

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

Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex  
Special | Issue 29 | 20 April 2020

As we enter the fourth week of lockdown, and with this period now extended until at-least mid-May, maintaining business-as-usual will be key over the next, maybe tough, weeks ahead – that’s why the news about Covid-19 testing for pharmacy staff in Sussex and Surrey -and their families - is so very welcome (see below).

These are strange times, and as always, our key focus is looking out for and supporting community pharmacies. To help us do that, we need your feedback. Tell us how you are getting on (good and bad) as it helps us make sure we are responding to the issues that matter most to you.

We will continue to offer our regular insights, advice and [weekly contractor’s meetings](#) as supporting and promoting you remains our utmost priority.

With warm wishes to you, your staff and your loved ones in these strange times

**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 since issue 28:

#### **Giving advice on how to claim for opening over Easter weekend.**

- Contractors have to claim for, or up to, 3 hours per day based on the number of hours they were open Good Friday (10th April 2020) and Easter Monday (13th April 2020). This can now be done on [Manage Your Service \(MYS\) portal](#) between the 17th April and 5th May 2020, with payment due on the 1st June. For those open on Easter Sunday (12 April 2020) we have emailed local claim forms direct to pharmacies and / or head offices for completion and returning to NHS England & Improvement in the South East by email

#### **Giving clarity on the newly launched *Pandemic Delivery Service*, especially the requirement for contractors to provide advice to the patient on how to identify a local volunteer to collect the prescription from the pharmacy on their behalf and then deliver it.**

- Appendix 1 of our briefing called [Covid-19: using volunteers to get medicines to vulnerable and shielding citizens](#) has contact details for local authority helplines across Surrey and Sussex

#### **Helping plan pharmacy elements of GP ‘Hot Sites’ & Clinical Decision Units which are being set up to deal with COVID-19 patients and representing local contractors affected by them**

- [Read more](#)

#### **Giving advice on the Emergency Regulations around flexible provision of services by dispensing doctors**

- Some contractors in rural areas may have seen information about emergency provisions for dispensing doctors and there has been some misinformation and local confusion. Primary Care Commissioning and PSNC have issued [some further guidance](#) and we have discussed with the local NHS England Regional Team about how it would exercise its powers under regulation 61 of the NHS regulations, only in the event of needing to do so. If rural pharmacy contractors are concerned about local behaviours they should contact us [lpc@communitypharmacyss.co.uk](mailto:lpc@communitypharmacyss.co.uk)

### **Highlighting *Prescribing Switching* from Warfarin to Direct-acting Oral Anticoagulants (DOACs) for patients with Non-Valvular Atrial Fibrillation (NVAF) or Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

- Pharmacies may start to notice changes in prescribing behaviour from Warfarin to DOACs during the Covid period. This work has started in practices across Surrey – where the DOAC of choice is Edoxaban, followed by Dabigatran. CCGs have liaised with manufacturers and wholesalers and we understand quotas have been listed. Some areas of Sussex will also follow. Read [Guidance for the safe switching of warfarin to direct oral anticoagulants \(DOACs\) for patients with non-valvular AF and venous thromboembolism \(DVT / PE\) during the coronavirus pandemic](#)

### **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** where we have shared your feedback about last week's Easter opening in advance of renegotiating local arrangements for rota/locally commissioned hours for Christmas 2020 through to Easter 2023.
  - **Public Health** and **Adult Social Care** colleagues about issues affecting the most vulnerable patients across Surrey and Sussex
  - **Medicines management teams** across Surrey Heartlands ICS and Sussex STP
  - **Local Medical Committee (LMC)**
  - **CD Accountable Officer**
  - **Healthwatch** – all four in Surrey and Sussex on separate occasions
  - **Local authority commissioners** and/or **prime providers**
  - **PSNC** - Covid-19 Rapid Action Team and PSNC News
  - **Journalists**
  - **Press officers** in the top tier councils to get help distributing information to borough and district councils and the voluntary and community sector
  - **Surrey Police** and **Surrey emergency planners**
  - Borough, District and County Council **elected members, and an MP**
  - **Housing department managers** and **staff supporting vulnerable people**
  - **All LPC members** across Sussex and Surrey to highlight emerging issues, and confirm actions being taken on their behalf
  - **Other LPCs**
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- **YOU!** We held another [Contractor's Zoom meeting](#). The next, our 5<sup>th</sup>, is on Tuesday 21 April at 8pm, invites have been sent. This will be a weekly meeting for as long as needed during these exceptional times.

## 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 that community pharmacy staff in Surrey and Sussex, and members of their households, can access Covid-19 testing**

- [Read more](#)

**Agreement from commissioners that they will consider potential new Locally Commissioned Services to support the pandemic. For example:**

- To support GP hot sites / CDUs where associated pharmacy workload is increased
- On demand availability of palliative care medicines (new services and extensions to those already in place)
- A very local delivery service in at least two local authorities

**Secured minimum income guarantees to protect locally commissioned income during the pandemic period, regardless of services being directed to be stood down, or by contractor choice**

- [Read letters from each commissioner](#)

**Increased understanding about changes to MCA/Blister packs/Dosette Boxes**

- as recent changes to provision start to filter through to patients and carers (but we are not complacent as there is still a lot of misunderstanding about the funding and local decision making around these products). Here is a reminder of your [LPCs position on medical compliance aids](#) and current [advice from PSNC](#)

**Collecting evidence on and giving clarity on accepting back unwanted medicines from patients.**

- As it stands community pharmacies are [still obliged to accept back unwanted medicines from patient – as per the terms of service and essential services specifications in the contractual framework](#). We don't expect this essential requirement to change. But we do expect all involved in the process to maintain safety and good infection control at all times.

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. Don't forget to tell us about:

- Periods of treatment being extended beyond normal
- Changes to prescription ordering processes
- Problems with locally commissioned services
- Unreasonable demands on you from other healthcare professionals
- Requests to be a GP hot sites
- Requests to dispense FP10s from remote sites via NHSmail (apart from dentists)

➤ During these exceptional times we are working to respond to changes and alterations affecting pharmacy on a daily basis. [Our A-Z](#) is being updated regularly with any new service information and we ask you to look here for help with your query in the first instance

➤ View [news archive](#)

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