**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 17th January*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**Community pharmacy sites join COVID-19 vaccination efforts**

As of Thursday 14th January, six community pharmacies became the first community pharmacy sites to administer COVID-19 vaccinations as part of the NHS vaccination programme. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/community-pharmacy-sites-join-covid-19-vaccination-efforts/>

**Contractors asked to take part in second PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audit**

PSNC is increasingly concerned about the pressures that pharmacy teams are under during the COVID-19 pandemic and also about reports that general practice teams are referring patients to pharmacies for consultations informally, rather than via the agreed Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) route. Community pharmacy contractors and their teams have been asked to take part in a second PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audit later this month (January 2021). Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/contractors-asked-to-take-part-in-second-psnc-pharmacy-advice-audit/>

**Discharge Medicines Service Toolkit published**

NHS England and NHS Improvement published the Discharge Medicines Service (DMS) toolkit for Pharmacy Staff in community, primary and secondary care. Read more and access the toolkit here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/discharge-medicines-service-toolkit-published/>

**New scheme launched to support domestic abuse victims**

The Home Office is implementing a new scheme (Ask for ANI) to help victims of domestic abuse access support safely and is encouraging community pharmacy teams to get involved. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/new-scheme-launched-to-support-domestic-abuse-victims/>

**PSNC Video Message from CEO Simon Dukes**

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes has recorded a new video message for community pharmacy contractors and their teams, reflecting on the extraordinary year of 2020 and the challenges ahead in 2021. Watch Simon’s video here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/psnc-video-message-from-ceo-simon-dukes/>

**Free PPE scheme extended until June**

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) confirmed on 11th January 2021 that the Government has decided to extend the provision of supplies of free COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) beyond the end of March 2021. Read more about how to access the portal here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/409783/>

**Digital Communications and LPC Support Officer job opportunity at PSNC**

PSNC is looking to recruit a new Digital Communications and Stakeholder (LPC) Support Officer. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/digital-communications-and-lpc-support-officer-job-opportunity-at-psnc/>

**BMJ Best Practice available to all community pharmacists and technicians**

Pharmacy teams can access this BMJ Best Practice clinical decision support tool for healthcare professionals. Read more about how to access this support here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/bmj-best-practice-available-to-all-community-pharmacists-and-technicians/>

**DHSC flu vac stock: use for private patients**

The DHSC confirmed that from 15th January 2021 community pharmacies can offer a flu vaccination using DHSC centrally procured vaccine to private patients or those within occupational health schemes. Read more here: <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/dhsc-flu-vac-stock-use-for-private-patients/>

**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.