



Daily Update

Friday 4th September 2020

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

In today's update: report concludes pharmacy funding is insufficient; PSNC CEO funding negotiation interview; further delivery service extension; Lithium carbonate 400mg MR tablets; consultation on regulatory changes for COVID-19 and flu.

NPA: Pharmacy network unsustainable under current financial framework

Community pharmacy funding is insufficient to maintain the network at its current scale, according to an in-depth report published by the National Pharmacy Association (NPA). The [Impacts of current funding, policy and economic environment on independent pharmacy in England](#) report suggests that, as things stand, around three-quarters of pharmacies could be in deficit by 2024, with between 28% and 38% already estimated to be in deficit as of 2019.

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes said:

"PSNC welcomes any attempts to dig further into the detail of the finances of pharmacies, and EY (Ernst & Young) have done a considerable amount of work on this. We concur with their finding that the position of the NHS as a monopsony purchaser is dangerous for community pharmacy: the sector has been feeling the consequences of only having one customer for the past decade. We also agree that community pharmacies are in an incredibly difficult financial situation now, with many of them already making a loss and the situation set to worsen in the next few years. This is in line with PSNC's recent letter to HM Government arguing for an uplift to the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF): this is critical to ensure that pharmacies can continue to deliver what the NHS needs them to both through the pandemic and in the post-COVID world."

[Read more about the NPA research](#)

PSNC CEO funding negotiation interview

PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes has given an indication of how funding negotiations are going in an interview with Pharmacy Magazine Editor Richard Thomas. As well as talking about PSNC's bid for a funding uplift, Simon discussed the impact COVID-19 has had on the sector, the perilous financial situation many contractors have found themselves in, and the findings of the independent review into contractor representation and support.

[Read or listen to the interview on the Pharmacy Magazine website](#)

Pandemic Delivery Service: another local outbreak extension

Due to the ongoing local COVID-19 outbreaks in various areas across England, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has decided that the pandemic delivery service requirements **should continue to apply from 8th July 2020 until the dates detailed below, but only for shielded patients who live in the following local outbreak areas:**

- 9 wards within South and West Blackburn, Darwen and rural areas until 21st September 2020;
- 8 wards within North East Blackburn until 23rd September 2020; and
- Leicester City until 23rd September 2020.

[View full information about the local outbreak areas](#)

Reimbursement for Lithium carbonate 400mg MR tablets

Due to [recent supply disruptions with Lithium carbonate tablets](#), PSNC's Dispensing and Supply Team wants to advise community pharmacy contractors on the reimbursement of prescriptions for this medicine.

Whilst prescriptions written by brand name are reimbursed based on the brand list price held on [dictionary of medicines and devices](#) (dm+d), where a prescription is written generically ordering 'Lithium carbonate 400mg modified release tablets x 100', contractors would only be reimbursed as per the Drug Tariff Part VIIIA price which is currently based on the recently discontinued product Priadel. **It is therefore advised that generic prescriptions are referred back to the prescriber to be written for the Camcolit brand instead.**

[Read the advice in full](#)

Consultation on changes to the Human Medicines Regulations relating to COVID-19 and Flu

The Government has launched a consultation to clarify the temporary authorisation of medicines and vaccines, ensure they can be promoted as part of a national vaccination or treatment campaign, clarify the scope of civil liability for their use, ensure the UK has the available workforce to administer any COVID-19 and flu vaccine, and make short-term provisions for any associated wholesale dealing.

As part of the consultation, which was published on 28th August 2020, the Government proposes that the scope of Patient Group Directions (PGD) should be expanded to allow pharmacists to administer unlicensed vaccines, including any COVID-19 vaccine. Also that pharmacy technicians could become eligible to safely administer a COVID-19 or influenza vaccine. The consultation closes on 18th September 2020.

[View the Government consultation](#)

Keep up-to-date on COVID-19 with our hub page: psnc.org.uk/coronavirus

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