

Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex
Special | Issue 30 | 27 April 2020

Count on us for support

This is an important time to stay connected to your LPC. Things are hard and we're all doing what we can to support our patients, staff and profession.

We've been busy over the last couple of weeks representing you and told you some of the detail in these *Coronavirus* bulletins. Past issues of all our newsletters are [here](#) if you missed them, or need to refer back to them.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has confirmed that they are considering asking community pharmacies to open on the next Bank Holiday (8 May). PSNC has reported they expect that NHSE&I will treat the day in the same manner as the Easter Bank Holidays as GP practices will again be open for business as usual. We will continue to listen out for news and let you know as soon as we hear anything. In the meantime and ahead of any formal direction to be received, we suggest you make plans to open 2-5pm on Friday 8 May, with any exceptions agreed in advance with the NHSE&I regional team in the South East. It is likely that an email with further information will be sent to all contractors tomorrow (28 April) – for multiples both CCA and AIMp this will go directly to head offices

Finally, and as we enter week six of lockdown, please look after yourselves, 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 29:

Advising about unwanted medicines and returns

- Community pharmacies are still obliged to accept back unwanted medicines from. We don't expect this essential requirement to change and there is likely to be an increase in demand as sadly the number of community deaths from Covid-19 related and other deaths grow. How we've responded to contractors who have asked us about this:
 - Consider your waste management collections and update your requirements if needed using your online account at www.vector.anenta.com or call Anenta on 03301 222 143
 - Consider using the flexible operating arrangements in the [NHS England SOP](#) if you need time to deal with dealing with waste, or CD destruction.

- Speak to your staff about the risks of handling returned medicines and the need to prioritise clinical activities. [Read James Wood's advice to contractors](#)
- Refresh on [PSNC guidance and resources](#)

Talking about queues outside pharmacy with other healthcare workers and charity workers

- This week we are starting to encourage all pharmacies to think about queue management, especially in the run up to closing times, or if the pharmacy closes for lunch
- Some pharmacies are finding out who is in their queue and the medicines they need so that the team inside can try to be ready for each customer.
- As part of this, we urge you to think about how you could assist fellow healthcare workers and the voluntary and community sector by allowing them to bypass the usual queue when coming to collect medicines. It is important that healthcare professionals support one another as much as they can.

Highlighting the MHRA/NHS Central Alerting System (CAS) alert called [Considerations for Personal Protective Equipment in the Context of Acute Supply Shortages](#) for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

- and reminding contractors that PPE obtained directly or indirectly (via wholesalers) from the national stockpile should only be used by pharmacy staff and under no circumstances is not for resale to the public.

Hearing reports that fraud (and attempted fraud) is increasing as fraudsters have been quick to create and/or adapt or resurrect well-known scams to target citizens and businesses during Covid-19 pandemic

- We have been alerted to a number of fake letters on NHS and DHSC letterheads that have been sent to pharmacies
- Please be vigilant; take a moment to stop and think before parting with information that could keep your business or patients safe. Challenge: Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or challenge any requests.
- **Report** anything suspicious (**letters and/or phone calls**) to the police or to [Action Fraud](#)
- Suspicions of fraud against the NHS can also be reported anonymously and confidentially online [here](#) or by phoning the 24-hour fraud and corruption reporting line on: 0800 028 4060
- **Contact details for NHS England & Improvement South Counter Fraud Team** are on our website under 'F for fraud'

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**
- **Public Health and Adult Social Care**
- **Medicines management teams** across Surrey Heartlands ICS and Sussex STP
- **Local Medical Committee (LMC)**
- **CD Accountable Officer**
- **Healthwatch**
- **Local authority commissioners and/or prime providers**

- **PSNC**
- **Journalists**
- **All LPC members** across Sussex and Surrey to highlight emerging issues, and confirm actions being taken on their behalf
- **Other LPCs**
- **YOU!** We held another [Contractor's Zoom meeting](#). The next, our 6th, is on Tuesday 21 April at 8pm, invites have been sent. This will continue to be a weekly meeting for as long as these exceptional times continue.

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)

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- **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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