**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 4th April*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**C-19 Test Distribution service added to the CPCF**

On Monday 29th March, a new**Advanced service – the NHS community pharmacy COVID-19 lateral flow device distribution service**was added to the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF). This service, which **pharmacy contractors can choose to provide,** aims to improve access to**asymptomatic COVID-19 testing**by making lateral flow device (LFD) test kits readily available at community pharmacies. The service is part of the NHS Test and Trace offering to the public and people**will self-administer the tests away from the pharmacy. Learn more about this new service: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/c-19-test-distribution-service-added-to-the-cpcf/**

**Next publication date for PNAs deferred by 6 months**

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has announced that due to ongoing COVID-19 pressures across all sectors, the requirement to publish renewed Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments (PNAs) will be suspended until October 2022 – an extra six months. The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 will be updated to reflect this change in due course. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/next-publication-date-for-pnas-deferred-by-6-months/**

**Extension of temporary suspension of signatures on prescriptions and token submission requirements**

Following representations made by PSNC to DHSC, Ministers in England agreed to extend the temporary suspension of the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the back of NHS prescription forms or EPS tokens until **30 June 2021.** Whilst the suspension of signature requirements remains in place, contractors are **not required** to submit EPS tokens (other than those used for SSP claims) to the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). PSNC has published updated [guidance](https://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PSNC-Briefing-040.20-Requirement-to-sign-prescriptions-suspended-dispensing-and-submission-guidance-10.12.20.pdf) on the changes to the dispensing and end of month submission processes. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/temporary-suspension-of-signature-and-token-submission-requirements-extended/**

**Regulatory dispensations update and March 31st deadlines**

At the end of last year PSNC agreed several regulatory dispensations for contractors with DHSC and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I). This week, two deadline extensions were announced to the Secretary of State’s declaration of an emergency under the regulations and to [the dispensation from patient’s charge exemption signatures on prescriptions and dispensing tokens](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/temporary-suspension-of-signature-and-token-submission-requirements-extended/) (see above). The period of emergency declaration has been extended to 30th June 2021 in [an amendment to the Directions](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/Pharm%20Serv%20%28Adv%20Enh%20Serv%20and%20Emer%20Dec%29%20%28Eng%29%20%28Amend%29%20Directions%202021%2029032021.pdf). This allows contractors to request and NHSE&I to grant temporary flexible opening hours (days or times) by setting out the reasons for the request and giving 24 hours’ notice. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/regulatory-dispensations-update-and-march-31st-deadlines/**

**March CPN magazine published**

The March 2021 edition of Community Pharmacy News (CPN) has now been published. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/march-cpn-magazine-published/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/march-cpn-magazine-published/)

**Contractor Notice: Further Extension to SSP05 and SSP009**

DHSC has announced that SSP05 for Fluoxetine 10mg tablets and SSP009 for Fluoxetine 40mg capsules will both now expire on the **17th May 2021** (unless otherwise stated)**. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/contractor-notice-further-extension-to-ssp05-and-ssp009/**

**Survey for community pharmacy PCN Leads**

Community pharmacy Primary Care Network (PCN) Leads should have received or shortly receive an email from their LPC asking them to complete a survey about their experience of meeting the PCN-focused activities in the Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) Part 2 2020/21. All community pharmacy PCN Leads are strongly encouraged to complete this survey to help PSNC to understand more about this experience so that this can be reflected in future negotiations with DHSC on the 2021/22 PQS. The deadline for completing the survey is 14th April 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/survey-for-community-pharmacy-pcn-leads/**

**Pharmacist Support Wellbeing Workshop: 29th March**

On the 29th March, PSNC hosted its second Wellbeing Workshop provided by [Pharmacist Support](https://pharmacistsupport.org/) and are pleased to report that the event was well attended. Read more about the event here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pharmacist-support-wellbeing-workshop/**

**March 2021 Price Concessions: Final Update**

DHSC has announced its final set of price concessions for March 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/march-2021-price-concessions-final-update/**

**Medicine Supply Notification: Fluoxetine 40mg capsules**

DHSC has announced that the resupply date for Fluoxetine 40mg capsules is now expected to be late May 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicines-supply-notification-fluoxetine-40mg-capsules/**

**Medicine Supply Notification Update: Oral contraceptive tablets (various brands)**

DHSC has issued a Medicine Supply Notification (MSN) for Oral contraceptive tablets of various brands. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-oral-contraceptive-tablets-various-brands/**

**Medicine Supply Notification: Chloral Hydrate 143.3mg in 5ml oral solution**

DHSC has issued a MSN for **Chloral Hydrate 143.3mg in 5ml oral solution. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-chloral-hydrate-143-3mg-in-5ml-oral-solution/**

**End of Pandemic Delivery Service for CEV patients**

The Pandemic Delivery Service for clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) patients ended on March 31st. Community pharmacy contractors are, therefore, reminded that no further deliveries should be made to these patients, under this service. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pandemic-delivery-service-for-cev-patients-ends-today/**

**End of 2020/21 Flu Vaccination service**

The national [community pharmacy Flu Vaccination Service 2020/21](https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/flu-vaccination-service/) ended on March 31st. Community pharmacy contractors are, therefore, reminded not to administer any further vaccinations under this service. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/flu-vaccination-service-2020-21-ends-today/**

**Medicine Supply Notification Update: Ranitidine (all formulations)**

Following advice from the European Medinces Agency (EMA), the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have suspended all licenses for ranitidine products. Subsequently, all preparations of ranitidine (tablets, effervescent tablets, oral solution and injection) are out of stock until further notice. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/supply-notification-ranitidine-all-formulations-update/**

**FAQs on new prescription charges from April 2021**

PSNC have created a page of FAQs on our website to help contractors adjust to the change in prescription charges. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/reminder-prescription-charge-rises-to-9-35-from-1st-april/**

**MUR service decommissioned**

The Medicines Use Review (MUR) service has now been decommissioned. Community pharmacy contractors are therefore reminded not to provide any more MURs. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicines-use-review-service-now-decommissioned/**

**Terms of Service changes for DSPs**

From 1st April 2021, the NHS Terms of Service require **Distance Selling Pharmacies** (DSP) to have a **website which includes content promoting healthy lifestyles. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/terms-of-service-for-dsps-change-from-today/**

**35 products added to the April DND list**

Following applications made by PSNC to DHSC and NHSBSA, a further **35 new products** will enter the list of ‘Drugs for which Discount is Not Deducted’ (DND) in Part II of the Drug Tariff from 1 April 2021. This takes the total number of products granted DND status over the past 12 months to over **300** following checks made by PSNC. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/35-products-added-to-the-april-2021-discount-not-deducted-dnd-list/**

**Updated NHSE&I letter on Flu Vaccines for 2021-22**

NHSE&I have published an updated flu reimbursement letter. This letter provides information on the flu vaccines which will be reimbursable under the 2021/22 Community Pharmacy Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Advanced Service ([**Flu Vaccination Service**](https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/flu-vaccination-service/)), for the three cohorts (65 years and over, 50-64s and at-risk adults aged 18-64). This includes the addition of another vaccine to those which will be reimbursable – QIVr (Supemtek, Sanofi Pasteur). Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/updated-nhsei-letter-on-flu-vaccines-for-2021-22/**

**Contractor Notice: Expiry of SSP010 for Levothyroxine 12.5mcg tablets**

**SSP010 for Levothyroxine 12.5mcg tablets has now expired. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/contractor-notice-ssp010-levothyroxine-12-5mcg-tablets-expiring/**

**Participate in NHS Test and Trace research on Pharmacy Collect**

Following the launch of the [NHS community pharmacy COVID-19 lateral flow device distribution service (Pharmacy Collect)](https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/c-19-lateral-flow-device-distribution-service/) (see above), NHS Test and Trace are seeking volunteers from pharmacy teams to help them understand: how pharmacies perform as another convenient way for the public to receive their lateral flow device (LFD) self-test kits; andpharmacies’ needs and any potential barriers for supplying LFD test kits and reporting the collection of them via MYS. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/participate-in-nhs-test-trace-research-on-pharmacy-collect/**

**Over 2.6 million flu vaccinations administered by community pharmacists during 2020-21**

Community pharmacy teams proved that they could deliver yet again by administering over 2.6 million flu vaccinations under the national Flu Vaccination Service in 2020/21. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/over-2-6-million-flu-vaccinations-administered-by-community-pharmacists-during-2020-21/**

**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.