**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 10th October*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**PQS: Aspiration payment window is now open**

Contractors can now make a claim for an Aspiration payment for the 2021/22 PQS on the NHS Business Services Authority's [**Manage Your Service (MYS) portal**](https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-prescription-services-submissions/login). This payment is optional; if contractors do not want to claim it, it will not impact their ability to claim a PQS payment during the declaration period. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-the-aspiration-payment-window-is-now-open/**

**Update on pharmacy IT workstreams published**

The Community Pharmacy IT Group (CP ITG) has published its Autumn 2021 quarterly Pharmacy IT round-up, following the group’s September meeting. The Autumn round-up includes updates on Shared Care Records (ShCR), paperless processing, Real-Time Exemption Checking (RTEC), and more. The round-up also lists opportunities for pharmacy teams to get involved with the ongoing work to improve pharmacy IT. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/update-on-pharmacy-it-workstreams-published-3/**

**Medicine Supply Notification Updates**

Updates have been issued for the following Medicine Supply Notifications:

* [**Metronidazole (Acea) 0.75% gel**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-metronidazole-acea-0-75-gel/)
* [**Catapres (clonidine) 100microgram tablets**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-catapres-clonidine-100microgram-tablets/)
* [**Nalcrom (sodium cromoglicate) 100mg capsules**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-nalcrom-sodium-cromoglicate-100mg-capsules-updated/)

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) also issued a Medicine Supply Notification for **Mesalazine (Asacol) 800mg MR gastro-resistant tablets. Read more here:** [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-mesalazine-asacol-800mg-mr-gastro-resistant-tablets/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-mesalazine-asacol-800mg-mr-gastro-resistant-tablets/)

**MHRA Drug Safety Update October 2021**

A new Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Drug Safety Update has been published and includes articles on COVID-19 vaccines, MedSafetyWeek 2021, and more. Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-drug-safety-update-october-2021/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-drug-safety-update-october-2021/)

**NHSX publishes new CPCS Buyers Guide**

NHSX and partner organisations have published a new CPCS Buyer’s Guide to help contractors prepare for the transfer to them of the cost of Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) IT solutions. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/nhsx-publishes-new-cpcs-buyers-guide/**

**Electronic route for submission of Temporary Safeguarding Payment claims**

From this month (**October 2021**), any claims for Temporary Safeguarding Payments are required to be submitted electronically rather than sending a physical form with their FP34C submission document. With use of the MYS portal becoming compulsory for submission of FP34Cs from **March 2022**, DHSC has agreed to a paperless route for submission of Temporary Safeguarding Payment claims. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/contractor-notice-electronic-route-for-submission-of-temporary-safeguarding-payment-claims/**

**Webinar on changes to Advance Payments now on-demand**

PSNC’s webinar about the upcoming changes to advance payments and FP34C submission requirements is now available on-demand. Over 90% of attendees said they would recommend the webinar to others, with almost two-thirds (63%) saying that they found it very useful. Watch the webinar: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/webinar-on-changes-to-advance-payments-now-on-demand/**

**Guidance published on accessing DHSC flu vac stock**

DHSC has published guidance on how community pharmacy contractors will be able to access supplies of flu vaccines procured centrally by the Government. In order to achieve even higher vaccine uptake rates compared to last year, DHSC has secured an additional supply of influenza vaccines, as a temporary measure for this year only. These vaccines will be available for NHS trusts, general practices and community pharmacies, to top up local supplies once they run low and will be deployed to areas where it is most needed to maximise uptake. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/guidance-published-on-accessing-dhsc-flu-vac-stock-2/**

**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.