**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 4th July*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**July 2021 Category M Prices Announced**

The Drug Tariff Category M pricelist for July 2021 has been published on the [**NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) website**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/drug-tariff/drug-tariff-part-viii). Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/july-2021-category-m-prices-announced/**

**Sajid Javid becomes new Health Secretary**

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid, MP for Bromsgrove, has been appointed as the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care following the resignation of Matt Hancock. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/sajid-javid-becomes-new-health-secretary/**

**DHSC policy proposals to reshape use of health data**

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published a draft policy paper on the better use of health data. A few of the key proposals within this paper were that health and care staff (including pharmacy teams) should have quicker access to [**Shared Care Records (ShCR/LHCRs)**](https://psnc.org.uk/lhcr), the data security guidance provided by central NHS bodies should be simplified, ​​​​​and data collection requests to health and care staff should be reduced. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/dhsc-policy-proposals-to-reshape-use-of-health-data/**

**COVID-19 costs: PSNC reaches deal with HM Government**

PSNC has accepted an offer from HM Government that will allow all community pharmacy contractors in England to claim for their COVID-related costs. The revised offer from HM Government was a significant improvement on their original proposal which was rejected by PSNC last summer. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-costs-psnc-reaches-deal-with-hm-government/**

**CPAF screening process now open**

The Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) screening questions for this year, 2021/22, are now open on the [**Manage Your Service (MYS) Portal**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/dispensing-contractors-information/manage-your-service-mys). Community pharmacy contractors are required to complete the questionnaire between **Monday 28th June and midnight on Saturday 24th July 2021**, for each of their NHS pharmacies. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/cpaf-screening-opens-today/**

**Update on pharmacy IT workstreams published**

The Community Pharmacy IT Group (CP ITG) has published its summer 2021 Pharmacy IT round-up following its [**quarterly meeting on June 9th**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/it-group-progresses-workstreams-at-its-quarterly-meeting/). This round-up includes updates on the Care Identity Service 2 (CIS2), the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS), the pharmacy infrastructure survey and more. Both [**PDF**](https://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Community-pharmacy-IT-progress-update-Summer-2021-CP-ITG.pdf) and [**HTML**](https://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/pharmacy-it/policy-the-nhs-and-it/community-pharmacy-it-group-cpitg/community-pharmacy-it-group-cp-itg-workstream-update/) versions of this round-up are available. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/update-on-pharmacy-it-workstreams-published-2/**

**New briefing published on Hub and Spoke dispensing**

The Regulations Team at PSNC has published a briefing for community pharmacy contractors on Hub and Spoke (H&S) dispensing. This briefing includes information about H&S dispensing and its potential impact and details of the likely regulatory issues that could arise, as well as some of the views of PSNC and others on H&S. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/new-briefing-published-on-hub-and-spoke-dispensing/**

**Pandemic Delivery Service extended for self-isolators**

The Pandemic Delivery Service has been further extended to **30th September 2021** for people who have been notified of the need to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace. This means all pharmacies (excluding distance selling pharmacies) will be required to ensure those people who have been notified by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate can receive their prescription medicines and appliances by home delivery during the ten-day self-isolation period, if they are unable to arrange for medicines to be picked up. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pandemic-delivery-service-service-for-self-isolators-extended/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pandemic-delivery-service-service-for-self-isolators-extended/)

**Secretary of State declaration of emergency extension**

The [**declaration of an emergency**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Pharm%20Serv%20%28Adv%20Enh%20Serv%20and%20Emer%20Dec%29%20%28Eng%29%20%28Amend%29%20Directions%202021%2029062021.pdf) requiring the flexible provision of pharmaceutical services which was introduced to help maintain pharmacy services during the COVID-19 outbreak, has been extended to **30th September 2021. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/secretary-of-state-declaration-of-emergency/**

**Updates to the COVID-19 test distribution service planned later in the summer**

Contractors will be aware that the NHS community pharmacy COVID-19 lateral flow device distribution service (Pharmacy Collect) [**service specification**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/20210326%20C1181%20Community%20Pharmacy%20COVID-19%20Lateral%20Flow%20Device%20Distribution%20Service%20Advanced%20Service%20specification%20-%20edits%20%28002%29%20%28004%29.pdf) states that a review of the service will be undertaken at the end of **June 2021**. The review is underway, and work has begun on some changes that will be introduced later in the summer. Information on the changes will be communicated to pharmacy contractors as soon as possible. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/c-19-test-distribution-service-updates-planned-later-in-the-summer/**

**Public holiday guide for pharmacies**

PSNC has produced a quick reference guide for the remaining 2021 and all 2022 bank / public holidays to address some of the common queries on the pharmacy terms of service opening hours requirements. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/public-holiday-guide-for-pharmacies/**

**June 2021 Price Concessions final update**

DHSC has granted its final list of price concessions for June 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/june-2021-price-concessions-final-update/**

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

Ministers have once again agreed to extend the temporary suspension of the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the back of NHS prescription forms and/or EPS tokens. The latest extension is until **31st August 2021**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/temporary-suspension-of-signature-and-token-submission-requirements-extended/**

**IT case study: Community pharmacies accessing the East London Record System**

Community pharmacy contractors in parts of East London are successfully accessing the [**East London Patient Record (eLPR)**](https://www.cityandhackneyccg.nhs.uk/about-us/elpr.htm), which is a type of Local health and shared care record ([**LHCR**](https://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/pharmacy-it/electronic-health-records/local-health-and-care-records-lhcrs/)). Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/it-case-study-community-pharmacies-accessing-the-east-london-record-system/**

**Drug Tariff Watch: July 2021**

PSNC’s Dispensing and Supply Team has created a summary of the Drug Tariff changes for July 2021. This includes details of additions, deletions and category and price changes. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/drug-tariff-watch-july-2021/**

**New distribution arrangements for staff COVID testing**

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has [**announced new arrangements**](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/12/C1276_Staff-testing-letter_29june21.pdf) for distributing COVID-19 Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) to pharmacy team members. Previously, pharmacy contractors ordered LFD test kits from the Primary Care Support England portal. But from **5th July 2021**, staff will be able to order test kits for asymptomatic staff testing [**here**](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests). Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/staff-c-19-testing-new-distribution-arrangements-for-lateral-flow-tests/**

**Encouraging patients to support COVID-19 vaccine study**

The [**Drug Safety Research Unit (DSRU)**](https://www.dsru.org/) in Southampton, an Associate Department of the School of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences, University of Portsmouth, is asking pharmacy teams to encourage patients who have recently had a COVID-19 vaccine to participate in a safety study about the vaccines to ensure any side effects are quickly recognised and acted upon. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/encouraging-patients-to-support-c-19-vaccine-study/**

**More pharmacies to participate in COVID-19 booster program**

Last week, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that any COVID-19 vaccine booster programme should begin in **September 2021** and that, where possible, a synergistic approach to the delivery of COVID and flu vaccinations should be pursued to support delivery and maximise vaccine uptake. Following publication of the JCVI advice, NHSE&I published a letter setting out early guidance for the NHS on planning for a COVID booster programme – referred to as phase 3 of the vaccination programme. This guidance aims to support local planning and makes a series of recommendations to consider, including deploying delivery models with capacity spread across community pharmacy, vaccination centres and general practice. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/more-pharmacies-to-participate-in-c-19-booster-programme/**

**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, face coverings 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.