



Joint statement on medicines supply

Co-signed by the CCA, AIM, NPA, PSNC and RPS

We recognise that some patients and members of the public are concerned about the potential impact that Brexit could have on their ability to access the medicines they need.

Over the past year we have been working closely with colleagues from across the pharmacy sector, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the NHS and other stakeholders to seek to ensure the continued supply of medicines and healthcare services in community pharmacies as the UK leaves the European Union.

DHSC began to release details of its plans for ensuring medicines supply in the event of a no-deal Brexit, along with supportive guidance, back in August 2018. Since then these plans have been under regular review and the current plans are multi-layered. Medicines will be given priority at ports and alternative routes for bringing supplies into the country have been identified. Medicines manufacturers have been encouraged to build up buffer stock in the UK and DHSC has procured a new freight service which will be available to transport urgently needed medicines and medicinal products into the UK quickly. This additional supply route is intended to provide an extra level of protection in the event that manufacturers' contingency arrangements are not sufficient.

Whilst prescribers, pharmacists and the public have been asked not to stockpile medicines, patients are advised to continue to keep ordering prescriptions and taking their medicines as normal. Guidance has been made available for patients on the [NHS.UK website](https://www.nhs.uk).

Towards the end of 2018 we collectively worked with DHSC as they reviewed legislation to enable pharmacists to support the wider NHS in the event of serious shortages of medicines. This new legislation is now in place so that, if the Secretary of State believes there to be a serious shortage, pharmacists will be enabled to provide continued access to medicines and patients will continue to receive the best possible care. The Serious Shortage Protocols are intended to prevent unnecessary additional burden being placed upon general practice during what would be an already challenging situation.

In the weeks leading up to the end of October, and beyond, we will continue to monitor the situation and do all we can to help community pharmacy teams provide their patients with the support and care that they need.

If you would like more information about how the community pharmacy sector is preparing for Brexit, please [visit the PSNC website](https://www.psnco.org.uk).

