



COVID-19 Special

Detailing the plans put in place to support community pharmacy teams through the pandemic



Simon Dukes
PSNC Chief Executive

I'm not sure it's possible even to summarise, in my usual 650 words, all the work that PSNC has been doing over the past four weeks to support contractors and their teams at the frontline of community pharmacy. So I'm not going to. On the PSNC website you will find resources, tools and information on funding, contractual and regulatory matters, business continuity, opening hours and closures, supply, Easter opening, PPE, delivery service, staff safety, education and training and much more. All of it updated regularly on the basis of new information every day. Instead, I thought I would focus on the work that all of you are doing.

Ministers are aware that community pharmacies are playing a hugely important role

I know Ministers are aware that community pharmacies are playing a hugely important role in the response to COVID-19. As well as ensuring that patients continue to get their medicines – an increasingly difficult task in light of ongoing supply chain issues and social distancing requirements – pharmacies are now in many areas the only primary health professionals that patients can still see in person.

Chief Executive's blog

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes vows to utilise the extraordinary efforts of pharmacy teams during these unprecedented times in funding negotiations.

We all owe you a debt of gratitude

One pharmacy manager told PSNC last week they are now seeing more patients "than ever before", and this story seems to be echoed across the country. The value of the healthcare advice that pharmacies are giving, along with the safe supply of medicines on which so many people rely to stay healthy, has increased significantly during this pandemic. Pharmacies are playing a critical role in supporting patients and taking pressure off the rest of the NHS.

Which means that those underlying funding and capacity challenges for the sector which I have spoken about before need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, and as part of a transparent and shared vision for the future of the network. The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework settlement agreed last July makes no allowance for inflation despite material increases in the National Minimum Wage from April 2020, and there has been no opportunity to make any of the efficiency savings implicit in the settlement assumptions. It certainly didn't have COVID-19 built in to it!

The network resilience that the NHS is relying on at present cannot be taken for granted. As one independent community pharmacy contractor told PSNC recently: "I have done everything the Government has asked of me ... but we are simply not being funded adequately for the job we are doing. If my doors were to close, the local primary care system would fall over, and yet here I am at serious risk of going out of business in the middle of this national crisis."

Pharmacists talk of a deepening sense of anxiety and fear amongst their teams; they tell of gruelling work schedules which are affecting their families and their wellbeing and are unsustainable from a health

perspective long term; they say that morale is at an all-time low as they struggle to keep up with demand; and they talk of the abuse that they suffer daily from

members of the public who are angry, frightened and do not understand the challenges facing pharmacy teams. Their stories paint a worrying picture of a group of people working for the NHS operating under immense pressure and in a sector that is close to collapse from exhaustion and underfunding.

PSNC's mission is clear. It is to get the sector enough financial support to get us through COVID-19 – which we and the NHS both need. To do this, NHSE&I have to recognise what is obvious to us, our patients, healthcare colleagues and now society as a whole – that community pharmacy is a crucial part of the NHS. Only then can we sit down and together with NHSE&I and DHSC have a fundamental review of the Contractual Framework and a full and frank discussion about what the Government and NHS want from us in a new normal world and how it should be funded.

The network resilience that the NHS is relying on at present cannot be taken for granted

One final thing. I need to repeat what I said in my recent webinar on Wednesday 15th April (still available on the PSNC website!) – on behalf of all of us at PSNC, thank you for everything that you and your teams are doing to help our country through this national crisis. We all owe you a debt of gratitude.

PSNC COVID-19 Negotiations Update

PSNC has been working hard to put plans in place to support community pharmacy teams through the COVID-19 pandemic.



PSNC is continuing to press for further support and protection for pharmacies

PSNC has published a list of the possible action points that we are in urgent negotiations with the NHS and Government about to ensure that community pharmacy teams are fully supported in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These include discussions on an urgent funding rescue package, recognising the enormous financial pressures on contractors at this time and the need to ensure that the pharmacy network can continue to stay open and serving patients.

The UK response to the COVID-19 pandemic is significant and wide-reaching. The day-to-day running of community pharmacies has, and will continue to, change to meet the needs of patients and the wider public. These changes are already putting immense pressure on pharmacies and we know that it is imperative that they get the support they need throughout this pandemic.

PSNC has been in urgent and wide-ranging discussions with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) on the support and measures needed for a number of weeks now. Many of the negotiations are very detailed and require Ministerial or other approval, including in some cases legal changes, which can take time to achieve.

Whilst we have already achieved some key wins through the negotiations – such as a relaxation in the rules around pharmacy closed-door working – discussions on many other crucial topics are ongoing. So that contractors and LPCs can see the scope of the measures we are working to secure, we have published our live negotiations action list.

Read PSNC Negotiations Action List at: psnc.org.uk/covid19negotiations

Ministers agree £300 million cash injection

Ministers have agreed to inject a total of £300 million of advance funding into community pharmacies over the next two months in recognition of the significant cashflow pressures facing the sector at this point in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The payments will need to be reconciled at a later date and they will be paid as 'uplifts' to contractors' January and February payments which are payable in early April and May. Find out more at: ow.ly/QjX730qA4Zd

Contractor guidance

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Dr Keith Ridge has begun a series of regular communications about COVID-19 for the community pharmacy sector. These are being posted on the NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) website: ow.ly/bzxX30qA5qZ

NHSE&I are also issuing a daily COVID-19 Primary Care bulletin, which includes a specific section for community pharmacy updates. You can sign up for these at: ow.ly/6WGi30qA5qM

On-demand PSNC webinar

PSNC held COVID-19 webinar for community pharmacy contractors on 15th April and a recorded version is now available to watch.

During the webinar Simon Dukes, PSNC Chief Executive, informed viewers about PSNC's work to ensure the right support is in place for contractors and their teams, and answered questions live.

Watch the on-demand webinar at: psnc.org.uk/covid19webinar

Media and Parliamentary Work

PSNC has been working with the other national pharmacy organisations on drawing attention to community pharmacy's role in the COVID-19 response. This work has included issuing press releases to the national media, giving radio interviews and providing statements to newspapers. You can see some of the recent pharmacy stories on page 10 of CPN.

We have also been working with the other pharmacy bodies on MP engagement, taking advice from Lexington Communications on COVID-19 related Parliamentary work. We are expecting further media coverage and to build more support for community pharmacy in the coming weeks.

Visit psnc.org.uk/coronavirus and then see the Promoting pharmacy's role page for further details on how we are celebrating our **#pharmacyheroes**.

NHS Volunteer Responders

HM Government and the NHS have worked with the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) to recruit NHS Volunteer Responders via the GoodSam app. Around 750,000 people have already signed up to volunteer.

Patients can request help from the RVS by calling 0808 196 3646 (8am-8pm), or pharmacy contractors can request help for their at-risk patients via a website or call centre run by the RVS, who will match people who need help with volunteers who live near to them, using the GoodSam app. If they wish, contractors can also request help from NHS Volunteer Responders to deliver all prescriptions, not just those for shielded patients.

Find out more about how to access help from NHS Volunteer Responders by reading NHSE&I's information document: [ow/ly/fGjK30qzksL](https://www.nhs.uk/ow/ly/fGjK30qzksL)

Shielded Patient Flag added to SCR

NHS Digital have added a 'Shielded Patient Flag' (also known as a Vulnerability flag) to the NHS Summary Care Record (SCR) of patients who are on the shielded patient list. This flag displays an alert when viewing the SCR of such a patient.

The alert is available when using NHS Digital's SCRa web portal (available from within the Spine portal) and via SCR 1-click solutions. SCR 1-click is currently available on Cegedim Pharmacy Manager, PharmOutcomes and Sonar Informatics.

Flu Vaccination Service training

Following PSNC requesting changes to the usual face-to-face training requirements for the Flu Vaccination Service, Public Health England has confirmed that anyone who has undertaken the vaccinations training before and is due to undertake face-to-face training this year, can participate in online update training instead, delaying the face-to-face requirement until next year.

For more information, please see: psnc.org.uk/flutrainig

Pandemic Delivery Service

New medicines delivery Advanced service is launched alongside changes to the pharmacy Terms of Service to complement its introduction.

“Launch of community pharmacy delivery service to support shielded patients”



As part of the NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pharmacy Terms of Service have been changed and a new Advanced service introduced for all pharmacy contractors, bar distance selling pharmacies (DSPs).

Terms of Service changes

Where a shielded patient cannot identify a family member, friend or carer to collect their prescriptions, the pharmacy team must:

- provide advice to the patient on how to identify a local volunteer to collect the prescription from the pharmacy on their behalf and then deliver it; or
- where no volunteer is available, deliver the medicine as part of the Advanced service; or
- where no volunteer is available, arrange for another pharmacy to deliver it on their behalf; or
- where no volunteer is available, arrange for the prescription to be dispensed and delivered by another pharmacy.

Pharmacies (excluding DSPs) will be paid a monthly allowance to recognise this additional work. The monthly payment, coming from outside of the community pharmacy global sum, will be aligned to the banding used for the Transition Payment.

Advanced service

An Advanced service, which contractors can provide if they wish to, has also been commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I); this will fund any deliveries that contractors have to make to shielded patients under options b or c opposite.

The service specification includes details on the eligible patient group and sets out the requirements the contractor must comply with, including record-keeping. Contractors (excluding DSPs) can claim a payment of £5 per delivery as part of the Advanced service, plus an allowance for VAT.

Pandemic Delivery Service page

This PSNC webpage provides information on new contractual responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic related to supporting extremely vulnerable patients selfisolating at home (shielded patients) to obtain their medicines. It also contains general guidance on delivering all prescriptions during the pandemic and on the use of volunteers.

Visit psnc.org.uk/deliveryservice to learn more.

Contractual and regulatory changes

Support agreed for community pharmacy contractors during the COVID-19 pandemic includes temporary amendments to some CPCF requirements.

NMS and MUR data submission

NHSE&I will not require quarterly New Medicine Service (NMS) and Medicines Use Review (MUR) data submissions during the period of the pandemic.

Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS)

The scheme has been postponed for three months and the period of delay will be kept under review. The released £18.75 million will be delivered to contractors for activity associated with the COVID-19 response.

Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS)

Patients being referred to the CPCS are now being told to phone the pharmacy and to speak to the pharmacist. Unless there is a clinical need for the patient to be seen in the pharmacy, the pharmacist can provide a consultation by telephone and can still claim the fee for provision of the service. Note, existing pilots for GP referrals to the service will remain in place, but these will not be extended at this time.

NHS complaints process

NHSE&I has paused the NHS complaints process, initially for three months from 28th March 2020. The pause is not being enforced for any healthcare providers who do wish to operate as normal with regard to complaints. NHSE&I will also not require annual complaints report submissions from contractors during the period of the pandemic.



NHS 111 Online CPCS urgent supply referrals

The NHS 111 Online service now makes CPCS referrals to community pharmacies where people need urgent access to their usual prescribed medicines. This rollout of this functionality has been brought forward in response to the huge surge in demand for NHS 111 services. For contractors and their teams, the CPCS consultation should be conducted in the normal way.

Public health campaigns

For the time being these campaigns are suspended and any that are agreed to run during the period of the pandemic will only be focused on the national COVID-19 response.

Hepatitis C testing and PhIF pilots

The introduction of this Advanced Service has been delayed from April 2020, for at least three months. Also the three Pharmacy Integration Fund (PhIF) pilots announced in February (blood pressure testing; stop smoking support; and point of care testing) have been postponed until further notice.

Data Security and Protection Toolkit

The submission deadline has been amended from 31st March 2020 to 30th September 2020.

Practice leaflets

NHSE&I will not take action against contractors who have not updated their practice leaflets during the period of the pandemic.

Please visit psnc.org.uk/coronavirus for more information.

Health Education England (HEE)

The following work has been undertaken by HEE in recent weeks. Further information on all of the below can be accessed via its new Coronavirus (COVID-19) information for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians webpage: ow.ly/PmYW30qyyRQ

Facilitating the deployment of MPharm students

Joint Guidance: Facilitating deployment of pharmacy undergraduate students to support the pharmacy workforce has been issued which defines guiding principles for how employers might support safe and effective deployment of pharmacy students within pharmacy settings, during the emergency period.

Current advice is that students only deploy in a way/at a time that will not interrupt their amended schedule of assessment.

Guidance for Pre-registration trainees

In response to concerns over the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on pharmacy education and training and the broader impact on clinical care, HEE (along with the Statutory Education Bodies Scotland and Wales) have issued national guidance for Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians and Pre-Registration Pharmacist Trainees.

The guidance highlights the importance of supporting trainees and protecting patients.

Coronavirus e-learning for healthcare workers

A free to access e-learning programme on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic from HEE's e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LFH) is now available for the UK health and care workforce. The programme includes key materials to help the healthcare professionals respond to Coronavirus, and more content will be added in the coming weeks.

For more information about the programme, visit: www.e-lfh.org.uk/coronavirus

Operational and workforce support

Exceptional measures may be required to ensure patient safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the welfare of the pharmacy team.

Help to operate your pharmacy safely during the pandemic



New provisions introduced

The following provisions have come into effect in the past month. Full details can be found in PSNC's COVID-19 hub: psnc.org.uk/coronavirus

Opening hours flexibility: The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for community pharmacies in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic was updated to give pharmacies some flexibility in the hours in which they need to open to the public.

Emergency regulations: The Pharmaceutical Services (Advanced and Enhanced Services and Emergency Declaration) Directions 2020 declared an emergency requiring the flexible provision of pharmaceutical services. Direction 2 states that until 1st July 2020 NHS England must exercise its functions, or consider exercising its functions, under NHS regulations relating to: relocation of premises, temporary flexible provision of hours and/or closures, appliance contractors, LPS pharmacies, and dispensing doctors.

Easter opening: NHSE&I required all community pharmacies in England to open from 2pm to 5pm on Good Friday and Easter Monday. The requirement was made under the National Health Service (Amendments Relating to the Provision of Primary Care Services During a Pandemic etc.) Regulations 2020. PSNC and NHSE&I agreed that contractors will be funded for these openings at a rate of £250 per hour, to be claimed through the Manage Your Payments (MYS) portal.

Supporting guidance provided

Additionally, the following guidance to support business continuity and network resilience has been provided. All resources can be found in PSNC's COVID-19 hub: psnc.org.uk/coronavirus

Resilience guidance: PSNC (with the NPA, CCA and AIM) published guidance to help support and maintain the community pharmacy network during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance addresses three aspects of an NHS pharmacy's terms of service – opening hours, responsible pharmacist and unplanned (emergency) closures – with advice given on how best to address each going forwards. See our network resilience webpage.

Temporary closures: New options for temporary closure are now available under emergency provisions in NHS Regulations (see opposite). PSNC has brought together guidance and resources for contractors if they need to: close temporarily during an emergency or change opening hours; temporarily suspend services due to illness or other reasonable cause; or relocate during an emergency. See our network resilience webpage.

Business continuity guidance: Advice and information on shared care clients, nursing and care home patients, and providing Multi-compartment Compliance Aids (MCAs) is available on our business continuity webpage.

COVID-19 testing for pharmacy staff

Information on how healthcare workers, including community pharmacy staff, can access testing for COVID-19 has now been released.

An online portal is now available for healthcare workers to book tests



The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has announced details of a new portal for booking COVID-19 tests for key workers, including community pharmacy, which is now available for use by team members and employers.

This portal replaces an earlier temporary system for pharmacy staff from the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Testing will allow those currently unable to return to work because they or a member of their family or household have symptoms of coronavirus to know whether they do have the virus.

Who is eligible for a test?

- Frontline workers who are self-isolating because they are symptomatic (but no other members of their household); and
- Symptomatic members of the household of a frontline worker, where the frontline worker is self-isolating because of the symptoms of the other

member of their household – in this case only the household member(s) (and not the frontline worker themselves), is eligible to receive a coronavirus test with the frontline worker's name being noted.

How can I apply for a test?

Pharmacy staff who think they or one of their household are eligible for a test can apply for one via: ow.ly/l8cl30qBpVO

What can employers do to assist their staff?

Pharmacy contractors can let staff know they can now request a test via the GOV.UK website.

Employers can also register so they can then submit the contact information of employees who would benefit from being tested. Once submitted, the employees will be sent a message providing details on how they can book a test. Register at: ow.ly/tO3Q30qBpUu

Staff wellbeing and COVID-19 testing page

Maintaining the health and wellbeing of pharmacy team members is a high priority for pharmacy contractors and the NHS during the COVID-19 pandemic. This PSNC webpage contains information on NHS support tools to assist with staff health and wellbeing, and information on how pharmacy team members can access testing for COVID-19.

Visit psnc.org.uk/COVID19testing to learn more.

Public information posters

Public Health England (PHE) updated the set of COVID-19 posters for use in pharmacies on 10th April 2020, which can be downloaded from the PHE Campaign Resource Centre: ow.ly/VREn30qzcUn

The poster series includes an updated poster that should be displayed so it is visible to people seeking to enter the premises, a poster to advise on maintaining a 2m distance from others and a poster pharmacies can use if they are working behind closed doors for part of the day. Complementary digital resources are also now available to use on social media and in-pharmacy screens.

A pack of posters has been sent to community pharmacies via Royal Mail, with deliveries expected by 26th April.

Protection of staff

The latest guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE), published on 2nd April, recommends the use of fluid-resistant surgical masks in pharmacies when working in an area with possible or confirmed cases and where staff cannot maintain 2 metres social distance from patients. PPE from Public Health England's stockpile is being supplied on a weekly basis to AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix Healthcare.

NHSE&I have announced that they will make a £300 payment to all pharmacies, except distance-selling pharmacies, to support the installation of bollards, physical barriers or screens. This funding comes from outside the global sum and payment will be made automatically.

Free access to wellbeing apps

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) have issued information on the first in a series of psychological support for all NHS staff, including those working in primary care, during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The initial offer involves free access to a number of wellbeing apps (Unmind, Headspace, Sleepio and Daylight) from now until the end of December 2020 to support healthcare workers' mental health and wellbeing.

Find out more at: ow.ly/P2ft30qzcWA

Dispensing and Supply News

Our Dispensing and Supply Team highlights the latest news, information and guidance that community pharmacy teams should be aware of.

Dispensing paper prescriptions

While paper prescriptions are becoming less common as most prescribing in primary care is undertaken using the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS), pharmacy contractors are reminded that they must dispense legally valid paper prescriptions presented for dispensing, including those from healthcare providers who do not have access to EPS, such as dental practices and hospitals. Plans to extend EPS to additional care settings has been expedited to help reduce the volume of paper prescriptions.

EPS pharmacy nominations via NHS App

The NHS App now has a feature that allows patients to view and change their EPS pharmacy nomination. Having a pharmacy nomination in EPS removes the need for patients to collect FP10s from GP practices and drop them off at a pharmacy, supporting the public to observe social distancing.

The NHS App team at NHS Digital have been working on this development for some time, but its release has been prioritised to help patients and primary care teams better cope with ordering and obtaining prescriptions during the pandemic. Learn more at: [ow.ly/2hOp30qyyAG](https://www.nhs.uk/2hOp30qyyAG)

Update from the HDA

The Healthcare Distribution Association (HDA) has informed PSNC about the work its members are doing to ensure the ongoing resilience of the supply chain. HDA wholesalers will be as flexible as possible regarding credit caps for pharmacy purchases at this time, but has asked that pharmacy teams ensure delivery tote boxes are returned as quickly as possible to the support the increase in demand on the supply chain. Tote boxes are essential to safe medicines supply as they help suppliers to protect and track medicines and so pharmacies are requested to return any totes to their supplier's delivery driver when they are making a delivery.

Parallel export ban additions

Since 20th March, 132 items have been added to the list of medicine which must not be parallel exported from the UK. The new restrictions cover crucial medicines such as adrenaline, codeine,

insulin, paracetamol and inhalers. The parallel export ban will help ensure there is an uninterrupted supply of medicines for treating COVID-19 patients. View the latest list at: [ow.ly/QX0W30qzN6l](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parallel-export-ban-list)

Advice on ibuprofen and coronavirus

The Commission of Human Medicines (CHM) Expert Working Group on COVID-19 has concluded that there is currently insufficient evidence to establish a link between use of ibuprofen, or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), and susceptibility to contracting COVID-19 or the worsening of its symptoms. Learn more at: [ow.ly/Qjf830qBonb](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ibuprofen-and-coronavirus)



Retrospective price adjustments

Following representation from PSNC to account for new Omeprazole and Melatonin products entering the market, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has retrospectively determined changes to Drug Tariff listings.

Omeprazole

New licensed liquid products have led to the addition of Omeprazole 10mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free and Omeprazole 20mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free into Part VIIIA from the March 2020 Drug Tariff.

Both Part VIIIA listings have special container status applied and are priced based on the Rosemont Pharmaceuticals Ltd products.

The equivalent Part VIIIB listings have also been removed, meaning payments for March and April prescriptions will be as per the retrospectively determined Part VIIIA listings.

Melatonin

The relaunch of Melatonin 1mg/ml oral solution sugar free as an alcohol free formulation by Colonis Pharma has led to the deletion of Melatonin 5mg/5ml oral solution alcohol free and Melatonin 5mg/5ml oral suspension alcohol free from Part VIIIB of the Drug Tariff.

As Melatonin 1mg/ml oral solution sugar free already appeared in Part VIIIA of the Drug Tariff, payments for March and April prescriptions for the 5mg/5ml oral solution alcohol free will be as per that listing. However, retrospective adjustment will not apply to Melatonin 5mg/5ml oral suspension alcohol free as this is a different formulation.

COVID-19 related payments

PSNC's guide outlines how and when the payments announced so far to support community pharmacies during the COVID-19 pandemic will be made.

A number of new COVID-19 related payments for community pharmacy contractors have been announced in recent weeks. Here we summarise how to claim for these payments (if required) and when each payment will be made.

The table below provides claim details (where applicable) and other information for the agreed COVID-19 related payments:

Payment type	Claim method	Payment amount	Payment due	How payment will appear on your Schedule of payments														
Easter Bank Holiday opening hours (Good Friday and Easter Monday)*	MYS portal	£250 per hour (maximum £750/day for opening of at least 3 hours per day)	Payment due on 1st June if claimed using MYS by 5th May	This payment will not appear on the Schedule of Payment. NHSBSA will issue individual letters to contractors who claimed via MYS.														
Pandemic Delivery Service (Essential Service)**	Automatic payment by NHSBSA	<table><thead><tr><th>Number of items per month from 1 April 2020</th><th>Monthly payment from 1 April 2020</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>0-100</td><td>£0</td></tr><tr><td>101 – 2,500</td><td>£34</td></tr><tr><td>2,501 – 5,000</td><td>£396</td></tr><tr><td>5,001 – 12,500</td><td>£500</td></tr><tr><td>12,501 – 19,167</td><td>£542</td></tr><tr><td>19,168+</td><td>£563</td></tr></tbody></table>	Number of items per month from 1 April 2020	Monthly payment from 1 April 2020	0-100	£0	101 – 2,500	£34	2,501 – 5,000	£396	5,001 – 12,500	£500	12,501 – 19,167	£542	19,168+	£563	Monthly – with first payment due on 1st July	Paid under same line as Transitional payment
Number of items per month from 1 April 2020	Monthly payment from 1 April 2020																	
0-100	£0																	
101 – 2,500	£34																	
2,501 – 5,000	£396																	
5,001 – 12,500	£500																	
12,501 – 19,167	£542																	
19,168+	£563																	
Pandemic Delivery Service (Advanced Service)**	MYS portal	£6 (including VAT) per delivery	Monthly – with first payment due on 1st July for deliveries made in April and claimed using MYS by 5th May	‘Additional Advance Payment’														
Payment for installation of physical barriers e.g. screens**	Automatic payment by NHSBSA	£300	End of April/ early May	This payment will not appear on the Schedule of Payment. NHSBSA will issue individual letters to contractors informing them of payment.														

*Contractors who remained open on Good Friday 2020 and Easter Monday 2020 as per a local agreement with NHSE&I should only claim for payment as outlined above for up to 3 hours per day based on the number of hours they were open. If they were open for more than 3 hours, the balance must be claimed from the regional team as per local agreement. Pharmacy contractors must not duplicate claims for the same opening hours by claiming on MYS and through local arrangements.

**Excludes distance -selling pharmacies.

Pharmacy contractors should use the NHS Business Services Authority's (NHSBSA's) Manage Your Service (MYS) portal to claim for the Easter Bank Holiday opening and the Advanced Pandemic Delivery Service.



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 to find answers to your questions.



NHS Digital's EPS work

NHS Digital's work to support the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic includes work across several EPS-related projects.

Continuation of Phase 4 roll-out

Around a quarter of GP practices already have prescribing system systems which can send Phase 4 prescriptions and NHS Digital is continuing to support suppliers with their roll-outs to the rest.

TPP SystmOne GP system and EMIS are increasing the pace of their Phase 4 roll-outs across their GP practice users, whilst Microtest and Vision are currently in the piloting stage.

EPS in urgent and other care settings

EPS started being used by urgent care prescribers in 2018 and it is available within:

- Advanced AdastrA prescribing system
- IC24
- EMIS Web systems
- TPP systems

NHS Digital is now working with EMIS and TPP so that EPS is an option for prescribers to use in extended access hubs, community, out of hours and urgent care settings.

New 'one-off nomination' feature

Following piloting, TPP SystmOne has now rolled out a one-off EPS nomination feature for prescribers using their system.

This feature has been requested for use during emergencies where a pharmacy is going through a temporary closure and for those patients who are not ready to commit to a nomination but would like a one-off nomination instead of a Phase 4 prescription.

The EMIS prescribing systems is also developing this functionality for their EMIS Web system.

Further information about EPS is available at: psnc.org.uk/EPS

End of month submission reminder

PSNC's Dispensing and Supply Team advises community pharmacy contractors on handling end of month submissions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contractors must continue to submit their monthly prescription bundles as normal



The monthly submission bundle and its associated FP34C submission form is effectively a pharmacy's invoice to the NHS for payment; without it no payment can be made. In the current circumstances it is more important than ever to ensure submission is made in good time.

Contractors should submit their end of month bundle and FP34C using their usual delivery method no later than the 5th day of the month following that in which supply was made. However, they may also wish to consider the following advice in light of the current situation.

- With pharmacies seeing an increase in prescription volumes including prescriptions from displaced patients, please remember to check and apply the correct exempt / paid status for EPS and paper prescriptions before submitting.
- Contractors can obtain and view PMR system supplier reports which show total of paper prescriptions dispensed and EPS claims submitted to date.

- Where possible, contractors are urged to use Manage Your Service (MYS), which can be accessed remotely, to submit their FP34C month-end declarations electronically and send the paper prescription bundle with a printed copy of their corresponding FP34C.
- If your regular courier service is unavailable, contractors should make alternative arrangements for delivery of bundles using a secure track and trace method.

Further guidance on preparing your prescription bundle can be found at: psnc.org.uk/submission

If a pharmacy is faced with an emergency (unplanned) closure and does not expect to open during the usual end-of-month submission period, contractors are advised to contact the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) to notify them if there is likely to be a delay in bundle submission.

EPS timely submission tips

In these times where there could be a risk of temporary closure caused by COVID-19, contractors may wish to consider the following EPS submission tips.

- Send EPS dispense and claim messages promptly and often, preferably daily and before the 180-day (six-month) EPS prescription claiming deadline;
- Take account of the EPS 5-day window (see psnc.org.uk/timeEPS);
- Use the 'bulk submit' feature on PMR systems, where available;
- Ensure that all electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) prescription issues are claimed within 365 days; and
- Ensure that Schedule 2, 3 and 4 Controlled Drug prescriptions have EPS dispense and claim messages sent in a timely manner.

Drug Tariff Watch

The Preface lists additions, deletions and alterations to the Drug Tariff. Below is a quick summary of the changes due to take place from **1st May 2020**. You may also wish to see our factsheets on the Drug Tariff at: psnc.org.uk/dtresources

KEY:

- Special container
- * This pack only (others already available)
- SLS Selected List Scheme

Part VIIIA additions

Category A

- *Almotriptan 12.5mg tablets (3)
- *Almotriptan 12.5mg tablets (9)

Category C

- SLS Alprostadil 20microgram powder and solvent for solution for injection cartridges with device ■ (2) – *Viridal Duo Starter Pack*
- SLS Alprostadil 40microgram powder and solvent for solution for injection cartridges with device ■ (2) – *Viridal Duo Starter Pack*
- Interferon beta-1b 300microgram powder and solvent for solution for injection vials (15)
- Methotrexate 20mg/0.4ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes ■ (1) – *Methofill*
- *Zolmitriptan 5mg tablets (12) – *Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Europe Ltd*

Part VIIIA deletions

- Glyceryl trinitrate 2% ointment ■ (60g) – *Percutol*
- Losartan 2.5mg/ml oral suspension sugar free ■ (200ml) – *Cozaar*
- Morphine sulfate 10mg suppositories (12) – *Alliance Healthcare (Distribution) Ltd*

Part IX deletions

Product	Additional information (e.g. size, product code, etc.)
INCONTINENCE APPLIANCES – NIGHT DRAINAGE BAGS – ConvaTec Ltd – Night drainage bag	S320
STOMA APPLIANCES – COLOSTOMY BAGS – Hollister Ltd – Impression “C” with convex wafer, Transparent front with filter and beige Comfort backing on body worn side	32mm (3594)
STOMA APPLIANCES – ILEOSTOMY (DRAINABLE) BAGS – ConvaTec Ltd – Esteem+ Drainable Pouch with InvisiClose outlet – Standard – clear with filter pre-cut	35mm (416732)
STOMA APPLIANCES – ILEOSTOMY (DRAINABLE) BAGS – Hollister Ltd – Compact Drainable Pouch – Beige-with beige comfort backing on both sides cut-to-fit	13-64mm (3251) 25mm (3252) 32mm (3258)
STOMA APPLIANCES – PRESSURE PLATES/SHIELDS – ConvaTec Ltd – Combihesive Natura Convex Inserts (for use with Combihesive Natura flanges)	All sizes
STOMA APPLIANCES – PRESSURE PLATES/SHIELDS – ConvaTec Ltd – Combihesive Natura Low pressure Adaptor (for use with Combihesive Natura flanges)	All sizes
STOMA APPLIANCES – SKIN FILLERS AND PROTECTIVES – Medline Industries Ltd – Remedy Barrier Moisturising Cream	2ml (MSCE92534PK)
STOMA APPLIANCES – SKIN PROTECTORS – ConvaTec Ltd – ConvaTec Stomahesive Seal	98mm x 3mm (413505)
STOMA APPLIANCES – SKIN PROTECTORS – Salts Healthcare – Foam Seals as in small twin pack	833031
STOMA APPLIANCES – TWO PIECE OSTOMY SYSTEMS – ConvaTec Ltd – Natura+ Urostomy Pouch with soft tap small clear	All sizes
STOMA APPLIANCES – TWO PIECE OSTOMY SYSTEMS – Hollister Ltd – Conform 2 with Lock’n’Roll Closure Drainable Pouch, anatomical shape with integral filter and Lock and Roll closure system – Midi – Transparent with comfort backing on body side only	45mm (24850)

Supply Updates

The Department of Health and Social Care has issued medicine supply notifications for the following products.

Phytomenadione (Konakion MM Paediatric) 2mg/0.2ml ampoules (Cheplapharm)

Konakion MM Paediatric will be out of stock until the end of May 2020.

Acetazolamide SR 250mg capsules

Re-supply date anticipated to be the end of July 2020.

Levodopa/carbidopa/entacapone (Staneke®) tablets

Staneke® tablets (various strengths) are out of stock until at least mid-June 2020.

For further information, or to report a medicine shortage, please visit: psnc.org.uk/shortages

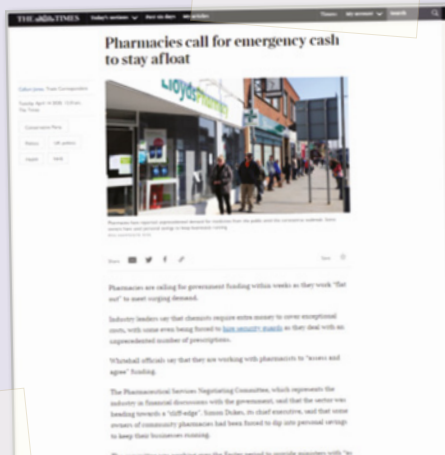
National press coverage

National media outlets are showing considerable interest in COVID-19 and PSNC has been working to promote pharmacy's role in the response to the pandemic.



BBC News (16th April)

Local pharmacies are facing a cash crisis, with many supplying prescriptions at a loss. The article features some of the pressures experienced in pharmacies at the moment and includes contributions from PSNC Regional Representative and independent contractor, Mark Burdon.



The Times (14th April)

Pharmacies are in desperate need of appropriate funding to stay afloat. PSNC was quoted as saying that the sector is heading towards a "cliff-edge".



BBC Radio 4's Today programme (7th April)

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes appeared on BBC Radio 4's Today programme to discuss the national medicines delivery service for shielded patients, raising concerns that current plans could leave vulnerable people at risk from fraudsters and potentially without their medicines.



ITV News (9th April)

Pharmacists feel 'abandoned on the front line'. A survey – conducted by the PDA – of around 1,000 pharmacy workers found that 89% of pharmacy workers have experienced abuse or aggression in the past month.



The Mirror (9th April)

Toby Anderson, chief executive of the Lloyds Pharmacy chain, told BBC Breakfast that 2,500 members of staff are now self-isolating, equivalent to 20% of its entire workforce.



The Telegraph (12th April)

Jackie Doyle-Price, Conservative MP for Thurrock, praised the role of pharmacists amid the COVID-19 outbreak. In particular, she called for greater financial support for the sector "in the form of a special payment to cover the costs incurred in the fight against COVID19".