**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

*Week ending 27th September*

**Flu vaccination service gets off to a flying start**

The first four weeks of the flu vaccination service have seen community pharmacists vaccinating **over 650,000 NHS patients** – **three times the number** vaccinated in the same period last year. Contractors and Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs) have reported a massive increase in public demand for flu vaccination; in some cases, this has been ten times the usual demand. This year’s vaccination effort represents a massive undertaking on the part of pharmacy teams to help protect at-risk patients – all part of the NHS programme to reduce the health impact of flu and the added risk to patients who also get infected with COVID-19. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/flu-vaccination-service-gets-off-to-a-flying-start/>

**Part 2 PQS digital guide for contractors**

PSNC has published a digital guide to the Part 2 PQS for contractors. Access the guide here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/part-2-pqs-2020-21-digital-guide-for-contractors/>

**Face coverings become compulsory for retail staff**

As of Thursday 24th September, it became compulsory for community pharmacy staff to wear a [**face covering**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own#:~:text=From%2024%20September%2C%20it%20will,a%20member%20of%20the%20public) in areas that are open to the public and where they come, or are likely to come, within close contact of a member of the public. Read full story: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/face-coverings-become-compulsory-for-retail-staff/>

**NHS COVID app: QR code posters optional for community pharmacy**

Last week the NHS COVID-19 app launched. The Government is encouraging businesses and organisations, such as hospitality services, to display official NHS QR code posters at their venue entrances to help support contact tracing.

NHS COVID-19 app users will then be able to scan (check-in) as they enter a venue. This means that if people visit the venue and later test positive for coronavirus, other app users who were there at the same time may be sent an alert, if local public health teams think this is necessary. Community pharmacies are not required to display NHS QR code posters but may do so, according to Government advice. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhs-covid-19-app-qr-code-posters-optional-for-community-pharmacy/>

**All COVID-19 PPE now available via portal**

The Government’s PPE portal can now be used by community pharmacies to obtain all the COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) they need; the supplies will be provided free of charge. Community pharmacies will have received an email invitation to register to access the service, which will have been sent to their NHSmail shared mailbox. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/all-covid-19-ppe-now-available-via-portal/>

**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.