



Daily Update

Wednesday 7th October 2020

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

In today's update: advice for community pharmacy teams on NHS Test and Trace; new Government leaflet on flu vac supplies.

NHS Test and Trace: Advice for community pharmacy

PSNC is today recommending key actions for community pharmacy contractors on NHS Test and Trace following increasing reports that contractors are experiencing issues with the service.

It seems that, despite pharmacies being a healthcare setting, COVID-19 contact tracers are not taking into account the current national advice on use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other mitigations which seek to prevent the spread of infection. This has resulted in cases where one pharmacy staff member tests positive, and the whole team is then told to go into self-isolation.

PSNC is concerned that the community pharmacy network may not be able to continue to assure the supply of medicines to patients if all pharmacy staff are asked to self-isolate every time one member of staff tests positive for COVID-19. We are liaising with NHSE&I and PHE to discuss the ongoing issues with NHS Test and Trace and are pushing for more guidance to be released to address the situation.

[View the recommended actions for contractors](#)

PSNC is aware that in other healthcare establishments the individual circumstances of the case are considered and is seeking parity for community pharmacies.

PHE publish leaflet on flu vac supplies

The Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health England (PHE) and the NHS have published a leaflet for the public, which explains why some people eligible for flu vaccination are being asked to wait to get vaccinated. This follows significant early demand for flu vaccinations being seen this season, with some pharmacies and general practices already having run out of initial supplies of the vaccine.

[Read more about demand for flu vaccine and supplies](#)

The leaflet can be downloaded from the [GOV.UK website](#) and the leaflet text is also available on that site, so pharmacy contractors may want to highlight this information to patients via their website or social media.

Copies of the leaflet can also be ordered from PHE.

[Download the leaflet](#)

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. How am I supposed to protect my staff from catching COVID-19?

Contractors are advised to ensure that:

- Patient information posters for NHS settings are displayed so they can be seen before patients enter the premises.
- A [risk review for their pharmacy and individual risk assessments for staff](#) have been completed and steps put in place to mitigate any risks identified.
- [All pharmacy staff should now wear facemasks](#), unless the pharmacy is COVID-19 secure, including all staff being able to maintain a social distance from one another.
- All pharmacy staff practice good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than one metre when providing health care) with any potentially infected person.
- Users of the pharmacy should be advised to keep a distance of at least two metres from other people.
- Additional appropriate PPE is used – see below.

Public Health England (PHE) has advised that full height screens installed on medicines counters would provide helpful protection for staff and PSNC advises pharmacy contractors to consider installing these wherever possible.

Q. What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should pharmacy teams be using?

PHE updated its guidance on the wearing of facemasks in primary and community health care settings in July 2020. In summary, the recommendation is that all pharmacy staff now wear facemasks, unless the pharmacy is COVID-19 secure, including all staff being able to maintain a social distance from one another.

This aligns the PHE guidance with PSNC's guidance to contractors, issued in mid-June.

[Read the latest PHE guidance](#)

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

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