



# Daily Update

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> 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: requirement to sign prescriptions will be suspended; COVID-19 self-isolation advice; NHS Test and Trace impact survey.**

### **Requirement to sign prescriptions suspended from November**

The Government has temporarily suspended the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the back of NHS prescription forms or EPS tokens. This change comes into effect from 1st November 2020 and will last initially until 31st March 2021.

As part of the social distancing measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus and to assist in the management of the serious risk or potentially serious risk to human health in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, Ministers in England have agreed to temporarily suspend the need for patient signatures on prescription services forms.

The changes will be kept under review and further extensions may be granted if there continues to be a cross infection risk. The temporary suspension will be lifted once it is deemed safe for patients to resume signing of forms.

[Learn more about the change here](#)

### **COVID-19 self-isolation advice**

In a recent Primary Care Bulletin, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) issued guidance to pharmacies on NHS Test and Trace and the need for staff to self-isolate.

NHSE&I indicated that, if a member of the pharmacy team tests positive and there is a risk to the provision of pharmaceutical services, then advice regarding the individual circumstances should be sought from the [local Health Protection Team](#) (specific individual circumstances will be considered and advice may therefore appear to differ). Contractors are also recommended to contact their regional NHSE&I team regarding the possible disruption.

NHSE&I also clarified that, if a member of staff receives a negative test, they do not need to self-isolate as long as:

- everyone they live with who has symptoms tests negative;
- everyone in their support bubble who has symptoms tests negative;
- they were not told to self-isolate for 14 days by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 App; and
- they feel well.

Further guidance can be found in the [updated COVID-19 SOP for community pharmacy](#) and [PSNC's NHS Test and Trace briefing](#).

## Impact of NHS Test and Trace decisions on pharmacies

PSNC continues to monitor the issues some community pharmacies are experiencing with NHS Test and Trace. We are particularly interested in the impact that incorrect handling of cases by contact tracers is having on pharmacies.

To help inform PSNC's work in this area and any media reports, we would like to get a sense of how many pharmacies are or have been affected, and how easy it has been to resolve the situation.

### [Complete the Impact of NHS Test and Trace decisions survey](#)

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. Are all NHSBSA prescription processing sites open as usual to receive end of month bundles?**

All NHSBSA prescription processing division offices will be staying open so bundles should continue be posted via secure track and trace method to the normal delivery addresses no later than the 5th day of the month following that in which the supply was made.

It would be prudent to check in advance with your regular courier if there are any planned changes to collection/delivery timings for your end of month bundle. If your regular courier service is unavailable, contractors should make alternative arrangements for delivery of bundles using a secure track and trace delivery method.

**Keep up-to-date on COVID-19 with our hub page: [psnc.org.uk/coronavirus](https://psnc.org.uk/coronavirus)**

*Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee*



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