



COVID-19 Update

Friday 20th March 2020

This update contains important information for community pharmacy teams about the Government's response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus in the UK. PSNC is working with the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England and NHS Improvement to provide as much support and guidance as possible to help community pharmacy teams contribute to some of the many challenges that could arise in an epidemic situation. This email is one of a series expected to be sent in the coming months to manage the potential spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Update: 20th March

A number of updates have been issued today.

Key workers

The Government has announced that schools in England will be closed for all but a limited number of children. Schools have been asked to continue to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot safely be cared for at home.

The definition of key workers has been deliberately drafted broadly, so that all the people involved in the medicines and pharmacy supply chains who are critical to the supply of medicines, and the delivery of pharmacy services, to patients and the public – including pharmacists and pharmacy staff – are included.

[Template letter that pharmacy contractors can issue to their staff](#)

Business continuity guidance

PSNC has updated its hub for community pharmacy teams on the COVID-19 coronavirus to include new business continuity guidance and details of measures to support contractors.

Advice and information on shared care clients, nursing and care home patients, and providing Multi-compartment Compliance Aids (MCAs) has today been added to the **[business continuity section](#)** of the hub.

These documents have been drafted to help pharmacies assess their business mix and decide how they can improve their dispensary efficiency, whilst still supporting their most vulnerable patients, in the event of multiple members of staff being off work to COVID-19.

The information and guidance in this hub will be updated as more details are released. We are currently working on a number of other resources which we hope to be able to publish in the coming days and weeks, such as a series of FAQs based on the questions that pharmacy teams and LPCs have been sending in.

Deliveries of medicinal products

The Healthcare Distribution Association (HDA) is asking that community pharmacy teams support the increase in demand on the supply chain by ensuring delivery tote boxes are returned to suppliers of medicinal products as quickly as possible.

Tote boxes are essential to safe medicines supply as they help suppliers to protect and track medicines. HDA is therefore asking pharmacy teams to return any totes to their supplier's delivery driver when they are making a delivery.

Crucial medicines added to parallel export ban list

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has announced that over 80 medicines are to be added to the **[list of medicines which must not be parallel exported from the UK](#)**. The restriction will be in place from 00:00am 21 March 2020.

The parallel export ban will help ensure there is an uninterrupted supply of medicines for NHS hospitals treating COVID-19 patients.

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

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