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AUDIT: TO INFORM ON HOW COMMUNITY PHARMACY CHANGES



PQS PART1: DETAILS ANNOUNCED



DELIVERIES FROM JULY 31ST ON P7

# NORTHANTS AND MK LPC NEWSLETTER

# MASKS MUST BE WORN IN SHOPS



**BY LIZZY BUCHAN** *Political Correspondent*  
**SHOPPERS will be ordered to wear face masks in stores from July 24 in a bid to prevent a deadly second wave of coronavirus.**  
And those caught flouting the rules face police fines of up to £100. It comes after days of confusion on the issue as Boris Johnson appeared at odds with Tory colleagues over wearing the coverings.  
But after pressure from medical experts, No10 will finally announce the change in rules today.  
A spokesman said: "The PM has been clear people should be wearing face coverings in shops and we will make this mandatory from July 24."  
**FULL STORY: PAGES 4&5**

New Government rules make face coverings compulsory in England from July 24

## Face coverings mandatory

Face coverings to be mandatory in shops and supermarkets from 24 July 2020.

It has been announced by the government that as part of a move to enhance protection for those that work in shops, as well as to give people more confidence to shop safely, face coverings would be made mandatory in shops (including pharmacies) and supermarkets from 24 July 2020.

Under the new rules, people who do not wear a face covering could face a fine of up to £100. Children under 11 and those with certain disabilities will be exempt. The liability for wearing a face covering will lie with the individual, not the retailer. Full guidance is on the [PSNC website](https://www.psncc.org.uk).

Shop staff do not need to wear them but it is strongly recommended that they do. Physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene are the most important and effective things we can all do to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Should an individual without an exemption refuse to wear a face covering, a shop can refuse them entry and can call the police if people refuse to comply, the police have the formal enforcement powers and can issue a fine.

This is in line with how shops would normally manage their customers and enforcement is of course a last resort, and government fully expect the public to comply with the rules as they have done throughout the pandemic.

PSNC has previously provided guidance to contractors on the use of [facemasks and face coverings](#). We previously issued a poster advising patients to wear face coverings, but this has been withdrawn whilst we await official PHE/NHS posters reflecting the updated Government guidance. We will update contractors when new posters are available.

Covid FAQs can be accessed [HERE](#). The page is updated by PSNC regularly (last update 16.7.20).

## PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audit

Thank you to community pharmacies who completed the Pharmacy Advice Audit during the first week of July. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Apart from referrals via the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS), patient consultations are not recorded anywhere, but from anecdotal reports we know that they are having a significant beneficial impact on local communities, patients and the wider NHS.

The audit will help PSNC to assess how many of these informal consultations are happening and their positive impact on the patient and wider health care system, and this evidence will be used to support the ongoing funding negotiations.

If you participated and submitted your results by 10th July, you will have fulfilled your contractual requirement to undertake a clinical audit.

In the end, there was a clear winner so well done to Somerset LPC who topped the leaderboard with 94.1% of their pharmacies completing all the sections. However it must be noted that 16 LPCs achieved over 80% completion, which again is excellent. In our LPC out of 171 pharmacies, 115 completed the audit (67.3%). The average was 73% completion across all the LPCs.

## NHSBSA Launches Staff Risk Assessment Survey

Community pharmacy contractors are being asked to declare

Evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you. However, if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms, it may provide some protection for others you come into close contact with.



*Northants and  
MK LPC  
achieved 67.3%  
of pharmacies  
completing the  
Pharmacy  
Advice Audit*

their progress on performing COVID- 19 risk assessments for their staff. This was communicated to you on July 9, 2020.

Community pharmacy contractors are being asked to declare their progress on performing COVID-19 risk assessments for their staff.

At the end of June, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) requested that individual risk assessments for at least staff in at-risk group (including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff) should be completed within a month ([see the PSNC news article here](#)). They have now authorised the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) to collect information about the progress of community pharmacy contractors over the course of July; similar information is also being requested from the other primary care contractors.

There will be two windows for collection:

- 9am on **9th July** to 11.59pm on **17th July**; and
- 9am on **24th July** to 11.59pm on **31st July**.

Contractors are asked to submit a declaration in each window, even if all staff assessments were completed during the first.

The questions within the survey are:

- 1 Have you offered a risk assessment to all staff?
- 2 What % of all your staff have you risk assessed?
- 3 What % of risk assessments have been completed for staff who are known to be 'at-risk', with mitigating steps agreed where necessary?
- 4 What % of risk assessments have been completed for staff who are known to be from a BAME background, with mitigating steps agreed where necessary?

This was then updated **to offer clarity** – the wording of questions 3 and 4 was not fully clear on the approach to be taken to calculating the answer. NHSE&I have provided the following further information to assist contractors:

*Q3 and 4 are asking – of those staff known to be in the at-risk or BAME categories prior to the risk assessment process, how many of them have had a risk assessment completed. The denominator is all staff known to fit that classification (not all staff known to fit that classification who have accepted the offer of a risk assessment).*

#### [Complete the Risk Assessment Declaration](#)

NHSBSA has contacted all pharmacies via NHSmail, but information can also be found on the [NHSBSA website](#).

## PQS announcement

This week, a new Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) for the first part of 2020/21 has been announced . The focus of the scheme is ensuring community pharmacy contractors and their teams have put in place all reasonable measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting both themselves and the people using their services.

*You may have been pondering the contractual implications of this work for community pharmacy. Completion of the assessment is not mandatory after all . However, GPhC encourage all pharmacy owners and employers to take this opportunity to review their existing risk assessments and consider what further actions they could take to protect their staff, trainees and patients. For further information and guidance: <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/news/reviewing-risk-assessments-during-covid-19-pandemic>*

During the pandemic, pharmacy contractors and their teams have been the local healthcare heroes within their communities, keeping the door to primary care fully open for their patients. To achieve this, they have had to make many significant changes to the way they have operated. This first PQS scheme for 2020/21 has been developed to recognise all that prior work by contractors and their teams and to encourage them to check that all appropriate actions have been taken to protect their staff, patients and the continuity of their service to the community, as we continue our journey through this pandemic (such as conducting the risk assessment as above).

This scheme and the second part of PQS in 2020/21, which is being developed for the second half of the year, replace the original 2020/21 scheme that PSNC had agreed with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I), and which, prior to the start of the pandemic, had been due to commence in April 2020.

## Scheme requirements

To meet the requirements of the new scheme, contractors need to complete all 14 actions set out in a checklist, all of which relate to the response to the pandemic; many contractors will already have undertaken most if not all of the actions in the checklist over the last few months.

[Download the Part 1 PQS 2020/21 Checklist for the COVID-19 response](#)

PSNC has also developed the following support materials for contractors:

- [advice on what evidence should be retained](#) to demonstrate that contractors have complied with the scheme;
- answers to [frequently asked questions](#) on the scheme;
- a [PSNC 10-minute digital guide](#) to the scheme; and
- a [record sheet](#) to capture staff briefings, or training sessions.

### Funding and claims

The funding made available for the scheme is **£18.75m** and all contractors meeting the requirements can claim a payment of **£1,630** via the NHSBSA's Manage Your Service (MYS) portal.

Claims via MYS can be made **between 14th July 2020 and 23:59 on 29th January 2021**.

Any residual funding not paid to contractors within the Part 1 scheme will be distributed as part of payments in the Part 2 2020/21 scheme. Payments will be made by the NHSBSA as soon as possible after a claim has been submitted, with, for example, any claims submitted by 5th August 2020 being paid on 1st September 2020.

## Part 2 2020/21 PQS

*PSNC is currently in discussions with NHSE&I and DHSC, working to finalise the detail of the Part 2 PQS scheme, which is expected to commence in October 2020. This will also focus on the response to the pandemic and details will be published as soon as possible and at the latest in the September 2020 Drug Tariff. The remainder of the £75m PQS annual budget (£56.25m) will be applied to this scheme.*

*Completion of and claiming for the Part 1 scheme will be a Gateway requirement for the Part 2 scheme. Part 1 has no Gateway requirement.*

## Negotiations begin on pharmacy COVID-19 funding

Negotiations on high-level community pharmacy costs and funding throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have now formally begun. PSNC confirmed this on July 8th.

The negotiations between PSNC, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) follow several months of representations by PSNC, including the submission of a business case for additional funding in April.

PSNC has now had to the go-ahead from HM Government to begin the formal negotiations process, which could last many more weeks.

DHSC and NHSE&I recognise the 'significant effort' made by the community pharmacy sector in supplying advice and medicines during the early stages of the pandemic and there is an acceptance that in doing so, costs were incurred by the sector.

To date, since the start of the pandemic, the sector has received £370m in advances to help smooth cashflow, and a £15m a month addition to margin from June, and much of the discussion will focus on how those advance payments will need to be reconciled, and when.

### PSNC CEO Simon Dukes said:

“Contractors have already been waiting many months for news on COVID-19 funding and it is frustrating that today’s news only begins the formal negotiations process, rather than giving them the answers they need. It may be some time before we can give those answers: PSNC now needs to understand and carefully analyse the HM Treasury views on pharmacy funding and to negotiate for the best outcome for contractors.

As contractors will know, the sector has already received some £370 million in advance funding from HM Government, and the question at the heart of our negotiations will be how those loans might need to be repaid, and when. We also need to agree processes so that any agreed funding plan can be adjusted in the future to reflect emerging data and costs from the ever-changing pandemic situation. This means that as a sector we will need to continue collecting that data.

I know that contractors will be keen to know more about our discussions – unfortunately, as this is a live negotiation we remain bound by HM Government confidentiality rules. Once any position has been agreed in principle it will be for the full PSNC Committee to decide whether it is acceptable to the sector, and we will update contractors as soon as we can.”



# Antibody testing

Guidance has been produced by Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for members of the public, patients, professionals and industry around the COVID-19 tests and testing kits. This includes information on how they work, the different types of tests and the specifications manufacturers need to follow.

In some parts of the country, NHS staff members will have access to Regional Test Centres. Some Trusts may also work together to identify local swabbing stations. Eligibility to attend these stations will be determined locally. Some may be available for other key workers, either now or as their capacity increases.

For community pharmacy colleagues working in Northamptonshire, there has been sporadic availability for antibody testing. I have not been updated on availability for dates beyond 19th July. I will circulate new dates as they become known. Results should be available 7-10 days after the test.

The venue will be:

Kettering General Hospital, Rothwell Rd, Kettering.

Follow the signs to the Drive Thru swabbing centre, the blood will be taken for the test in the recreational hall. This sits behind Glebe House.

There is no need to book, please take your ID badge as you will not be able to be tested without it. [Antibody Testing Local Guidance CCG SARS Cov-2 Ab Request Form v3 040620 \(2\)](#)

## Essential workers get a test to check if you have Coronavirus

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



*An antibody test can tell you if it's likely you've had coronavirus before.*

*But it does not work for everyone, as some people who've had the virus do not have antibodies.*

*An antibody test does not tell you:*

- *if you're immune to coronavirus*
- *if you can or cannot spread the virus to other people*

*To find out if you currently have coronavirus, there's a different test to check if you have coronavirus now.*



**Have you seen our latest COVID-19 FAQs?**

PSNC is compiling a large number of answers to queries about issues faced by pharmacy teams during the pandemic.

Visit [psnc.org.uk/COVID19FAQs](https://psnc.org.uk/COVID19FAQs) to find answers to your questions.



## National position

UK tests completed: **12,669,634**

Confirmed UK cases: **292,552**

Daily tests carried out: **202,912**

Total UK deaths: **45,119** (5pm, 15 July)

## Local position

Confirmed Northamptonshire cases: **3,310**

Northamptonshire deaths: **690**

Total local cases in Milton Keynes since the beginning of the pandemic: **862**

There were no Covid- linked deaths recorded at MK hospital on 15/7/2020.

Meanwhile, the number of coronavirus deaths at Milton Keynes Hospital remains at **104** - with the date for the most recent reported death being 4th July.

COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable can be read [HERE](#) From July 6th these measures started to ease.

## Deliveries

The Government shielding support package, including the pandemic delivery service (the Terms of Service requirements and the Advanced service), will remain in place **until 31st July 2020**, with no changes to the requirements.

**Contractors must submit their claims for payment for the Advanced service via the MYS platform by 5th August 2020.** Payment for the Essential service will be made automatically for July. You can see the details of the essential service [HERE](#)

**For further clarity please see <https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/pandemic-delivery-service/>**



*Globally there have been 13.8 million cases since the outbreak began, with 589,000 deaths*



The Terms of Service for all pharmacy contractors, bar distance selling pharmacies (DSP), were **amended** requiring contractors to help shielded patients to receive their prescriptions, while they self-isolated at home.

## This update includes important information to community pharmacy colleagues detailing the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic

As of 30th June, Northampton Fire and Rescue Service delivered prescriptions to 2271 homes in Northamptonshire. There was a marked rise in demand during May which tailed off gradually until mid June. In total, firefighters from 11 of NFRS's on-call fire stations have been called on to assist in the deliveries. Support has also been provided by wholetime crews and members of NFRS's Home Safety Team.

In line with national guidance, NFRS are happy to continue offering support through until 31st July. Many volunteers previously furloughed have now returned to work and we therefore have to start thinking about their capacity to maintain the level of support so valued by us at the peak of the pandemic.

We now ask that you are making use of alternative delivery options and prioritise those vulnerable patients still shielding. This will mean that do not call upon NFRS in the first instance after the month end.

On 22 June 2020 the Government published plans for a phased easing of the [shielding guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable](#), effective from 6 July 2020. In order to assist in the management of the serious risk or potentially serious risk to human health, eligible patients are advised to continue to stay away from pharmacy premises in the circumstances set out in this letter, Service Specifications and guidance until 31 July 2020. The NHS will continue to maintain the shielded patient list, and the government shielding support package will remain in place until the end of July.

The document [HERE](#) was sent to you from [england.eastmidpharmacy@nhs.net](mailto:england.eastmidpharmacy@nhs.net) at the beginning of July and details other delivery options available to you, your patients and dispensing Doctors until the end of the month.

Pharmabike is in a 'Business As Usual' mode of operation and self managed by and large - so it has achieved what we had hoped as a support to NFRS and the community resilience team.

We have seen a large drop off in volunteers. There are a couple of aspects to this and the operation overall:

1: Volunteers going back to work

2: Volunteer fatigue

3: Unreasonable Pharmacies (although not many to be fair) - feeds into point 2

4: Patients starting to believe that the delivery is a right, whether they need it or not, and demonstrating that behaviour ('I have been in all morning waiting for you, why can't I be first on your list...') feeds into point 2.

and the biggest issue of all

5: People not in - we are seeing a large increase on people not being in to take delivery. The volunteers are happy to help those in need, but by definition if they are not in they are not in isolation, so why do they need the service. I appreciate that it is not that 'cut and dried' but if we have a list of 24 packages to deliver and return with 6 because people are not in it is quite dispiriting and feeds into point 2.

In summary, it's time to think about encouraging patients to take responsibility for getting their prescriptions as they did pre virus and once again promoting the Self Care agenda.



## “I am so proud of them all, Northampton pharmacist joins Chron’s big thank you campaign”

David Ashton has thanked customers for their support during the Covid-19 pandemic and praised his team (pictured above), for their resilience and professionalism.

David, from Abington Pharmacy, was responding to the Chronicle & Echo's Big Thank You campaign and said pharmacies had remained open throughout lockdown while some GP surgeries and dentists had had to close.

"Pharmacies have continued to provide a consistent service, which the nation depends on to protect their wellbeing. Significant additional work has been undertaken to ensure the vulnerable get what they need on time, and at considerable risk to those providing that care," he said.

“Our doors have remained open for a variety of face to face consultations, modifications have had to be made to our premises to create safe social distancing. An arduous rota of additional cleaning and wearing of PPE has been adhered to, and our delivery service has been extended from our regular 70-80 deliveries to around 150-170 per day. I am so proud, and would like to thank and congratulate my team for the resilience they have shown. Furthermore, I would love to thank our loyal customers for their kind understanding and adherence to the new rules during this challenging time.

Even though we have taken steps to protect ourselves, some of our colleagues have fallen ill during the crisis, and have had to follow the government's directions of self isolation to protect their colleagues and the general public.

These absences, plus the increased workload could have created an insurmountable challenge. Instead, we have been able to rely on the kindness and professionalism of some very brave people who have provided assistance despite not being contractually obliged to do so.”

David finished by saying, “I would like to thank our university and college students that have provided cover; NAMMC "Pharmabikes"; Northampton Fire and Rescue Service; and our GoodSam Volunteers.”

# Pharmacy Representation Review Update: Next Steps

Following the publication of Professor David Wright's review into community pharmacy contractor support and representation, thank you to all contractors who took part in Professor Wright's webinar on this topic. If you missed it, you can [watch an on-demand version on his website](#).

You can also find the full report on that website, and PSNC's summary of it is here:

[PSNC Briefing 020/20: Summary of the Independent Review into Contractor Representation and Support](#)

The review identified a number of issues with the current structures that are providing contractor support and representation and set out 33 recommendations for change. Those ranged from a rebranding exercise and the introduction of a new governance framework, to the creation of a new Council structure for PSNC and a shared vision for the future of community pharmacy.

This week, almost 180 LPC and PSNC representatives took part in a virtual meeting about the findings of the review. The event gave delegates the chance to question Professor Wright on his findings, and also to share their initial reactions to his report.

The results of four delegate poll questions are copied below, and it is particularly striking that 100% of delegates agreed with at least some of the issues identified by Professor Wright and with at least some of his recommendations. A fifth question sought views on a proposal for next steps as follows:

***Our proposal is that we continue working together (PSNC and LPCs) and set up an LPC/PSNC working group to review the recommendations and work on proposals in time for the September LPC Conference.***

PSNC has received a large number of responses and ideas from LPCs, but the clear message is that almost everyone is keen for PSNC and LPCs to work together in some way to explore proposals in time for the September LPC Conference. To facilitate that, in the week commencing Monday 20th July PSNC CEO Simon Dukes will share a proposal with LPCs for our next steps together.

PSNC is absolutely clear that contractors need to be a part of this – to that end, we would welcome your ongoing thoughts and feedback via the [review@psnc.org.uk](mailto:review@psnc.org.uk) email address. The proposal for next steps for PSNC and LPCs will also pick up the ongoing need to engage with the sector as a whole.

PSNC will update contractors again once a way forward has been agreed for the summer.

## AGM

There will be an opportunity for all contractors to attend the virtual Northants and MK LPC AGM. This is scheduled for **17th September 2020 at 12 noon**. Mid August, I will be sending out the voting papers, summary of our annual accounts and an annual report. I will also include a link so that you can join the 'Go to Meeting' if desired.

## End of month

There are no planned changes to the end of month submissions process. Contractors must therefore continue to submit their end of month bundle and FP34C as normal using their usual secure delivery method **no later than the 5th day of the month** following that in which supply was made. PSNC has put together a [list of top tips to help contractors with their end of month process](#)

## New LPC Chair

In July, our Chair, Sue Snelling took the decision to step down to spend more time with her family and to pursue other interests and goals. Over the past 5 years, Sue guided the committee with strong leadership through structural changes. Sue's experience enabled the committee members to successfully restructure our LPC into the organised body we have today. The effort all the committee members (past and present) put into this transformation was particularly noted by Sue. She intends to keep in touch but cannot dedicate the amount of time required to fulfil the role and therefore feels she is right to step down and concentrate on her demanding day job.

At this point in time, a strong direction is especially important as we will have decisions to reach following the publication of the David Wright Review.

Our Vice Chair, Carolynne Freeman who is Professional Services Manager at Jardines (UK) Ltd was unanimously voted into the role of Chair. Carolynne is energised by her appointment and the challenges that it will bring. She intends to further develop the committee ensuring mixed representation and continue to promote openness and transparency. We are all keen to ensure that contractors are very much aware of how funds are managed and spent.

Details of our current committee members as well as our meeting dates can be viewed [on the LPC website](#).

## CPPE

In order to keep their staff and customers safe, CPPE have decided to **postpone all face-to-face events, including pathway events until at least Monday 4 January 2021**, with immediate effect. However, they have been working hard to ensure that you can still learn and will be offering a range of online workshops from mid-July. Topics will include asthma, deprescribing, dementia and many more, so watch this space! <https://www.cppe.ac.uk>

## Free to a good home!

Katie Fulcher, one of the pharmacists at Guilsborough Pharmacy, has some Venalink cold seal items no longer required. Katie is happy to give the following items away:

- One opened but nearly full box of shallow blisters
- One opened but nearly full box of deep blisters
- Lots of divider cards
- Lots of racks
- 4 green bags to transport the packed meds in.

If you are interested, please email:  
[nhspharmacy.guilsboro.guilsboroughfx557@nhs.net](mailto:nhspharmacy.guilsboro.guilsboroughfx557@nhs.net).

## Flu 2020/21

As at 1 September 2020, anyone who is due to undertake annual online refresher training, but has done so within the previous 18 months, does not have to do the training again for the 2020/21 season (although they may do so if they wish). However, they must ensure that they are familiar with the various documents to support the season, including choice of vaccine and contents of the annual flu letter.

### [Appendix B, NHSE&I community pharmacy letter 14th April 2020](#)

The above statement from NHSE&I means that pharmacists who have previously undertaken vaccination training and are due to repeat face-to-face training for both injection technique and basic life support (including administration of adrenaline) in 2020 do not need to do this until 2021.

Ordinarily, all vaccinators are expected to undertake annual update training to ensure their knowledge stays up to date with changes in practice and guidance. This may involve self-directed learning, using relevant references sources, such as the Green Book and the annual flu letter. It may also include online training which is available from a range of providers. The wording in the above NHSE&I statement notes that annual refresher training does not necessarily have to be repeated in 2020/21, subject to the stipulations in the statement. It does however state that vaccinators must ensure that they are familiar with the various documents to support the season, including choice of vaccine and contents of the annual flu letter.

PSNC recommends that all pharmacists that will provide the flu vaccination service during 2020/21, undertake annual update training prior to commencing provision of the service, to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge in relation to the provision of flu vaccinations in 2020/21 and any related matters, such as current guidance on infection control, which may need to be updated in light of the pandemic. This update training can be undertaken in a variety of ways, including self-directed learning and use of online training materials.

The LPC is keen to work closely with multi-discipline organisations ensuring and improving the coverage of the influenza vaccination programme across Milton Keynes and Northants. Following the NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important than ever that we have effective plans in place for the 2020/21 flu season and going forward. This is essential to protect those at risk, prevent ill-health and minimise further impact on the NHS and social care.

Flu vaccination is one of the most effective interventions we have to reduce pressure on the health and social care system during the winter, however winter 2020/21 sees the possibility of co-circulation of COVID-19 and flu.

Like GPs, community pharmacy does not yet have a new specification for this year's service. This is something that PSNC are pressing for as soon as possible.

*Thank you for reading this edition of your e-newsletter from Northants and MK LPC. Keep in touch*

*Tel: 07889412690; email: [chiefofficer@pharmacynorthamptonshire.co.uk](mailto:chiefofficer@pharmacynorthamptonshire.co.uk) ; website: <https://psnc.org.uk/northamptonshire-and-milton-keynes-lpc/>*

*Anne-Marie King (LPC Chief Officer).*