



17 December 2020

## **EU Exit: Medicines Supply in Primary Care – joint statement by the BMA and PSNC**

The UK will leave the EU Single Market on 31 December and as we reported last week, [the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer has reminded primary care providers of the need to avoid local stockpiling of medicines](#). This message extends to patients.

National plans are in place seeking to ensure continuity of supply, and GPs and pharmacists are encouraged to reassure patients that they do not need to order extra medication as this could contribute to or cause supply problems. Additionally, NHSE/I have said that prescription durations will be monitored and investigated where necessary - the aim is to keep prescribing and dispensing as close to business as usual as possible.

The DHSC work in this area is supported by the Medicines Shortages Response Group (MSRG) which advises, for example, on whether the development of a Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) would be beneficial to help mitigate a shortage. See more information about medicine shortages [here](#).

We are in regular contact with DHSC on medicines supply and will continue to monitor the situation and resolve any issues as they arise. However, should there be any disruption to medicines supply next year, GP practice staff and community pharmacy teams will need to work together to make sure that all patients continue to have access to the medicines they need, when they need them.

Community pharmacies will do all that they can to ensure that patients do have access to the medicines they need. These efforts may include phoning around suppliers, 'staged' dispensing (owings), or considering potential alternative treatments. GPs will continue to liaise with pharmacies on this as necessary. Medicine shortages can bring additional workload to both GPs and pharmacists, but collaborative working at a local level is essential to maintain patient care.