



Daily Update

Thursday 10th December 2020

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

In today's update: NHS update on EU exit plans; GPhC issues COVID-19 vaccination guidance; flu vaccine survey; shortage of Bile acid sequestrants.

EU Exit: Update from NHSE&I

The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer at NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I), Dr Keith Ridge, has today written to primary care providers to update them on the continuity of supply of medicines as part of the Government's contingency preparations for the end of the Brexit Transition Period.

The UK will leave the EU Single Market and Customs Union on 31st December 2020 and NHSE&I have been working closely with the Department of the Health and Social Care (DHSC) to help minimise the possibility of disruptions to the supply of medicines. As such, the letter reiterates guidance from DHSC which advises that:

"... it is not necessary for local providers, whether in hospitals or primary care, to stockpile medicines or for clinicians to write longer prescriptions for patients."

Community pharmacy contractors should also note the letter's reference to the [recent update on the EU Falsified Medicines Directive](#) from UK FMD Working Group for Community Pharmacy, which includes next steps regarding local pharmacy systems and disconnecting them from the FMD systems.

[Read more about the letter](#)

GPhC issues COVID-19 vaccination guidance

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has published an [online guide for pharmacy professionals and contractors](#) about the COVID-19 vaccination programme, as well as releasing a related set of [Q&As aimed at patients](#).

For pharmacy professionals who want to help deliver COVID-19 vaccinations, GPhC advises that they check they have appropriate indemnity arrangements in place to cover this work. The Council also advises that contractors may need to consider temporary registration for any offsite provision in a larger setting if the vaccine requires final preparation and/or assembly on site before administration (such as the Pfizer vaccine) and/or if the vaccine is being administered under a Patient Group Direction (PGD).

[Read more in the GPhC's online guide for pharmacy](#)

NHSE&I flu vaccine survey for pharmacies

As part of the NHS focus to protect as many people as possible this winter, NHSE&I are asking all primary care providers, including pharmacy contractors, to complete a survey to help them understand how many frontline healthcare workers have had a flu vaccination this year.

Contractors are asked to complete the survey by 6.59pm on Friday 18th December 2020. It only asks two questions and should take a couple of minutes to complete:

1. How many staff with patient contact are currently working on your premises?
2. How many staff have had a flu vaccine (since September 2020)?

The information submitted will help NHSE&I with their flu and COVID-19 vaccination planning for this year and next.

[Find out how to access the survey and submit your response](#)

Shortage of Bile acid sequestrants

[Specialist Pharmacy Service \(SPS\)](#) advises there is a shortage of Bile acid sequestrants: colestyramine powder for oral suspension 4g (Questran and Questran Light), colesevelam (Cholestigel) and colestipol (Colestid)

Following the divestment of the Questran range from Bristol-Myers Squibb to Cheplapharm at the end of July 2019, the availability of several bile acid sequestrants has been affected, with some currently out of stock until mid-2021.

[Further information is available here](#)

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

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