**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

*Week ending 26th July*

**Guidance on use of face coverings by patients and customers**

This news story features guidance on use of face coverings by patients and customers, as from 24th July 2020 people in shops – including community pharmacies – have been mandated by law to wear a face covering. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/guidance-on-use-of-face-coverings-by-patients-and-customers/>

**Updated PHE guidance on use of face masks by pharmacy staff**

PHE has updated its guidance on the wearing of face masks in primary and community health care settings. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/updated-phe-guidance-on-use-of-face-masks-by-pharmacy-staff/>

**NHS flu vac programme targets 30 million people as expansion of eligible groups announced**

Last week the DHSC announced that additional groups will be eligible for an NHS flu vaccination this year, in a move that will now mean that more than 30 million people will be included in the eligibility criteria for 2020-21. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhs-flu-vac-programme-targets-30-million-people-as-expansion-of-eligible-groups-announced/>

**Pandemic Delivery Service ending: patient communications**

PSNC published a leaflet to help community pharmacy teams explain when and why the national pandemic delivery service will end on 31st July 2020. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pandemic-delivery-service-ending-patient-communications/>

**APPG elects new chair and officers**

The All-Party Pharmacy Group (APPG) held its Annual General Meeting, where former health minister Jackie Doyle-Price, Conservative MP for Thurrock, was elected as the new Chair. Baroness Cumberlege, Lord Clement-Jones and Julian Sturdy, Conservative MP for York Outer, remain as officers of the Group and have been joined by Sir David Amess, Conservative MP for Southend West. A host of new MPs elected at the 2019 General Election have also joined the Group as officers, including:

* Paul Bristow, Conservative MP for Peterborough
* Jason McCartney, Conservative MP for Colne Valley
* Feryal Clark, Labour MP for Enfield North
* Taiwo Owatemi, Labour MP for Coventry North West

Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/appg-elects-new-chair-and-officers/>

**Survey suggests COVID-19 has improved attitudes to self-care**

A survey of more than 2,000 adults by PAGB, the consumer healthcare association, found that almost one in three people (31%) are now more likely to visit a pharmacy for advice before seeking help elsewhere. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/survey-suggests-covid-19-has-improved-attitudes-to-self-care/>

**GPhC warns against supply of COVID-19 rapid antibody tests**

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has stated that it does not believe it is appropriate for COVID-19 rapid antibody tests to be sold in community pharmacies at this time.In a letter sent to community pharmacy contractors and superintendent pharmacists, Chief Executive Duncan Rudkin outlined the GPhC’s concerns about the potential for the selling or recommendation of such antibody tests to undermine the standards and professional responsibilities of pharmacy professionals. Read the letter in full here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/gphc-warns-against-supply-of-covid-19-rapid-antibody-tests/>

**COVID-19 Appendix**

**Remember: Key actions to take during the pandemic**

Contractors and pharmacy teams can take the following actions to ensure they are well prepared:

* Read the [**NHSE&I guidance**](https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/contractor-guidance-and-support/) **and implement its recommended actions;**
* Clearly display the [**COVID-19 poster**](https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/information-for-the-public/) **at points of entry to your pharmacy;**
* Read your [**business continuity plan**](https://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/essential-service-clinical-governance/emergency-planning/) **and consider whether it needs to be updated to reflect the current and emerging situation;**
* Keep up to date with developments by regularly checking the information on [**COVID-19 on GOV.UK**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus)**, the** [**NHSE&I Coronavirus Primary Care**](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/) **webpage and checking your NHSmail shared mailbox on a regular basis for updates from NHSE&I; and**
* Where possible, display the [**public health advice posters**](https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016) **on hand washing etc.**

**Guidance for healthcare professionals**

The key guidance for health professionals is available on the Public Health England (PHE) section of the GOV.UK website:

[**COVID-19: guidance for health professionals (GOV.UK)**](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus)

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) published guidance for primary care teams on 27th February 2020. This includes a specific document for community pharmacy teams, which takes the guidance already available on the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus), but contextualises it for the community pharmacy environment.

[**NHSE&I Coronavirus Primary Care webpage**](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/)

The guidance explains how to deal with patients presenting in the pharmacy with suspected COVID-19 infection and preparations pharmacy contractors can take to deal with such a scenario. All pharmacy contractors should read the guidance and then undertake appropriate preparations for dealing with potentially infected patients.