

### Support for NHS community pharmacy contractors in Surrey and Sussex

Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex  
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Thank you for your hard work and loyalty this last week. Our thoughts are with you and your teams in this unprecedented situation.

Supporting and promoting all NHS Community Pharmacy contractors with local issues remains our utmost priority and we are working to respond to changes and alterations affecting pharmacy daily.

If you require support, please visit our A-Z which is being updated regularly with any new information affecting Surrey and Sussex and we recommend you look here for help with any query in the first instance.

We are experiencing a higher than usual level of telephone calls.

Please help us to manage these by emailing us with your questions and queries where possible. We are doing all we can to help and will respond to emails as quickly as we can. Email us at [ipc@communitypharmacys.co.uk](mailto:ipc@communitypharmacys.co.uk).

Take care of yourselves, your staff and your loved ones

**James, Sandra, Hinal and Micky** - the team at Community Pharmacy Surrey & Sussex, on behalf of your LPCs

### Practical local support

Here are a few examples of the help we have given contractors across Surrey and Sussex this week and, where ready, resources and briefings we have developed to help you:

- 1. One-to-one support for [business continuity planning](#) – especially around substance misuse and MDS/MCA.**
  - **SURREY:** Read our [substance misuse briefing note for Surrey](#).
  - **SUSSEX:** Expect a briefing for Sussex soon (NB: this is taking longer to negotiate due to more complex contracts in Sussex).
  - **SURREY & SUSSEX:** Read [Covid-19 MDS/MCA advice from James Wood, CEO](#)
- 2. Advised and guided about reduced operational hours and distributed external communications to help manage others' expectations of you, and your teams**
  - [Read more](#)
  - Here is a locally developed template for you to download and use to display any revised opening hours. ([Temporarily closed](#) and [New hours](#))
- 3. Helped co-ordinate local staffing and resources, including contractor buddying to maintain continuity of community pharmacy services**
  - Advice to follow

#### You must continue to tell us about

- Periods of treatment being extended beyond normal
- When you experience changes to prescription ordering processes

- Problems with locally commissioned services
- Unreasonable demands on you from other healthcare professionals
- Being approached to dispense FP10 from non-EPS sites by scanning and emailing prescriptions to your NHSmail address

## Local representation

Here is a list of the people and organisations we have contacted and/or spoken to directly on your behalf this week to try to resolve issues raised by contractors in Surrey & Sussex, or get clarity on very local situations

- NHS England Regional Team
- Local Authorities – County Councils (Public Health and Adult Social Care), District and Boroughs
- NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
- Surrey Heartlands ICS
- Sussex STP
- GPs – through the Local Medical Committee (LMC), Primary Care Networks Clinical Directors, and CCGs
- CD Accountable Officer
- Smart Card Registration Authority
- Local GPhC Inspectors
- PSNC - Covid-19 Rapid Action Team and PSNC News
- Local media – radio and print
- Printers to negotiate a competitive price for [pop-up banners to display official PHE advice](#)
- Sussex Police and Surrey Police
- All LPC members across Sussex and Surrey to highlight emerging issues, and confirm actions being taken on their behalf
- Other LPCs
- YOU! We held our very first **Contractor Zoom meeting**. The next is on Tuesday 31 March at 7.30pm, invites have been sent. This will be a weekly meeting for as long as needed during these ex

## Results

A lot of the issues we are faced with are complex and are taking time to resolve and/or negotiate. But we have had some successes already. Including:

- Confirmation from NHS England contract managers that **CPAF visits have been suspended** and that contract managers will take a “pragmatic & flexible approach” over contract management and opening arrangements
- Providing behind-the-scenes advice to help the **NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service/NHS111 online referrals** go live
- Confirming to CCGs that **refocusing medicines management teams to support increasing EPS and eRD in general practice** is an urgent priority and providing some *watch-out-for* points to help local implementation
- Acknowledgement from some CCGs and GPs that **some isolated and collective local prescribing policies and practices** are having an effect on the medicines supply chain and/or on individual pharmacies, and that it must not continue

- Holding urgent discussions with all Commissioners and Lead Providers where sub-contracting arrangements exist for **locally commissioned services**. Await to hear joint response by end of next week.
- Highlighting that [violent and abusive behaviour towards pharmacy staff is not acceptable](#) and building support and empathy **for the amazing work of all community pharmacy staff**
- Highlighting to all contractors in Surrey and Sussex that they **may not be receiving all the locally significant news we send out** and **we thank** the 100 out of 533 contractors **who responded to our call-to-action to fix this by re-subscribing to our mailing lists**. [Read more](#) and ACT NOW if you haven't already.

Finally, do keep checking official sources of information (NHS, GOV.UK, PSNC and your professional institutions) for professional updates.

We will focus our efforts and communications on how national guidance translates and impacts on us locally, whilst continuing to cascade your concerns to NHS England, PSNC and other stakeholder organisations.

**Support | Develop | Promote | Deliver**

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