

Covid-19 – Community Pharmacy Continuity Plan: Actions to be taken by Turning Point if there is disruption to medication supplies through a community pharmacy closure

Background

Covid-19 is transmitted from person to person by close contact. Some examples of how it can be spread include:

- large droplets from coughing and or sneezing by an infected person within a short distance (usually one metre or less) of someone
- touching or shaking the hand of an infected person and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands
- touching surfaces or objects (such as door handles) that have become contaminated with the virus and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands (PHE, 2020)

If a community pharmacy branch is closed as a result of a suspected Covid-19 infection this will impact on any individual due to collect medication from that branch and/or supply of NSP paraphernalia. This is likely to most significantly impact Turning Point clients that have daily collection or supervised consumption arrangements in place.

Contingency Plan

Step 1: Turning Point notified that the community pharmacy is closed and the likely duration of closure

Step 2: Clinical Administrators identify all clients that receive medication from that community pharmacy and the collection/ supervised consumption arrangements for those clients

Step 3: Alternative community pharmacy in close proximity to the closed pharmacy identified and agreement obtained from the alternative pharmacy to supply to clients for the duration of the closure. Each pharmacy should have a Business Continuity Plan or BCP which should identify how they work in collaboration with neighbouring pharmacies, local practices and the wider multidisciplinary teams in these situations.

Step 4: Clients affected by the pharmacy closure informed of the pharmacy closure and the alternative pharmacy, reassurance and advice given to client on risks and signs of Covid-19 infection and how to self-isolate/report.

Step 5: Replacement prescriptions generated, signed by a prescriber and delivered to the community pharmacy as soon as possible either by courier or hand delivery in accordance with the Clinical Administration Policy

Step 6: Entries made on each client's electronic client record explaining steps taken

Services may want to liaise closely with their Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) to discuss arrangements with regards to pharmacy closures and local BCPs.

LPC details can be found at the following website:

<https://lpc-online.org.uk/>

References:

- PHE, COVID-19: interim guidance for primary care, Updated 7 February 2020
- PHE, COVID-19: guidance for staff in the transport sector, Published 14 February 2020
- NHSE&I, Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure – Community pharmacy, Published 27 February 2020
- NHSE. Community Pharmacy update regarding the emerging COVID-19 situation. Publications approval reference 001559. 9 March 2020

Produced by:

Graham Parsons, Chief Pharmacist, Turning Point

Katherine Watkinson, Pharmacy Support Services Technician, Turning Point

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