



Daily Update

Thursday 27th August 2020

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

In today's update: Part 2 Pharmacy Quality Scheme details and funding; launch date for Hepatitis C Testing Advanced service.

Full Part 2 PQS details published

Following PSNC's publication of [initial details on the Part 2 Pharmacy Quality Scheme \(PQS\)](#) for 2020/21 in early August, the full details are now available to pharmacy contractors in the [September 2020 Drug Tariff](#).

Key points for the Part 2 scheme are as follows:

- Formally commences on 1st October 2020, but contractors can start work sooner;
- Completion of the [Part 1 scheme](#) is a Gateway requirement;
- There are five domains, each with its own component criteria to achieve;
- An Aspiration payment can be claimed from next month;
- The Part 2 Declaration is due in February 2021;
- A new approach to allocating the funding is being introduced (see below).

[Learn more about Part 2 PQS](#)

New PQS payment structure

Total funding for the Part 2 PQS for 2020/21 is a minimum of £56.25m, with any unused funding from the Part 1 scheme also being added to the total.

A new approach to allocating the funding is being introduced in this scheme, with each domain having points allocated to it, but these vary dependent on the prescription volume of the contractor.

This change has been introduced to better recognise the varying workload and hence costs incurred by different contractors complying with the requirements of the scheme. While some costs will be common to contractors of all sizes, most of the elements of this new scheme involve variability of costs related to the number of staff employed at the pharmacy and staffing levels generally vary in relation to prescription volume.

[View the PQS domain payment bandings](#)

Hep C Testing service to commence next month

The Community Pharmacy Hepatitis C Antibody Testing Service, which had its introduction delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, will officially launch on 1st September 2020.

The new Advanced service is focused on provision of point of care testing for Hepatitis C (Hep C) antibodies to people who inject drugs, i.e. individuals who inject illicit drugs, e.g. steroids or heroin, but who haven't yet moved to the point of accepting treatment for their substance use. Where people test positive for Hep C antibodies, they will be referred for a confirmatory test and treatment, where appropriate.

Any pharmacy that meets the service requirements will be able to provide the service, but it will be of most interest to contractors that provide a locally commissioned needle and syringe programme service, with a sufficient number of clients, to make the investment in provision of the service worthwhile.

[Learn more about the Hep C Antibody Testing Advanced service](#)

Have you seen our latest FAQs?

PSNC's website has a large number of answers to queries posed by pharmacy contractors, their teams and LPCs; these are updated on a regular basis. Recent additions include:

Q. Which pharmacies are eligible to take part in the PQS?

All pharmacies on the pharmaceutical list in England (i.e. excluding Local Pharmaceutical Services (LPS) contracts) are eligible to take part in the PQS, including pharmacies that are part of the Pharmacy Access Scheme (PhAS) and distance selling pharmacies.

Q. If I was unable to claim a PQS payment last year, can I claim one in 2020/21?

Yes. Participation in a previous scheme does not affect a contractor's ability to be able to claim a PQS payment for the Part 1 2020/21 PQS. However, contractors won't be able to participate in the Part 2 2020/21 PQS unless they have first completed Part 1, as that is a Gateway criterion for the Part 2 scheme.

Keep up-to-date on COVID-19 with our hub page: psnc.org.uk/coronavirus

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