pharmacies to fulfil both their civic responsibilities and their professional obligations to patients.
12. We further call upon the Government, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), Regional Coordinating Councils and all agencies responsible for organising national clean-up exercises to formally recognise community pharmacies, hospital pharmacies and other pharmaceutical service

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points as essential health facilities when planning and implementing such exercises. Appropriate operational guidelines should be issued to avoid ambiguity and ensure that enforcement officers clearly understand which essential services should continue operating during restricted periods. This recognition must be consistently communicated and enforced across all districts so that no MMDCE acts in a manner that inadvertently disrupts access to essential pharmaceutical care.

13. The PSGH also encourages greater engagement between local authorities and health professional bodies before implementing directives that may affect healthcare delivery. Such consultation will help achieve the intended public policy objectives while avoiding unintended disruption to patient care.
14. To the general public, we encourage your continued support for national sanitation programmes. Clean environments contribute significantly to disease prevention and improved public health. At the same time, we urge the public to appreciate that access to medicines and pharmaceutical care is equally indispensable to safeguarding health. Environmental sanitation and access to essential healthcare are complementary public health priorities and should never be viewed as competing interests.
15. The Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana remains fully committed to supporting Government initiatives that promote public health, environmental sanitation and national development. However, such initiatives must be implemented in a manner that preserves uninterrupted access to essential healthcare services and respects the professional responsibilities of licensed healthcare practitioners.
16. We call on all stakeholders to work together to ensure that future national exercises are planned and executed in a way that protects both public health and patient access to life-saving pharmaceutical services. The PSGH remains available to engage Government and all relevant authorities in developing practical guidelines that will safeguard essential pharmaceutical services during future national exercises.

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