



Daily Update

Tuesday 21st July 2020

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

In today's update: BAME pharmacy leaders celebrated; COVID-19 rapid antibody tests.

Leadership contribution of BAME pharmacy professionals celebrated

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) is celebrating the contribution of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pharmacy professionals to NHS leadership this NHS Birthday month, with the publication of a [case study about Ade Williams, Lead Prescribing Pharmacist at Bedminster Pharmacy in South Bristol](#), who has successfully completed the Mary Seacole Programme.

Since 2017, 528 community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians have completed the programme, funded by the NHS England Pharmacy Integration Fund. More than 47% of professionals successfully completing the course come from BAME groups.

The Mary Seacole programme is a rigorous six-month development opportunity for first time leaders, designed to equip them with the skills and knowledge to successfully lead and manage teams. The programme provides a balance between the theory of leadership and a toolkit of skills that can be implemented in real life.

The Mary Seacole Programme is currently paused due to Covid-19, but [further information about the programme is available here](#).

GPhC warns against supply of COVID-19 rapid antibody tests

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has stated that it does not believe it is appropriate for COVID-19 rapid antibody tests to be sold in community pharmacies at this time.

In a letter sent to community pharmacy contractors and superintendent pharmacists today, Chief Executive Duncan Rudkin outlined the GPhC's concerns about the potential for the selling or recommendation of such antibody tests to undermine the standards and professional responsibilities of pharmacy professionals.

Whilst the UK Government, World Health Organization (WHO) and Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) remain concerned about the use and efficacy of these tests, it is strongly recommended that you ensure your pharmacy does not offer rapid antibody test kits.

As indicated in a [PSNC daily update email last month](#), there is a clear expectation from GPhC that pharmacies will adhere to published guidance from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Public Health England. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians should ensure they are up-to-date with national guidance issued by Government bodies and consider the wider public health impact of supplying or advising any activity that may contribute to false assurances.

[Read the GPhC letter about rapid antibody tests](#)

Have you seen our latest COVID-19 related 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 a regular basis. Recent additions include:

Q. Are pharmacy staff eligible for COVID-19 testing, and if so, how is this accessed?

Yes, frontline workers, including community pharmacy staff in England, can access free testing for COVID-19, via the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) national testing service. Testing will allow those currently unable to return to work because they or a member of their family or household have symptoms of coronavirus to know whether they do have the virus.

A portal for booking COVID-19 tests for key workers, including community pharmacy team members, is available for use by team members and employers: [Essential workers: apply for a coronavirus test \(GOV.UK\)](#)

Q. Where a symptomatic patient presents in the pharmacy and is unable to leave due to their medical condition, but the pharmacy does not have a closed area available for the patient to isolate in prior to the arrival of an ambulance, what should be done?

If, a person is too unwell to return home and there is no closed isolation area, the pharmacy may need to temporarily close to assist the patient and minimise the risk of transmission to other patients. The use of full personal protective equipment (PPE) – Type IIR mask, apron, eye protection and gloves – is necessary as detailed in the NHSE&I community pharmacy SOP to help to protect the wearer and avoid a close contact for the purposes of Test and Trace. All personal protective equipment should then be disposed of as clinical waste.

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

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

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