



Coronavirus

Support for contractors

Support for NHS community pharmacy contractors in Surrey and Sussex

Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex
Special | Issue 28 | 6 April 2020

Here's another Covid-19 special to support you on some of the important issues this week. 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 doing all we can to help and will respond to emails as quickly as we can. Email us at lpc@communitypharmacyss.co.uk. Or join our zoom video chat Tuesday 7th April at 8pm [click here to join](#)

Take care of yourselves, your staff and your loved ones

Practical local support

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

- 1. Understanding Easter opening NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has announced that it will require all community pharmacies in England to open from 2pm to 5pm on 10 April 2020 (Good Friday) and 13 April 2020 (Easter Monday). This is in addition to the regional arrangements for Easter Sunday.**

The requirement is being made under the [National Health Service \(Amendments Relating to the Provision of Primary Care Services During a Pandemic etc.\) Regulations 2020](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We encourage all pharmacy contractors to try hard to comply with this direction. Contractors will be able to claim a payment for these opening hours (further details to be announced in the coming days). If you are unable to open for reasons beyond the control of the contractor, notify the NHSE&I regional office as soon as possible [by email](#) the usual way and update the NHS 111 DoS. Please contact us if you need further advice or support

2. We can help advise and guide about reduced operational hours (40% of pharmacies in Surrey & Sussex are now operating this way). We have distributed external communications to help manage others' expectations of you, and your teams

- [Read more](#)
- We have developed this template for you to download and use to display any revised opening hours. ([Temporarily closed](#) and [New hours](#))

3. Support if you are approached to dispense for COVID-19 infected patients

In some areas, 'hot sites' are being set up at general practices, out-of-hours hubs or other locations, which may deal solely with COVID-19 patients. It is our view that this must not premises co-located with community pharmacies, as this creates significant issues for the pharmacy contractor and may disrupt the normal operational services offered by them. [Contact us immediately](#) if you are approached in this situation.

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. Note for NHS Dentists there are few other options and we are working with CCGs & NHS England to resolve this. In the meantime, *we encourage pharmacists to consider each request on a case by case basis, using professional judgement to decide which course of action will be in the best interest of the patient. This is at the discretion of the pharmacist and is private service – a fee could be charged to the patient to cover the cost of the emergency supply.* Here's [some further information](#), which you can share with local prescribers if asked

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 about volunteers – more details to follow this week**
 - NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
 - Surrey Heartlands ICS
 - Sussex STP
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- 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 are holding a weekly zoom video chat. The next is on Tuesday 7th April at 8pm, invites have been sent. This will be a weekly meeting for as long as needed during these exceptional times

Top Tips:

A lot of the issues we are all facing during the pandemic are new and complicated. We're all learning and adapting fast. Here are few things we have picked up, please do share your ideas with us:

Helping Other Healthcare Workers & Volunteers

- Many community pharmacies report that in order to allow the 2m social distancing in their premises they are having to limit the numbers of people coming in at any one time. Some pharmacies are managing these queues, finding out who is in them and what medicines they need so that the team inside can try to be ready for each customer. We could encourage pharmacies to think about queue management especially in the run up to closing times, or if the pharmacy closes for lunch.
 - As part of this, pharmacy could assist fellow healthcare workers and volunteers by allowing them to bypass the usual queue when coming to collect medicines. Given the valuable role that healthcare professionals are playing in the response to COVID-19, it is important that healthcare professionals support one another to help minimise their risk of contracting the virus.
 - HealthWatch have shared with us locally about the potential need for staff to speak loud and clearly (to overcome the dampening of their voice under masks) to avoid people stepping forward and putting themselves and the staff at risk.
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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.

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