



COVID-19 Update

Tuesday 2nd June 2020

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

In today's update: supporting carers during the pandemic; Fluoxetine 10mg tablets SSP extended; NHS IT developments.

Supporting carers during the COVID-19 pandemic

The Carers Trust has reported that some carers have had difficulty coping with some of the changes pharmacies have had to make during the COVID-19 pandemic – including queuing outside the pharmacy as a result of social distancing measures and difficulty in accessing and arranging medicines delivery slots. Some young carers have also reported being turned away from pharmacies.

Pharmacy teams will already be providing support and information to assist carers and making necessary adjustments to support carers and the cared for when they enter the pharmacy. But in addition, the Carers Trust – in partnership with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and PSNC – are asking pharmacy teams to consider the following actions to support carers in the community:

- Allowing 2 people into the premises when the carer has no choice but to take the person being cared for to the pharmacy with them;
- Consider prioritising carers of vulnerable / shielding people for medicine delivery slots; and
- Review the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's guidance on '[Children collecting medicines from a pharmacy](#)' and recognise that, for some families, young carers are the only people able to collect medicines in the household.

A [guide has also been published](#) which sets out helpful hints and tips to support unpaid carers to make the most out of their pharmacy team.

[Learn more about supporting carers](#)

SSP05 Fluoxetine 10mg tablets extended

On 12th March 2020 it was **announced** that the Secretary of State had authorised a Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) to help manage the supply of Fluoxetine 10mg tablets. This SSP was put in place to manage stock and to try to ensure that fewer patients have to return to their prescriber.

SSP05 Fluoxetine 10mg tablets has been extended from 12th June to 11th September 2020.

The SSP provides that the capsule formulation of Fluoxetine may be supplied against prescriptions for Fluoxetine 10mg tablets. However, pharmacists should always ensure they are using the current version of an SSP and exercise their professional judgement before supplying an alternative product.

[View the updated SSP documentation and PSNC guidance on SSP05](#)

NHS IT COVID-19 developments

New COVID-19 codes added to SCR Additional Information

New COVID-19 SNOMED CT codes have been added to SCR Additional Information to capture suspected or confirmed COVID-19 status from GP systems.

GPs have been instructed to record whether a patient is assumed to have had COVID-19, whether a patient has been tested, and whether the patient is at risk of medical complications should they contract the virus. If GP practices use these codes on their clinical systems, this will also be visible within SCR Additional Information.

Smartcard multi-site code added to cards of pharmacy professionals

NHS Digital is adding the multi-site FFFFF Smartcard code to Smartcards with the pharmacist or technician role, for the duration of the pandemic. The initiative has been supported by PSNC and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I). The bulk activity performed by NHS Digital is scheduled to take place across this week and to be finished by the end of the week.

A temporary Smartcard position has been created to provide greater flexibility for pharmacists and technicians during the ongoing pandemic. This will help pharmacy staff if they unexpectedly find themselves working at their non-usual pharmacy – e.g. because of staff shortages.

Can you help? Case studies requested

SCR and Smartcard changes are scheduled to last during the pandemic (including SCR with Additional Information as the default SCR). PSNC is requesting pharmacy teams email it@psnc.org.uk with experiences about why the changes are necessary even were it not for the pandemic. Please share experiences and case studies about how wider SCR access supports your ability to care for your patients.

Read more at: [Smartcards](#) and [SCR](#).

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. Can I conduct an MUR on the counter or another quiet area of the pharmacy, if the patient does not want to go into the consultation area?

No. The Directions require the consultation to be carried out in an acceptable location, and patient consent to carry out the MUR elsewhere cannot overrule this requirement.

If the patient does not want to go into the consultation area, the consultation could be carried out in the public area of the pharmacy when the pharmacy is closed. Or the local NHS England and NHS Improvement team may consent to the consultation being carried out in the patient's home or by telephone.

Q. How many MURs can I provide in 2020/21?

A total of 100 MURs can be provided in 2020/21.

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

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

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