**Key News and Guidance for LPCs**

 *Week ending 21st November*

**Last week’s news stories:**

**PQS: NMS gateway criterion data published by NHSBSA**

The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) has published a spreadsheet showing which community pharmacy contractors are currently meeting the Advanced Services gateway criterion of the 2021/22 Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS). Read more here: [**https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-nms-gateway-criterion-data-published-by-nhsbsa/**](https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-nms-gateway-criterion-data-published-by-nhsbsa/)

**MHRA Class 4 Defect Information: Slenyto 1mg and 5mg prolonged-release tablets**

The Medicines and Health products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has issued a Class 4 Medicines Defect Information for **Slenyto 1mg and 5mg prolonged-release tablets**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-class-4-medicines-defect-information-slenyto-1mg-and-5mg-prolonged-release-tablets/**

**Remaining 2021/22 mandatory health campaigns agreed**

PSNC and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) have agreed the remaining mandatory health campaigns for 2021/22, which community pharmacy contractors **must**participate in as part of their NHS contractual requirements. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/remaining-2021-22-mandatory-health-campaigns-agreed/**

**Payment timetable and deadline tracker updated**

PSNC has updated its payment timetable and deadline tracker to assist contractors with checking and/or claiming payments for services including the COVID-19 Lateral Flow Device Distribution Service, the Hypertension Case-Finding Service, and more. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/payment-timetable-and-deadline-tracker-updated/**

**2021/22 National pharmacy clinical audit agreed**

PSNC and NHSE&I have agreed that the 2021/22 national clinical audit will focus on valproate, with the aim of reducing the potential harm caused by taking valproate during pregnancy. Completion of the audit is part of contractors' NHS contractual requirements. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/2021-22-national-pharmacy-clinical-audit-agreed/**

**PQS: NHS Digital Weight Manage Programme resources**

The NHS Digital Weight Management Programme has produced two resources to assist community pharmacies with referring patients to the programme as part of the requirements for the Healthy living support Domain of the 2021/22 PQS. The first is a short video explaining how a member of the pharmacy team can make a referral to the programme and the second is a screen saver which can be used to promote the programme. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pqs-nhs-digital-weight-management-programme-resources/**

**MHRA Drug Safety Update November 2021**

A new MHRA Drug Safety Update (Vol 15 Issue 4 November 2021) has been published. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-drug-safety-update-november-2021/**

**DHSC responds to the 2019 consultation on community pharmacy drug reimbursement reform**

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published its response to the 2019 consultation on community pharmacy drug reimbursement reform. The response paves the way for DHSC to move to the second phase of the consultation with PSNC with a view to implement the reforms on several proposals, including changes to the way **Category A** prices are set and to how medicine margin is distributed in **Category M** drugs. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/dhsc-responds-to-the-2019-consultation-on-community-pharmacy-drug-reimbursement-reform/**

**Majority of contractors now benefitting from RTEC**

According to NHSBSA, more than half of all community pharmacies are now using Real Time Exemption Checking (RTEC). This is helping save staff time and reduce the use of paper, both reducing the risk of transmission of infection and pharmacies' environmental impact. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/majority-of-contractors-now-benefitting-from-rtec/**

**MHRA Class 2 medicines recall: IKERVIS 1 mg/ml eye drops, emulsion and VERKAZIA 1 mg/ml eye drops, emulsion**

**The MHRA has issued a Class 2 medicines recall for IKERVIS 1 mg/ml eye drops, emulsion and VERKAZIA 1 mg/ml eye drops, emulsion. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/mhra-class-2-medicines-recall-ikervis-1-mg-ml-eye-drops-emulsion-and-verkazia-1-mg-ml-eye-drops-emulsion-santen-oy/**

**New SSP issued for Liptor 20mg chewable tablets**

A reminder that a Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) has been issued for **Lipitor® (atorvastatin) 20mg chewable tablets** and community pharmacy teams should implement the SSP with immediate effect. SSP013 provides that for every Lipitor® 20mg chewable tablet originally prescribed, one Atorvastatin 20mg tablet must be supplied. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/new-ssp-issued-for-lipitor-20mg-chewable-tablets/**

**Medicine Cupply Notification: Sodium cromoglicate (Intal®) CFC-free 5mg inhaler**

DHSC has issued a medicine supply notification for **Sodium cromoglicate (Intal®) CFC-free 5mg inhaler**. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-sodium-cromoglicate-intal-cfc-free-5mg-inhaler/**

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

**The update to the Medicine Supply Notification for Chloral Hydrate 143.3mg in 5ml oral solution has been issued. Read more here: https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/medicine-supply-notification-chloral-hydrate-143-3mg-in-5ml-oral-solution/**

**Minister Maria Caulfield thanks pharmacies for pandemic work**

In an introductory meeting with PSNC, the new pharmacy Minister, Maria Caulfield MP, asked PSNC to convey her thanks to all pharmacies for the work done by the sector through the COVID-19 pandemic. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/minister-maria-caulfield-thanks-pharmacies-for-pandemic-work/**

**November 2021 Price Concessions first update**

DHSC has granted the initial list of price concessions for November 2021. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/november-2021-price-concessions-1st-update/**

**Evaluation of LFD tests**

In December, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) will be sending some pharmacies, via Parcel Force, cartons of 15 combined COVID testing kits (containing both a standard Lateral Flow Device (LFD) pack along with one polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test). A part of ongoing assessments of LFD test kits, this evaluation involves citizens taking a PCR test alongside one of their LFD tests and sending it to a lab for testing. There is no additional work for pharmacy teams to complete. Read more here: **https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/evaluation-of-lfd-tests/**

**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.