



COVID-19 Update

Friday 8th May 2020

This daily update contains important information for community pharmacy teams about the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In today's update: Update on safety net indemnity; volunteers scheme poster; Ministers thank pharmacy; share your stories

Updated Guidance on Government's Safety Net Indemnity

Following concerns that it might not have been arranged for community pharmacy, PSNC clarified with DHSC that the Government's safety net indemnity under the Coronavirus Act 2020 applies to community pharmacy (see the [PSNC article](#) for the background), and the [FAQs on NHS Resolution's website](#) have now been updated to confirm this.

PSNC wanted to clarify the position to avoid confusion, particularly around the application of the Government's safety net indemnity to volunteers delivering medicines to shielded, vulnerable and other patients. If volunteers are not covered by a pharmacy's indemnity insurance arrangements, they should be covered by the Government's safety net indemnity.

The answer to question 11 in the [FAQs on NHS Resolution's website](#), which asks about the indemnity arrangements for community pharmacists, now states:

*"...we do not want any indemnity concerns to be a barrier or delay to the response to the coronavirus outbreak. The powers taken in the Coronavirus Act 2020 allow the Secretary of State to provide indemnity for clinical negligence liabilities arising from NHS activities carried out for the purposes of dealing with, or in consequence of, the coronavirus outbreak, where there is no existing indemnity arrangement in place. **Under these powers we have made provision for organisations or individuals undertaking NHS activities to respond to the coronavirus to be covered for clinical negligence in these circumstances. This includes those working in community pharmacy delivering pharmaceutical services for the NHS.**"*

Details of the claim procedure for community pharmacy are expected to be announced in due course.

RVS/NHS Poster

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) and the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) have produced a poster to download and print to display in pharmacies, to help raise awareness of how people can get support from the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme.

[Download the poster](#)

Government Ministers Thank Community Pharmacy

Pharmacy Minister Jo Churchill has this week posted a message of thanks for the dedication of all the pharmacies who are supporting their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a short video shared on Twitter, Ms Churchill said: "community pharmacists across the country are providing an outstanding response to patients in extremely challenging circumstances".

[Listen to the Pharmacy Minister's video message](#)

Chancellor Rishi Sunak also praised the work of community pharmacies as part of an announcement of funding being made available to keep them open this bank holiday:



[View the original tweet from HM Treasury](#)

Share Your NHS Frontline Stories

We just wanted to remind pharmacy teams of the media resource hub available to help you tell your NHS frontline stories to newspapers and via social media. Created by the National Pharmacy Association (NPA) and PSNC, the hub – www.nhsfrontline.com – contains key messages, social media assets, template newspaper columns plus much more.

All the national pharmacy bodies have been working together to tell the story of pharmacy teams going above-and-beyond during the pandemic and resources created by other pharmacy bodies are also signposted from the website.

Have you seen our latest FAQs?

PSNC's COVID-19 hub has an [FAQs page](#) with a large number of answers to queries posed by pharmacy contractors, their teams and LPCs; these are being updated on an almost daily basis. Recent additions include:

Q. To what extent is PSNC taking account of reduced income to contractors: national services, local NHS and PHE commissioned services, retail income, private services?

We have been gathering data with the other pharmacy organisations and have prepared a dossier of evidence to try to persuade Government of the very urgent need for additional funding (over and above the agreed global sum) for the sector. Community pharmacies are reporting a number of extra costs associated with maintaining patients services during the COVID-19 pandemic, including from increased prescription numbers; extra staff costs from the increased demands for advice and medicines, covering for sickness and the rise in locum rates; and one-off costs, such as decontaminating pharmacies when someone infected had visited. Our business case to Government included information on all of these, warning that the current situation is not sustainable.

[Find answers to more of your questions here](#)

Keep up-to-date with our hub page: psnc.org.uk/coronavirus

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee



14 Hosier Lane, London, EC1A 9LQ
Tel: 0203 1220 810 | Email: info@psnc.org.uk