

Meet PillSorted, the delivery pharmacy providing personalised patient experiences

As part of our new quickfire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Zeinab Ardeshir, founder and chief pharmacist of PillSorted, about relieving pharmacists of administrative burden, blending compassionate care with technology, and running a tech enabled pharmacy on a shoestring budget.

What was the catalyst for launching PillSorted?

I've been a pharmacist for 17 years, but I've always loved working in community pharmacy as it's a blend of science, medicine, and relationships. My favourite part of the job is listening to patients, helping them understand their medication and supporting them to live healthier lives. But, so much of the pharmacy role requires admin and the manual duplication of tasks which means that the pharmacists time isn't always optimised.

So, I set up *PillSorted* in November 2019 as a new model of pharmacy. PillSorted uses technology to take the administrative burden off pharmacists.

This means their time is instead focused on patients and allows them to deliver personalised, holistic care.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

PillSorted is a delivery pharmacy that blends compassionate care and technology to provide a personalised experience for patients. We deliver patient's medications on time, review and manage their prescriptions and provide ongoing support and advice to patients.

We connect with the NHS Spine, so once a patient opts to use PillSorted as their NHS pharmacist, their prescriptions are sent to us. We review and clinically check all of a patient's incoming prescriptions to ensure all the medication is working together and that we're providing the best possible care to the patient. Once all the medications are in, they get delivered in one package to the patient, along with dosage information, so the patient gets it all at once.

I believe that personalised service is the future of the pharmacy industry. We already work closely with doctors as part of the primary care network and we are well positioned to support secondary and hospital services and social carers too.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

We are constantly listening to feedback from our patients to learn what does and doesn't work for them and make changes accordingly. Our technology enables us to evolve, be it through upgrading or personalisation. Initially, we were focused only on medication, however at the request of patients, we also set up an online shop where patients could get the same items they'd get in a pharmacy on the high street.

How are you funded?

We bootstrapped initially to make sure we had the right product- market fit. However, we recently raised a seed round from prominent VCs to scale and roll

out our service across the country.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

Running a tech enabled pharmacy on a shoestring budget was a challenge for the first 2 years but it was lots of fun! Now that we have had funding through investors, our focus is on high growth which entails expanding the team with specialists, ensuring smooth operations and maintaining our care-first culture. Bringing the best people on board that are passionate about our mission will be key to our growth.

How does PillSorted answer an unmet need?

Patients are already utilising home delivery services for medication, but the service has been compromised. We believe that we can deliver medication and upgrade care at the same time. This makes our service suitable for people with lots of different types of medication, many of whom are elderly people who are underserved when it comes to innovative solutions.

What's in store for the future?

At the moment, we are expanding our service within London, which will put us on the right trajectory to expand in the UK – from there, we see our solution being scaled globally.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Keep on learning! Ask advice from more experienced people to channel your learnings and block time into your daily schedule to learn.

Zeinab Ardeshir is founder and chief pharmacist of *PillSorted*.

