

Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) 2020/2021

1. The Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) 2020/21 will consist of two parts one that must be completed and declared by the 29 January 2021 and whose details are set out below as the 'Part 1 essential criteria checklist'. A contractor must complete and declare the completion of all of the criteria of Part 1 in order to qualify for any payments in respect of any completion of the first part; and to be eligible for the declaration of the second part. Details of the second part will be published no later than in the September 2020 Drug Tariff.

PQS 2020/21 Part 1 Essential Criteria Checklist

2. Pharmacy contractors must claim payment for Part 1 by the 5th of the month following completion of all of the requirements of the checklist through the Manage Your Service (MYS) application, which will open at 00:01 on 14th of July 2020, to receive the payment as per the usual schedule of payments (for example claims put between 13th of July and 5th of August, will be paid on 1st of September). Claims for payment for Part 1 will be accepted until 29 January 2021 (closes at 23:59). Contractors must have evidence to demonstrate that they meet all of the criteria in Part 1 before they make the claim.
3. Maximum total funding across all contractors for Part 1 of PQS is £18.75 million. Payment to pharmacy contractors will be based on the assumption that all pharmacy contractors will participate in Part 1 of PQS. Therefore, the payment for contractors who claim by the deadline mentioned in paragraph 1 will be £1,630 per contractor. Any remaining funding from the £18.75 million, which has not been claimed by contractors before the declaration period for Part 2 of PQS 2020/21 opens, will be allocated to the funding for Part 2. This funding will then be paid to those contractors who have completed and declared in respect of Part 1 by the deadline mentioned in paragraph 1 and have made a declaration for Part 2 and therefore qualify for payment for Part 2.

Table 1. PQS 2020/21 Part 1 Essential Criteria Checklist

<p>PQS 2020/21 Part 1 Essential Criteria Checklist Pharmacy contractors must note that all of the below hyperlinks are current at the time of publishing this determination and are advised to check for the most current version.</p>	
1a)	The contractor has conducted a COVID-19 infection control risk assessment for the pharmacy premises and where risks have been identified, has implemented mitigating actions, e.g. use of physical barriers such as above head height protective screens, where possible and appropriate.
1b)	The contractor has made reasonable adjustments to maximise social distancing in accordance with the latest government guidance on COVID-19 secure workplaces: Working safely during coronavirus ¹
2)	The contractor has updated the pharmacy Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or related guidance, where appropriate, to minimise the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2, having considered the guidance within the latest NHSE&I COVID-19 Pharmacy SOP ² . All staff have been briefed on changes relevant to their role in the pharmacy and a record of this is maintained.
3a)	The contractor has appropriate and up to date COVID-19 posters, warnings and information displayed so they are visible at entry points to the pharmacy premises.
3b)	For Distance Selling Pharmacies, there are appropriate and up to date COVID-19 public information and advice displayed prominently on their website.
4)	Members of staff have been informed of risk factors for poorer outcomes of COVID-19 such as gender, age, BAME background and comorbidities. Individual COVID-19 risk assessments have been offered to all members of staff. Where the staff members accepted the offer, the contractor has conducted an individual risk assessment for each member of staff and put in place any appropriate mitigations. A record of this is maintained.
5)	The contractor has a process in place to advise and refer staff with symptoms of COVID-19 for testing in accordance with Government guidance ³ .
6a)	The contractor has available facilities and resources (e.g. alcohol handrub) to support staff to conduct hand hygiene procedures frequently, to reduce the transmission risk of SARS-CoV-2 and support infection control.
6b)	The contractor has posters displayed in relevant areas to promote best hand hygiene practice, for example: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886217/Best_practice_hand_wash.pdf
6c)	The contractor has posters displayed in relevant areas to promote best practice use of handrub for example: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886216/Best_practice_hand_rub.pdf
7)	The contractor has reviewed and adopted, as a minimum, the PPE recommendations ⁴ for their staff working in the pharmacy.
8)	The contractor has reviewed and, as appropriate, updated business continuity plans for the COVID-19 pandemic including Emergency Business Continuity Planning for any potential closure(s), identifying one or more local pharmacies, which can support and provide pharmaceutical services to their patients, whilst the pharmacy is closed.
9)	The contractor has identified an area of the pharmacy where symptomatic patients could be isolated if they are unable to leave the premises, e.g. if an ambulance is required, and can follow the process outlined in the latest COVID-19 Pharmacy SOP (including decontamination of the area after the symptomatic patient has left).
10)	The contractor has reviewed examples of good practice during the pandemic and has adopted them as considered appropriate for the individual pharmacy. These include examples collated by the General Pharmaceutical Council: https://inspections.pharmacyregulation.org/knowledge-hub/search?Themes=12&FreeText=&Themes=12
11)	The contractor and registered staff working at the pharmacy have read relevant COVID-19 guidance on the GPhC website ⁵ and a record of this is maintained.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Novel-coronavirus-COVID-19-standard-operating-procedure-Community-Pharmacy-v2-published-22-March-2020.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers>

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879108/T3_poster_Recommended_PPE_for_ambulance_staff_paramedics_transport_pharmacy.pdf

⁵ <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/contact-us/coronavirus-latest-updates>