



COVID-19 Update

Monday 6th April 2020

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

In today's update: weekly news updates; the latest on PPE; chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine; supporting health and justice services; media and parliamentary work

Weekly Key News and Guidance Updates

In addition to these daily email news updates, PSNC is publishing [weekly COVID-19 round-ups](#). The round-up will be published every Monday and includes all the key news and guidance from the previous week. The page is also linked to from our [COVID-19 hub](#).

With so much information being sent out at the moment in this fast-moving situation, we hope this new weekly series will help you to keep track of all the latest COVID-19 updates.

The Latest on PPE

The recently revised guidance on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) means that in pharmacies where there is not enough space to allow team members to keep 2 metres apart, staff are advised to wear face masks. Therefore, like other frontline staff in the NHS, community pharmacy teams urgently require more PPE.

PSNC has asked for additional PPE to be released from Public Health England's stockpile for community pharmacies and we know officials at DHSC and NHSE&I are working on this.

[Read our page on PPE](#)

Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine

We have heard anecdotal reports about increased demand of Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine following media reports that these drugs can be used to prevent or treat COVID-19.

However, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has issued a [press release](#) to clarify that neither product is licensed for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19. Whilst research relating to the response of COVID-19 to these drugs is being undertaken, the MHRA states:

"Until we have clear, definitive evidence that these treatments are safe and effective for the treatment of COVID-19, they should only be used for this purpose within a clinical trial."

Similarly the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) has recently stated that it "does not currently endorse the use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine to treat COVID-19 given the very limited robust data on efficacy and safety."

Supporting Health and Justice Services

NHSE&I has published a letter providing information for community pharmacies on supporting people to access medicines who have been released from prisons and other prescribed places of detention in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some pharmacy teams may already have received this letter.

[Read community pharmacy letter to support health and justice services](#)

Media and Parliamentary Work

PSNC has been working with the other national pharmacy organisations on drawing attention to community pharmacy's role in the COVID-19 response. This work has included issuing press releases to the national media and giving interviews to programmes such as Radio 4's Today programme and newspapers including the Sunday Times and iNews. You can see some of the recent pharmacy stories on the [Media work section](#) of our COVID-19 hub.

We have also been working with the other pharmacy organisations on MP engagement, taking advice from Lexington Communications on COVID-19 related Parliamentary work. We are expecting further media coverage and to build more support for community pharmacy in the coming weeks.

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

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee



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