



COVID-19 Update

Monday 4th May 2020

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

In today's update: risk assessment template; returned medicines guidance; updating Early May Bank Holiday hours in DoS

Review Social Distancing and Infection Control Procedures

For many pharmacies, the peak demand of the early days of the pandemic has now diminished and as contractors and their teams may have a little more time to reflect on their experiences so far during the pandemic, now may be an opportune time to consider how well social distancing has been maintained and what else could potentially be done to ensure it continues to be maintained over the months to come.

PSNC has published a risk assessment template will help pharmacy teams to identify further potential changes which could be made to their pharmacy environment or procedures during the pandemic to increase the safety of staff and patients.

[Download the risk assessment template from this webpage](#)

Dealing with Returned Medicines

PSNC has worked with the National Pharmacy Association, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Community Pharmacy Patient Safety Group to produce joint guidance on dealing with unwanted medicines that have been returned to community pharmacies in England.

The contractual requirement for community pharmacies to accept unwanted/out-of-date/waste medicines for disposal from the public remains an important service during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it does bring potential risks for pharmacy teams. This guidance has been compiled to help contractors determine how best to safely handle returned unwanted medicines at this time. It contains a list of considerations and a suggested procedure, as well as checklists to work through.

[Guidance on dealing with patient-returned / unwanted medicines](#)

[Checklists on dealing with patient-returned / unwanted medicines](#)

Updating 8th May Bank Holiday Hours in DoS

Following the **announcement** that NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) requires all community pharmacies in England to open from 2pm to 5pm on Friday 8th May 2020 (Early May 2020 Bank Holiday), PSNC has received queries from contractors about the need to update their opening hours in the Directory of Services (DoS). Key messages are:

- **Contractors must update DoS themselves**, unless they have confirmation that the NHSE&I Regional Team is doing this for their region. LPCs may be able to clarify the position for contractors.
- There will be no national block update of contractors' hours on DoS for the bank holiday opening on Friday 8th May, because the flexibility provided by NHSE&I means it is more appropriate for contractors to update entries.
- It is important for contractors to update their DoS entry, so that NHS 111 does not send a patient to a closed pharmacy, for example, as part of the Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS).
- Contractors can use the **DoS Profile Updater** to make the necessary change by the end of Wednesday 6th May 2020. If you experience a last minute change, for example, due to staff illness, meaning you cannot open, you will need to use the DoS emergency change number instead: 0300 0200 363 (as well as notifying NHSE&I).

Contractors should also ensure that the pharmacy **NHS website** entry is correct for Friday 8th May.

[Read more on our DoS webpage](#)

PSNC 8th May Working

As all community pharmacies in England are required to open on Friday 8th May, the team at PSNC are treating it as a normal working day and will be open to support community pharmacy contractors and their teams. The best way to contact the team is via email: info@psnc.org.uk. If you would prefer to speak to someone, please call 0203 1220 810 and your call will be directed to the appropriate person.

One Day Left to Claim Easter Opening Payment

Community pharmacy contractors have ONE day left to claim payment for opening over the Easter Bank Holidays as the window for claiming this payment closes **tomorrow, Tuesday 5th May at 11.59pm**. Contractors must submit their claim for payment using the **Manage Your Service (MYS) portal**.

Have you seen our latest FAQs?

PSNC's COVID-19 hub has an **FAQs page** with a large number of answers to queries posed by pharmacy contractors, their teams and LPCs; these are being updated on an almost daily basis. Recent additions include:

Q. Why was the announcement that pharmacies would be required to open on 8 May made with such short notice?

NHSE&I indicated that an announcement would be made in its primary care bulletin on 24 April which has given contractors some notice. It is unclear why the formal announcement was made a week later on 1 May.

Q. Can I pick different hours that are easier for my staff to do?

The announcement includes flexibility on when to open if agreed with your NHSE&I regional team. For more information please see our [key points on the announcement](#).

Q. What should I do if I cannot get enough staff to open safely?

You can close temporarily if you are prevented from opening due to staff illness or other reasonable cause. This applies at any time and includes bank holiday opening. If you do, you must notify your NHSE&I regional team and follow the correct procedure – see [PSNC guidance](#).

[Find answers to more of your questions here](#)

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

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