



COVID-19 Update

Wednesday 27th May 2020

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

In today's update: primary care campaign day; changes to the Pharmacy Earlier Payment Scheme; returned medicines guidance.

Primary care campaign day

Tomorrow, **Thursday 28th May**, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) will be running a media activity day focussing on primary care. This will include activity across social media, promoting case studies and publishing blogs, all to let the public know that the NHS is still open for business during the pandemic.

Community pharmacy teams are encouraged to join in using #HelpUsHelpYou to share their examples. New social media assets to promote pharmacy have been made available in the [Public Health England \(PHE\) campaign resource centre](#).

Changes to PEPS

The Pharmacy Earlier Payment Scheme (PEPS) is being updated to provide pharmacy contractors with even earlier access to their monthly Advance payment. Under the new scheme, contractors can receive an estimated early payment, based on their submission history, before the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) receives their FP34C submission document. This means contractors can access funds up to 60 days earlier.

The previous PEPS terms will no longer apply from 1st July 2020. **Contractors currently signed up to PEPS who wish to continue with the new scheme must send a completed revised terms and conditions form to the NHSBSA by 31st May 2020.** Existing service users who do not send in their revised terms and conditions will revert to the normal payment timetable.

[Learn more about the changes to PEPS](#)

Handling medicines returned for disposal

The contractual requirement for community pharmacies to accept unwanted/out-of-date/waste medicines for disposal from the public remains an important service during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it does bring potential risks for pharmacy teams.

Earlier this month, PSNC, the National Pharmacy Association, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Community Pharmacy Patient Safety Group produced [joint guidance on how best to safely handle returned unwanted medicines at this time](#).

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. Where can I find the Transitional Payment on my latest Schedule of Payment?

The Transitional Payment line has moved from the '*Details of Other Payments Authorised*' section (Page 2) to the '*Prescription Fees*' section (Page 1) on your latest Schedule of Payment for March 2020 dispensing month (for payment due on 1st June). PSNC requested this change to ensure that the Transitional Payment forms part of the pharmacy Average Item Value (AIV) which is used to calculate the Advance Payment.

Q. I did not receive the automatic £300 payment towards the COVID-19 costs for premises adjustments required to support social distancing – can I submit a claim for this?

The majority of contractors will have received this payment on 1st May 2020. This payment was not itemised on the FP34 Schedule of Payments and was processed as a separate transaction to that outlined in the Schedule. The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) sent individual letters to contractors informing them of this payment.

Any contractors that had temporarily closed their pharmacy for more than two weeks since 31st March 2020 but made adjustments for social distancing prior to or shortly after the closure, will need to claim the £300 payment by 5th August 2020 using [the appropriate NHSBSA claim form](#). The claim form must be signed by the contractor.

Although PSNC has welcomed the £300 contribution, we are continuing to press NHSE&I to fully recognise the costs of introducing these important protective measures for pharmacy staff and patients.

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

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Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee



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