

Wednesday 8th July 2020

Community Pharmacy Somerset Bulletin

This briefing is critical reading as it contains local information and actions required to support you, your team and your business.

This bulletin focuses on the local Somerset system-based factors, decisions and support available, that will impact on your operations.

Please **read, review and reflect** on what you can usefully get from the info and [connect with us](#) if you have any questions or need any further information.

National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA) videos discussing Professor David Wright's independent review into the PSNC and LPCs [Action]

Dear colleagues,

In this bulletin we are including links to three NPA videos discussing the Wright review. I believe they will be informative and promote debate amongst all pharmacists not just those from the independent sector. The observant will notice that they are facilitated by Michael Lennox our Chief Officer who works part time for the NPA advising them particularly around LPC links. This is alongside his Somerset LPC role which is also part time where he is obviously working hard for all our contractors. I hope you get the chance to have a look at the videos and if you do have questions or concerns about the review please forward them to me at peterwhitaker123@gmail.com

Yours sincerely

Peter Whitaker, Chair, Somerset LPC

[Video 1: Initial insight and reactions on the Wright Review on Contractor support and representation for Community Pharmacy from contractors and NPA Members](#) (49.26 minutes).

Featuring Michael Lennox, NPA Integration Lead and Pharmacy Contractors Reena Barai, Olivier Picard and Vikki Furneaux,

[Video 2: Independent contractors and Chairs of LPCs discuss the Wright Review](#) (24:35 minutes).

Featuring Michael Lennox, NPA Integration Lead, Aneet Kapoor, Raj Matharu, Mark Burdon and Reena Barai.

[Video 3: Andrew Lane, Chair NPA and Mark Lyonette, CEO NPA provide an initial steer on the Wright Review](#) (11 minutes).

COVID-19 and influenza vaccination **NEW bulletin section******

To help you to navigate the influenza season this year we have added a new [COVID-19 and influenza vaccination section](#) to the bulletin. The purpose of this is to keep you updated with any new national or local information/guidance. Please take any of the required/recommended actions in each edition of the bulletin to ensure you have a successful influenza vaccination season during this difficult time.

Wellbeing - we are here for you!

We have a [Wellbeing and self-care web page](#) to signpost you and your team to resources intended to help you to maintain your health and wellbeing during this time. This will be updated as new information and resources become available.

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People

1. Personal protective equipment and heat: risk of heat stress [CMO Safety alert – Action]



- Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) in warm/hot environments increases the risk of heat stress.
- Measures to control the temperature of clinical environments and enable staff to make behavioural adaptations to stay cool and well hydrated should be made.
- The frequency of PPE changes may increase - ensure that PPE supplies are sufficient to cover a likely increase in demand.
- Please brief your teams about the signs and symptoms of heat stress and dehydration and mitigating steps they can take:
 - Thirst, dry mouth, dark or strong-smelling urine, urinating infrequently or in small amounts, inability to concentrate, muscle cramps, fainting.
 - Take more frequent breaks and keep hydrated - don't wait until you start to feel unwell before you take a break.
 - Ask your team to look out for the signs of heat stress (eg confusion, looking pale or clammy, fast breathing) in each other.
 - Between shifts, try to stay cool as this will give your body a chance to recover.

2. COVID-19: Pharmacies must complete staff risk assessments as soon as possible and by the end of July 2020 [Action]



- NHSE-I has asked community pharmacy contractors to complete COVID-19 risk assessments for BAME employees and other at-risk groups in the next few weeks.
- This follows publication of Public Health England's report on [Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19](#) and the recommendations set out in the second part of that report on [Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups](#). Data collected by PHE clearly demonstrates that people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, as well as some other groups, are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
- Information about completing the risk assessments is available at the [NHS Employers website](#).
- The GPhC have issued a statement [Reviewing risk assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) encouraging pharmacy owners and employers to review their risk assessments and consider what further actions they could take to protect their staff, trainees and their patients from COVID-19.
- The webinar for community pharmacy contractors on Wednesday 8th July from 19.00-20.00 will focus on risk assessments in community pharmacy. [Click here](#) to join at 7pm on Wednesday.

3. Coronavirus antibody testing [Information]

- Antibody testing is now available for all health and care workers across Somerset. The test is carried out by taking a blood sample and will identify if you have previously been infected with COVID-19 and have developed antibodies.
- There are a number of testing locations that are available including; Burnham on Sea, Frome, Glastonbury, Minehead, North Petherton and Yeovil.
- To request an appointment, please email: somccg.antibodytestingsomerset@nhs.net
- A member of the team will contact you in the next two to three weeks to agree a suitable test location, day and time for your appointment. You will also be sent a booking form that must be completed and returned before the appointment can go ahead.
- Please pass this information on to members of your team.

4. COVID-19 testing for pharmacy staff [Please use the Somerset based service first-line]

- Community Pharmacy Somerset is concerned that our pharmacy teams are not taking full advantage of the Somerset Health system offer to test pharmacy healthcare personnel rapidly and locally.
- Please ensure that your teams, including those who are currently self-isolating due to suspected symptoms of COVID-19, are fully briefed about this great support negotiated by your LPC. This is a key part of your duty of care for your teams; please follow the advice on our website to get any affected individuals in your teams tested and to keep them available for work.

[Somerset COVID-19 testing procedures for staff.](#)

- At present the logistically easier choice is through the Somerset Health and Care system micro-testing sites set up across four locations in Somerset (Taunton, Shepton Mallet, Yeovil

and Bridgwater). Community pharmacy staff are included in frontline worker support.

- There are South West based national units, the nearest ones being [Taunton racecourse](#), [Exeter \(Honiton Rd, Park and Ride, junction 29, M5\)](#) and [Bristol Airport \(Silver Zone car park\)](#) should the local test service not have availability.
- [Click here](#) for information about eligibility and how to access testing at a National Test Centre.
- Please notify the SW NHSE-I Primary Care Team if you have any issues with service delivery during this time - email: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net

5. CPPE Accuracy checking pharmacy technician programme [Great opportunity for your pharmacy technicians to become ACTs]

- This Health Education England funded programme provides an excellent opportunity to upskill members of your team during this challenging time. Wouldn't it be amazing to increase your team's resilience and adaptability in preparedness to thrive post COVID-19?
- The minimum completion period is three months as individuals need to develop their leadership skills and demonstrate accuracy checking competence consistently. The programme must be completed within 12 months.
- The programme is open to all GPhC-registered pharmacy technicians working in community or health in justice. Learning and activities are completed online and in your workplace.
- For further information, please visit the [CPPE website](#).

6. CPPE mental health e-course – extra programme to run this year [Register now!]

- Coronavirus has plunged the world into uncertainty and the constant news about the pandemic can feel relentless. All of this is taking its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with mental illness.
- CPPE are running an extra [Mental health e-course](#) this year to help to equip pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pre-registration pharmacists with the knowledge and skills to support people with mental illness who you encounter in your practice. Completing this course will help you to feel more confident in providing advice to people with mental illness and to deliver a high quality service.
- The course starts on July 20th and runs for 12 weeks. See attached flyer for further information and [click here](#) to register.

7. New training videos for needle exchange [Please promote to your teams]

- Jenny Scott, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, University of Bath has produced some training videos about needle exchange with Exchange Supplies aimed at pharmacy counter staff.
- Your teams can access the training [here](#).
- There is no need to register unless taking the assessment and obtaining a certificate.

Operations

1. Pharmacy frontline stories hub [Please take the opportunity to tell your positive stories about patients you have helped and differences made to people in Somerset]



- The NPA and PSNC have created a media resource hub to make it easier for pharmacy teams and LPCs to tell their NHS frontline stories, to newspapers and via social media.
- The aim is to use the recently intensified media interest in pharmacies and medicines to reinforce key messages. These include asking the public to be courteous to under-pressure staff and to respect social distancing in pharmacies.
- They also aim to increase social media posts via **#pharmacyheroes** to help it reach a wider audience.
- The new hub at: www.nhsfrontline.com - contains:
 - An online form through which you can report your most positive experiences and incidents of going 'above and beyond'
 - Key messages for use in newspapers, online or radio/TV
 - Social media assets and guidance on their use
 - Template newspaper columns to personalise and send to local press
 - A template letter, to personalise and send to local MPs
 - Links to media and lobbying resources for LPCs
 - Links to media resources in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as England.

2. Business Continuity Planning and Somerset pharmacy 'buddy' system [Action]



- Prepare for potential staff absence and ensure they are clear who to contact if they are unable to work and how.
- Consider arrangements with neighbouring pharmacies, eg, to help provide absence/holiday cover or take it in turns to close for cleaning etc, to ensure that patients continue to have access to pharmaceutical services.
- Community Pharmacy Somerset has been working closely with NHSE-I South West to establish a suggested 'buddy' system for pharmacies within each PCN. The purpose of this is that should your pharmacy need to close you can liaise with your 'buddy' to seek their help in supporting your patients. Please see attached Somerset pharmacies buddy mapping spreadsheet to see the proposed pharmacy buddies. If you have any comments please contact yvonne.somersetlpc@gmail.com
- If you do need to close inform your NHS England Regional team immediately using the normal process via PharmOutcomes or via email england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net
- Check your closure processes, principles, communications and contact lists are up-to-date:
 - How will you communicate this to your patients? eg, put a sign on the door, update your web page and **ensure your DOS is updated.**
 - How will you communicate your closure to other NHS Agencies that depend on your services? eg, GP Surgeries, other local pharmacies, other NHS agencies where you have locally commissioned services, CCGs, Local Authorities etc.

- Think about other aspects to closing as well as your normal processes, eg, contacting your drugs supplier, are you due a clinical waste collection etc.
- How can your staff members to work from home, where they are well enough to do so? This could include taking telephone calls to support your patients.
- Do you have any patients who attend for daily services, eg, supervised consumption, how can patients collect made up prescriptions?
- Have you sent outstanding prescriptions back to the spine - informing patients that you have done this and how and where they can obtain there medicines.
- Do you have any patient deliveries due today or the over the next 14 days?
- Consider any shielded or vulnerable patients?
- Do you do monitored dosage systems for care and nursing homes – can these continue?
- Please ensure that you keep the LPC and NHSE-I regional team informed as to your progress with your action plan and any re-opening date.
- Please contact yvonne.somersetlpc@gmail.com for support.

3. Care homes specialist information service [Information]

- Following the merger of Taunton and Somerset FT with Somerset Partnership to form Somerset NHS Foundation Trust (SomersetFT), the Medicines Information Service at SomersetFT will now be available to provide support to community pharmacy colleagues who may have a complex care home medication query they are unable to answer.
SomersetFT Medicines Information Service Telephone helpline (9:00-17:00 Mon-Fri): 01823 342253 or email: Pharmacy.Medicinesinformation@SomersetFT.nhs.uk
- Somerset CCG medicines management team can also be contacted regarding and queries relating to the Somerset Formulary or medicines commissioning. [Click here](#) for further information and contact details.

4. Varenicline (Champix®) PgD online training [Book your place now]

- This training is for pharmacists who deliver the Varenicline PgD community pharmacy service in Somerset who are due an update or those who are planning to start delivering the service.
- We know that outcomes from COVID-19 are worse for those people who smoke so this is a way that you could help. Delivering smoking cessation support adds to your business offer and footfall, as well as income, patient care, satisfaction, loyalty and helping people to improve their health and lifestyle.
- **Last quarter our top performing Pharmacy earned £448.82 in Champix® service provision. ...This could be you!!!**
- The quit clubs have waiting lists of clients waiting to be referred into a pharmacy in their area of choice so there is a real need to train more pharmacists to deliver the service, so please sign up!
- If you are a locum pharmacist this training is also for you if you work in any pharmacies providing or planning to provide the service.

Training and refresher dates (all 7:00-9:30pm online):

- Thu 24 September 2020
- Mon 09 November 2020 (*please note this date has changed*)
- To book please email: anne.somersetlpc@gmail.com with details of the pharmacies in Somerset that you work in.

COVID-19 and influenza vaccination



- As we approach the influenza season this year there are still a lot of unknowns on how the vaccination service will operate. Community Pharmacy Somerset is here to support and help you. We will encourage sharing of ideas and collaboration across PCNs and primary care.
- Please read the [annual flu letter](#) that was published on 14 May 2020.
- As new national or local information/guidance is published or received we will communicate it to you via three ways:
 - Community Pharmacy Somerset bulletin
 - Community Pharmacy Somerset website
 - Emails from Yvonne (Engagement officer, Community Pharmacy Somerset)
- Please contact yvonne.somersetlpc@gmail.com for support.

Customers

1. Supervised Consumption in Community Pharmacies during COVID-19 [Action]



- Turning Point is looking at their prescribing for future prescriptions for clients and regulations are starting to revert to normal operation, especially around Controlled Drugs.
- Some pharmacies have reported that space to dispense and safely store two weeks of medication for Turning Point clients is becoming an issue.
- See attached briefing from Turning Point for further information.
- If you are severely affected by storage problems, or have any questions, please email: yvonne.somersetlpc@gmail.com or Justin Hoggans at TP, email: justin.hoggans@turning-point.co.uk to discuss your situation and work out a solution.

2. Counterfeit benzodiazepine and other drugs - alert from Public Health England (PHE) SW [Action]



- Reports of counterfeit benzodiazepine and other drugs circulating in Plymouth, Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Torbay, Swindon and Wiltshire have been received. PHE has been tracking similar incidents in the South East and North East.
- Hospital admissions and some deaths that may be associated with these counterfeit drugs have been reported.
- Presenting symptoms have included paralysis and loss of memory for the 24-72 hours of intoxication, with some users presenting with a significant dissociative state making management of individual situations more complex.
- The drugs are being manufactured to resemble prescribed medicines including diazepam, lorazepam, flunitrazepam and alprazolam (packed in blister packs or pharmacy tubs). They

may also contain dangerous quantities of psychoactive substances, other harmful chemicals, or in some cases, none. Further forensic laboratory testing is taking place to confirm the content of seized products.

- Using high-strength benzodiazepines can result in an unintended overdose especially if taken with opioids such as heroin, methadone and buprenorphine; gabapentinoids such as pregabalin and gabapentin; and/or alcohol.
- Drugs and alcohol with a respiratory depressant effect may be especially dangerous in conjunction with coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.
- Please report incidents through your local reporting processes.
- **Please do not include patient identifiable data in your communications.**

Finance

- Nothing new to report or share this week.

Contact details and useful resources

Contact details:

- CEO: Michael Lennox. Tel: 07798 861866. Email: michael.somersetlpc@gmail.com
- Engagement Officer: Yvonne Lamb. Tel: 07932 952497. Email: yvonne.somersetlpc@gmail.com
- Administration Officer: Mary Pennington. Tel: 077142 14811. Email: somersetlpc@gmail.com

If you wish to contact any other Community Pharmacy Somerset member, visit our website at: [LPC members and officers](#).

Useful resources:

- [CPPE COVID-19 learning and resource hub](#)
- [NHS \(COVID-19\) Community Pharmacy Standard Operating Procedure](#) and [Contact details for Community Pharmacy SOP](#)
- [NPA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) updates](#)
- [PSNC COVID-19 hub](#)
- [Royal Pharmaceutical Society Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) hub](#)
- [Somerset LPC website](#)



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