

Community Pharmacy **Living Well** Campaign

STAY IN THE SHADE BETWEEN 11AM & 3PM

USE SUN PROTECTION WITH AT LEAST SPF 30 AND UVA 4 STARS

WEAR SUNGLASSES WITH 100% UV PROTECTION

WEAR A BROAD-BRIM HAT

COVER UP

Over exposure to UV from the sun or a sunbed can increase your risk of skin cancer

www.careinthesun.org

BE CANCER AWARE

HSC Public Health Agency

Cancer Focus NORTHERN IRELAND

The 'Care in the sun' campaign aimed to encourage everyone to adopt sun safe behaviours and to raise awareness of the health impacts of over exposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation.

The campaign ran throughout April and May 2026.

The information used to develop this report is from our submissions of pharmacy team evaluation surveys from 93% of Living Well contracted community pharmacies.

Evaluation figures are an estimation provided by contracted community pharmacies.

Campaign overview



505 pharmacies participated in the 'Care in the Sun' campaign



443 pharmacies felt campaign resources supported them to answer queries or know where to signpost patients to



412 pharmacies reported the public's feedback to be positive or very positive



220 pharmacies reported that requests for advice on sun protection factor increased compared to previous years



193 pharmacies signposted people to the [Care in the sun](#) webpage



70 referrals were made to the Action Cancer 'Big Bus' skin screening service



Campaign overview

The main queries were in relation to **sunscreen, sunburn, skin cancer signs and symptoms, children and sun care, sunscreen application, babies and sun care and skin moles or abnormal skin changes.**

Number of pharmacies that provided information to the following groups:

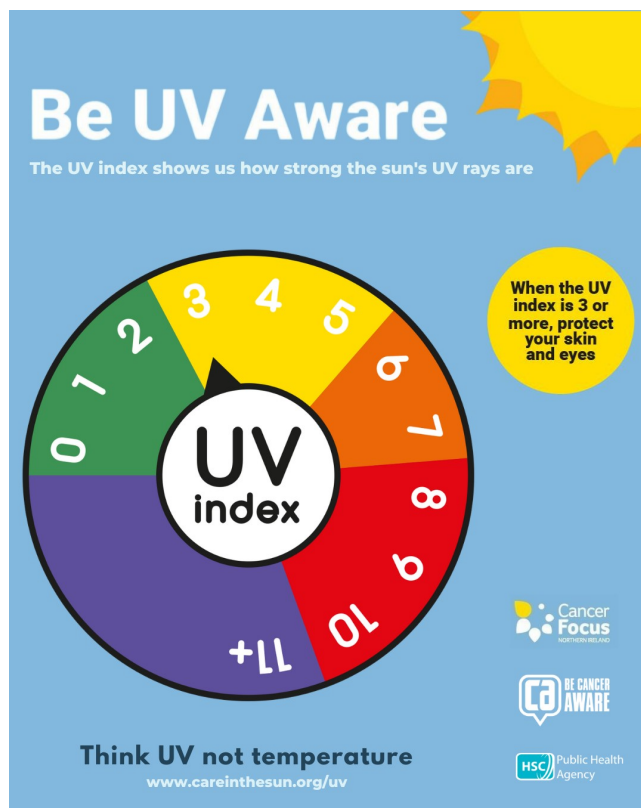
- ♦ **428 to young families**
- ♦ **395 to older people**
- ♦ **276 to people with long-term conditions or their carers**
- ♦ **187 to people of ethnic minorities**
- ♦ **166 to socially isolated people**
- ♦ **142 to people where English is not their first language**
- ♦ **140 to people experiencing drug or alcohol dependence**
- ♦ **134 to people living in poverty or deprivation**
- ♦ **115 to housebound individuals**



Patient stories

“An elderly woman approached the pharmacist with a large angry looking spot on her neck. It had increased in size and was sore. After speaking with the lady, the pharmacist learnt that she had previous episodes of skin cancer. We recommended that she see her GP and she later returned to thank us and to say that it had been identified as squamous cell skin cancer but was treatable.”

“Two gentlemen approached our pharmacy counter enquiring about skincare treatments as one of them had sunburn. The Foundation Training Year (FTY) pharmacist was running a health promotion event at the time and counselled the gentleman on suitable treatment options. She also provided ongoing advice on sun protection and encouraged him to consider using a higher strength SPF in future. On listening to the advice, the second gentleman confessed to previously using sunbeds and regularly applying oils to increase sun exposure. However, he now seemed genuinely concerned about long-term complications and decided to purchase a SPF50 sun cream.”



“After asking advice about her own children who were heading off to the sun, a school teacher asked me if I would put some information together for her to display in her classroom. Following this, other teachers from the same school borrowed her display for their classrooms.”

“A gentleman presented to the pharmacy with what looked like an actinic keratosis horn. He was concerned that it might be skin cancer as he works outside and never uses sun cream. I referred him to the GP, who prescribed treatment with cream. He was also seen by a skin specialist in between who confirmed there were no concerns about skin cancer. After this scare, the patient now uses sun cream when working outdoors.”

“We arranged for Cancer Focus NI to have a health promotion stand in the pharmacy. This allowed people to use the facial UV scanner to see the effects of sun exposure to their skin.”

“I had a positive conversation with the parents of a young family who were heading off on holiday. They had picked up a leaflet from the counter and asked advice on being safe in the sun. They talked through what they were bringing on holiday, and sought my advice on whether they had forgotten anything important.”

Patient stories

“We spoke to a young woman who was a frequent sunbed user. She believed that UV exposure from the sun was harmful, but that UV exposure from sunbeds was a healthy alternative. We spent time discussing the risks associated with sunbed use and explaining how frequent exposure can significantly increase the risk of skin cancer. Initially, she appeared hesitant to accept this information, but through open discussion and by exploring the evidence together, she became more receptive to the advice. By the end of the consultation, she agreed to substantially reduce her use of sunbeds, with the long-term aim of stopping altogether. The information provided in our literature, along with additional evidence from reputable online sources, helped her to better understand the risks and make a more informed decision about her sunbed use.”

“Our Foundation Year Pharmacist was involved in developing a health promotion campaign and arranged for a display of the Cancer Focus NI stand. This proved very popular with customers who attended.”

“A patient recently asked for advice after getting badly sunburnt on holiday. It was a good reminder of how valuable campaigns like ‘Care in the sun’ are in community pharmacy. We are often the first place people come to for practical sun safety advice and early skin concerns.”



“We engaged with the local GAA club about sun protection for their players when they are on the pitch and exposed to the sun, particularly their younger players.”

“We had a patient with a mole that had changed in shape and size recently. The pharmacist referred them to their GP and following a number of tests, they were unfortunately diagnosed with melanoma. They came back to inform us and explained they may not have gone to the GP if they hadn't been referred by us.”

“A lady came into branch asking me to check a mole for her. I used the ABCDE rule and as there had been changes to the mole I referred her to the Action Cancer bus to have the mole assessed.”

“The stickers were a great way to engage families with young children. It opened up many conversations about the campaign.”