

## Spectrum Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services

St Martins House  
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# SPECTRUM Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services

Hertfordshire

Dear Pharmacist,

Firstly, we would like to offer a huge thank you for your ongoing support to the people who use our services during the coronavirus pandemic. We know it has been a demanding time for all those involved in delivering healthcare, and we appreciate your hard work.

### Supervised consumption fees

As you are aware, we have agreed to pay supervised consumption fees each month since March, based on 100% of February's supervised consumption fees, ongoing until normal service is resumed. We will assess need for these payments on a rolling month basis and shall keep you informed if anything should change.

### Out of hours arrangements

We introduced an out of hours service at the start of the pandemic to allow pharmacists to contact a Change Grow Live prescriber for any queries which may arise outside of working hours. The service was introduced with a view to emergency CD legislation being implemented which would have allowed more scope for pharmacist intervention in collaboration with a prescriber. However, with this legislation not being active, we have reviewed the need to continue with the prescriber out of hours service and have decided to end this service, with the last day on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. Continued support is available to pharmacies from the service during working hours by contacting **0800 652 3169**.

### Pharmacy services

Change Grow Live are keen to work with community pharmacies in delivering services to support our service users. Take home naloxone provision is a priority for us, and would like to work with our pharmacy colleagues wherever possible to widen access and availability of naloxone to those who need it. Needle exchange services are also an important part of our harm minimisation efforts and we would like to work with pharmacies in delivering this service. Please get in touch with [AnnaMarie.Felice@cgl.org.uk](mailto:AnnaMarie.Felice@cgl.org.uk) or [Trudy.Sealy@cgl.org.uk](mailto:Trudy.Sealy@cgl.org.uk) about how you can best support delivery of these services.

### CD returns

An issue which has arisen during the coronavirus pandemic is the inability to return unwanted controlled drugs to some pharmacies for safe disposal, due to pharmacies refusing to accept medication returns during the pandemic. This presents risks of overdose, misuse and diversion,



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not just to our service users but to the local community. While we understand the need to keep people safe and as protected as possible from coronavirus, the risks related to excess CD's in the community also needs to be considered. There has been [guidance](#) and a [checklist](#) developed for community pharmacy teams (available on the Royal Pharmaceutical Society website) to support them in safely handling returned medication, and we would ask you to accept returned medication for safe disposal. If there is a genuine reason why you are unable to at that time, supporting the person in identifying an alternative local pharmacy for disposal would be helpful.

### Dispensing process

A concern was highlighted to us by several people about a queuing system implemented in some pharmacies to segregate those collecting their MAT prescriptions. It is understandable that at busy times this may quicken dispensing processes, however this method stigmatises those who are collecting their medication. In addition this puts people at risk of harm once leaving the pharmacy as others are aware they are in possession of controlled drugs. We would always expect that our service users will be treated the same as others using the pharmacy, and request consideration given to the most efficient processes which will also safeguard and protect their confidentiality.

### Thank you ...

We have heard numerous stories of pharmacy teams going above and beyond to help our service users. We are grateful for the effort you have put in to make sure people get their medication, can access needle exchange services and issuing safe storage boxes and naloxone kits to those who were unable to visit the service, and providing important regular face-to-face contact for so many of our people.

As always, please let us know if there is anything we can do either as a local service or as an organisation to support you, now or in the future.

Many thanks,

Mohammed Fessal  
Chief Pharmacist  
Change Grow Live



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