



COVID-19 Update

Thursday 11th June 2020

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

In today's update: reviewing your infection control procedures; latest PSNC CEO message to the sector; weekly news updates.

Is it time to review your social distancing and infection control procedures?

For many pharmacies, the peak demand of the early days of the pandemic has now diminished and as contractors and their teams may have a little more time to reflect on their experiences so far during the pandemic, now may be an opportune time to consider how well social distancing has been maintained and what else could potentially be done to ensure it continues to be maintained over the months to come.

As outlined in the [update on Test and Trace last week](#), contractors need to consider COVID related risks to staff and patients and put in mitigations, and may wish to refer to PSNC's Social Distancing and Infection Control Risk Review Template. This recently published template provides suggestions on how contractors can reduce the risk of infection and maintain 2m social distancing and it will be reviewed and updated by PSNC as required.

[Find the risk assessment template on our PPE, staff safety & security webpage](#)

Further support can be found on the [business continuity](#) and [network resilience](#) pages of PSNC's COVID-19 hub, as well as more general guidance on our [Emergency and Business Continuity Planning page](#). The RPS also has information on [protecting your team in the pharmacy](#).

Have you seen the latest PSNC CEO message to the sector?

In his most recent blog post, PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes considers how we can now start to 'Reset and Reform' community pharmacy for the benefit of patients and the sector.

Whilst being clear about the need to write-off the advance payments received in recent months against all the costs that contractors have borne during the COVID-19 pandemic, he also writes that "there may be no better time for us to shape the future" of the sector.

[Read the May 2020 CEO Blog](#)

Weekly News Updates

As we are all working in a fast-moving situation with new information and guidance being published on an almost daily basis, to help contractors and LPCs keep track of things, alongside these daily updates we are also publishing weekly news round-ups. These are published every Monday and include all the key news and guidance from the previous week.

[Click here to find the latest news round-up](#)

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. In March we saw GPs issuing prescriptions for extended periods of treatment. This practice has an impact on our workload and wholesaler costs; what is PSNC doing to account for this?

NHSE&I and DHSC have issued [guidance to practices](#) that changes should not be made to the duration of prescriptions:

"Prescriptions: Practices should not change their repeat prescription durations or support patients trying to stockpile: these actions may put a strain on the supply chain and exacerbate any potential shortages. Practices should consider putting all suitable patients on electronic repeat dispensing as soon as possible. The whole repeatable prescription can be valid for a year, but each repeat should be for no longer than the patient has now. For example, if the patient has prescriptions for a month's supply now then the repeat dispensing should be set up as 13 x 28 days' supply."

If contractors see that this guidance is not being followed, please raise this with your LPC immediately for further escalation and support on a local level. At a national level, PSNC has been in discussion with DHSC on the impact extensions to period of treatment are having on the supply chain and drug pricing. To help reduce inequality for contractors, PSNC will continue its work to seek a long-term solution for dealing with prescriptions with increased period of treatment. Currently, Drug Tariff Part XIVC sets out the temporary safeguarding arrangements which have been put in place for instances where pharmacy contractors are adversely affected if prescribers systematically increase prescription duration on all or a significant percentage of their prescription items.

As part of the work on supporting funding negotiations, PSNC collected data from pharmacies to substantiate the extra costs, impacts and activities taking place as a result of COVID-19. You may have been asked to complete a detailed questionnaire that was sent to independents via an NPA survey. This data was collected to support our ongoing negotiations for a long-term increase to total pharmacy funding to help pharmacies cope with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

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

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