**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 29th August*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**CPCF arrangements for 2021/22 agreed**

Arrangements for the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) in 2021/22 have been agreed between PSNC, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), in line with the five-year CPCF deal. This follows an intensive period of negotiations, lasting around three months. During this time, PSNC’s Negotiating Team fought hard to gain concessions on a number of key issues, all with the backing of the full Committee who eventually voted to accept the deal by an overwhelming majority. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/contractor-announcement-cpcf-arrangements-for-2021-22-agreed/**

**NMS expansion – Additional conditions and flexibilities added**

One of the outcomes agreed from the negotiations for Year 3 of the CPCF is an expansion of the New Medicine Service (NMS). From **1st September 2021**, contractors can offer patients support when they are newly prescribed medicines to manage twelve additional conditions, including Acute coronary syndrome (ACS), Epilepsy and Glaucoma. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nms-expansion-additional-conditions-and-flexibilities-added/**

**August 2021 Price Concessions 2nd Update**

The revised list of price concessions for the month of August has been released by DHSC. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/august-2021-price-concessions-2nd-update/**

**MHRA Drug Safety Update August 2021**

A new Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Drug Safety Update (Vol 15 Issue 1 August 2021) has been published and includes articles on: COVID-19 vaccines and Letters and medicine recalls sent to healthcare professionals. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-drug-safety-update-august-2021/**

**MHRA Class 2 Medicines Recall – Metformin Hydrochloride 500mg/5ml oral solution**

Rosemont Pharmaceuticals Limited is recalling all unexpired stock of **Metformin Hydrochloride 500mg/5ml oral solution** from pharmacies and wholesalers as a precautionary measure due to the identification level of an impurity above the acceptable limit. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-class-2-medicines-recall-metformin-hydrochloride-500mg-5ml-oral-solution-rosemont-pharmaceuticals-limited/**

**COVID-19 LFD distribution service extended**

Following discussions with NHS Test and Trace, NHSE&I has confirmed an extension of the period of commissioning of the Community Pharmacy COVID-19 Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Distribution Service (Pharmacy Collect). This service will now continue to be commissioned until **30th September 2021**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/c-19-lfd-distribution-service-extended/**

**August 2021 Price Concessions Final Update**

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

**Early advance payments for all contractors following an end to PEPS**

Following agreement between PSNC and DHSC, all community pharmacy contractors will have the chance to receive earlier Advance Payments from **November 2021**. Advance Payments will be made approximately **20 days earlier** than the current payment timetable for contractors who make their monthly FP34C submissions through the [**Manage Your Service (MYS) portal**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/dispensing-contractors-information/manage-your-service-mys) by the 5th of the month. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/early-advance-payments-for-all-contractors-following-an-end-to-peps/**

**Additional PQS information published in the Drug Tariff**

The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) has published the [**September 2021 Drug Tariff**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-additional-information-published-in-the-drug-tariff/), which contains further detail on the 2021/22 Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) requirements in Part VIIA. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-additional-information-published-in-the-drug-tariff/**

**PQS Quality Criterion staring from 1st September 2021**

Following publication of the September 2021 Drug Tariff, community pharmacy contractors should note that the ‘Inhaler disposal’ quality criterion, part of the Respiratory domain for the 2021/22 PQS, will need to be implemented from **1st September 2021**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-quality-criterion-starting-from-1st-september-2021/**

**Vaccinations when working or deployed in care homes**

Following DHSC's announcement that COVID-19 vaccination will be a requirement for people working or deployed in care homes from **11th November 2021,** NHSE&I has written to NHS staff, including community pharmacy contractors, about how this will be delivered operationally. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/vaccinations-when-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes/**

**Details about 2021/22 PhAS published**

The NHSBSA and DHSC have published details about the updated Pharmacy Access Scheme (PhAS), which starts from **January 2022**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/details-about-2021-22-pharmacy-access-scheme-published/**

**Drug Tariff Watch – September 2021**

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

**End to temporary suspension of signatures on prescription forms and updated token submission requirements**

The temporary suspension of the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the reverse of NHS prescription forms or Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) tokens is due to end on **31st August 2021**. In addition, the submission requirement of certain EPS tokens to the NHSBSA is also due to resume from **1st September**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/end-to-temporary-suspension-of-signatures-on-prescription-forms-and-token-submission-requirements/**

**Adjusted price for Cetirizine 1mg/1ml sugar free oral solution following price changes in August 2021**

During the month of August 2021, PSNC received several reports from contractors unable to obtain Cetirizine 1mg/ml oral solution sugar free (200ml) at the published [**Drug Tariff**](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/drug-tariff) price of £6.49. PSNC submitted a request for a price concession but this was later withdrawn after confirmation from DHSC that, due to the [**price change mechanism**](https://psnc.org.uk/dispensing-supply/endorsement/how-the-price-change-mechanism-works/), the reimbursement price for Cetirizine 1mg/1ml oral solution sugar free increased from £6.49 to **£11.24**for the month of August 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/adjusted-price-for-cetirizine-1mg-ml-oral-solution-sugar-free-following-price-changes-in-august-2021/**

**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.