



Daily Update

Friday 5th March 2021

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

In today's update: briefing MPs on C-19 costs; ventilation of indoor spaces to reduce C-19 spread; PEPS payment information; SSP010 extended; No smoking day 2021.

Briefing MPs on COVID-19 costs

PSNC is continuing its work to brief Parliamentarians on the financial pressures facing community pharmacies.

[Ahead of the Budget, PSNC had called upon the Chancellor to intervene](#) in ongoing COVID-19 funding negotiations and ensure that pharmacies do not have to pay back the £370 million in emergency loans they received last year. The letter was featured in **[The Times](#)** and PSNC has also been briefing Parliamentarians to update them on the funding situation for pharmacies, asking them to call on HM Government to cover contractors' COVID-19 costs.

Following the Budget announcement, in which no provisions for pharmacies were made, MPs from the All-Party Pharmacy Group (APPG) were vocal during a parliamentary debate, stating that support for pharmacies is lacking and desperately needed.

Upcoming debate: Thursday 11 March

The APPG has secured another opportunity for MPs to discuss pharmacy in Parliament and on Thursday 11th March at 1.30pm MPs will debate pharmacy and the impact of COVID-19.

PSNC will be encouraging MPs to contribute to the debate next week, but it would be helpful if LPCs and contractors could also write to their MPs asking them to join the debate on Thursday.

[Read our news story for more information and a template to help contact your MP](#)

Ventilation of indoor spaces to reduce the spread of C-19

New guidance has been published by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on how ventilation in the workplace can help to stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Read more about the new guidance here](#)

PEPS payment information

Contractors signed up to the Pharmacy Earlier Payments Scheme (PEPS) will have received their payments on 1 March directly from the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) instead of the finance company Greensill Capital.

Contractors have been rightly concerned by the news reports regarding Greensill: given the more general parlous state of community pharmacy funding, they cannot afford for anything else to impact on their income or cashflow.

PSNC raised the issue urgently with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) who have given us the following statement: *'Pharmacy contractors will continue to be paid. We are aware of developments with Greensill Capital and are in discussions to determine the next steps. We will provide an update when these have been finalised.'*

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes said:

"We will continue to monitor the situation carefully: this must not turn into another issue, outside of contractors' control, to hit the financial confidence of the sector."

For further information on PEPS, see [NHSBSA's](#) and [PSNC's](#) websites.

SSP010 extended

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has provided an update on the Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for Levothyroxine 12.5mcg tablets (SSP010).

SSP010 for Levothyroxine 12.5mcg tablets was previously expected to expire on 5th March 2021 but the end date has been further extended to **12th March 2021**.

[Learn more about current SSPs](#)

No smoking day 2021

No Smoking Day is a national campaign that encourages the nation's smokers to make a quit attempt on the second Wednesday of March each year. The day is an important opportunity to engage smokers in your local community, encouraging them to quit and access local stop smoking support.

This year's campaign has been developed collaboratively between [Action on smoking and health \(ASH\)](#) and [Breathe 2025](#) with support from Public Health England (PHE) Marketing, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and Fresh Smokefree North East.

[Learn more about no smoking day](#)

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