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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | Daily Update | | Monday 29th March 2021 | | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  |  |  | |  | This daily update contains important information for community pharmacy teams about the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In today's update: C-19 test distribution service; extension of prescription signature suspension; regulatory dispensations update; deferred publication of PNAs.  **COVID-19 test distribution service added to the CPCF** A new Advanced service – the NHS community pharmacy COVID-19 lateral flow device distribution service – has been added to the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) today.  This service, which pharmacy contractors can choose to provide, aims to improve access to asymptomatic COVID-19 testing by making lateral flow device (LFD) test kits readily available at community pharmacies. People will self-administer the tests away from the pharmacy and pharmacy staff will not be involved in the generation of test results, supporting the reporting of results or the next steps for the person taking the test.  In NHS Test and Trace marketing and communications aimed at the public, the service will be referred to as **Pharmacy Collect** and it will allow asymptomatic people to collect LFD test kits, free of charge, from community pharmacies, so they can undertake regular testing as part of the Government’s [**COVID-19 roadmap**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=5b6bea40f4&e=12757307a1) plan.  [**View details on service funding and further information**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=9da2ecd6aa&e=12757307a1) **Extension of temporary suspension of signatures on prescriptions and token submission requirements** Following representations made by PSNC to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Ministers in England have agreed to extend the temporary suspension of the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the back of NHS prescription forms or EPS tokens until **30th June 2021.**  Whilst the suspension of signature requirements remains in place, contractors are **not required** to submit EPS tokens (other than those used for SSP claims) to the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). PSNC has published updated [**guidance**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=ebd2ddd1b7&e=12757307a1) on the changes to the dispensing and end of month submission processes as well as important reminders for pharmacy staff on the correct completion of exempt or paid declarations on the reverse of prescription forms and EPS tokens.  [**Learn more about the extension of the suspension of signatures on prescriptions**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=f17830ff24&e=12757307a1) **Regulatory dispensations update and March 31st deadlines** At the end of last year, PSNC agreed on a number of regulatory dispensations for contractors with the DHSC and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I).  Today the period of emergency declaration has been extended to 30th June 2021. This allows contractors to request and NHSE&I to grant temporary flexible opening hours (days or times) by setting out the reasons for the request and giving 24 hours’ notice.  Contractors are also reminded of the dispensations previously agreed with DHSC and NHSE&I that relate to the usual 31st March deadlines. These included waiving the Community Pharmacy Patient Questionnaire and clinical audits, plus an extension to the Data Security and Protection Toolkit for 2020/21.  [**Find out more about the dispensations**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=0591ccc379&e=12757307a1) **Next publication date for PNAs deferred by 6 months** At the end of last week, DHSC announced that due to ongoing COVID-19 pressures across all sectors, the requirement to publish renewed Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments (PNAs) will be suspended until October 2022 – an extra six months. The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 will be updated to reflect this change in due course.  The announcement followed requests by PSNC and Local Authorities.  [**Find out more about the deferral of PNAs**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=74a8c7d99f&e=12757307a1)  **Keep up-to-date on COVID-19 with our hub page:**[**psnc.org.uk/coronavirus**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=b671e78d7a&e=d3dc5e7fbd) |  | | |
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