**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 8th August*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**COVID-19 Claim Countdown**

Community pharmacy contractors have until **23.59pm on 15th August 2021** to claim for the extra costs they incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Contractors should be aware that the £370 million Advance Payments given to the sector last year will be recovered from all community pharmacies, even those who do not make a COVID-19 costs claim. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-claim-countdown-two-weeks-left/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-claim-countdown-two-weeks-left/)

**Supply Disruption Alert: Glipizide 5mg tablets**

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has issued a medicine supply disruption alert for **Glipizide (Minodiab®) 5mg tablets. Read more here:** [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/supply-disruption-alert-glipizide-minodiab-5mg-tablets/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/supply-disruption-alert-glipizide-minodiab-5mg-tablets/)

**NHS Prescription Services ‘Hints and Tips: Issue 44**

The latest edition of NHS Prescription Services quarterly newsletter called Hints & Tips for dispensing contractors” has been published. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhs-prescription-services-hints-tips-issue-44/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhs-prescription-services-hints-tips-issue-44/)

**Flu vaccine service specification published**

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) have now published the service specification for the 2021/22 Community Pharmacy Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Advanced Service. The publication of this document formally starts the countdown to the commencement of what is expected to be the largest ever community pharmacy flu vaccination programme on **Wednesday 1st September 2021**. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/flu-vac-service-spec-published/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/flu-vac-service-spec-published/)

**CPPE launch Health Inequalities e-learning and e-assessment**

The Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) has launched a Health inequalities e-learning programme and associated e-assessment. This e-learning has been specially designed to support pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and trainees within these roles to develop the skills and knowledge required to reduce health inequalities within their local communities and among those they serve. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/cppe-launch-health-inequalities-e-learning-and-e-assessment/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/cppe-launch-health-inequalities-e-learning-and-e-assessment/)

**Extra Smartcard rights for pharmacy professionals extended until 2022**

During the pandemic, NHS Digital added the multi-site FFFFF Smartcard code and Shared Care Record (SCR) access rights onto the Smartcards of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. This extension of Smartcard rights was supported by PSNC and NHSE&I. NHS Digital have now confirmed to PSNC that these assignment codes will be further extended until 31st March 2022. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/extra-smartcard-rights-for-pharmacy-profs-extended-until-2022/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/extra-smartcard-rights-for-pharmacy-profs-extended-until-2022/)

**Latest COVID-19 Cost Claims workshop now on-demand**

PSNC’s final COVID-19 Cost Claims Workshop for community pharmacy contractors is now available to watch on-demand. As the second webinar in the series, our presenters were able to include a little more detail about how the process applies in specific scenarios and the event also includes subtitles to make it easier to follow. Watch the webinar here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-costs-latest-workshop-now-on-demand/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-costs-latest-workshop-now-on-demand/)

**August video update from PSNC’s CEO**

In his latest video update, PSNC's CEO Simon Dukes discusses this year’s flu vaccination plans. Simon welcomes another complex but important public health programme for the community pharmacy sector to participate in, whilst recognising that COVID-19 vaccine boosters and the expanded age cohort could lead to some bumps in the road. Watch Simon’s update here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/august-video-update-from-psncs-ceo/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/august-video-update-from-psncs-ceo/)

**Flu vac: PGD published and minor change to service specification**

NHSE&I have approved the patient group direction (PGD) for use by pharmacy contractors during the forthcoming flu vaccination season, and it is now available to download from their website. This PGD allows contractors to use other healthcare professions listed in the PGD (e.g. nurses) to provide the service under the supervision of a pharmacist. A minor amendment has also been made to the service specification in paragraph 4.4 to remedy the accidental omission of a reference to using a national protocol for the administration of a vaccine when operating off the pharmacy premises. Ministers are still debating whether a national protocol will be issued for use in the flu vaccination programme. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/flu-vac-pgd-published-and-minor-change-to-service-spec/**

**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.