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| PSNC Newsletter |
| Wednesday 15th December 2021 |

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|  | This newsletter from PSNC is sent on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It contains important information for those that work in the community pharmacy sector.In this update: PQS deadline extension and further measures; holiday openings; update on LFD availability; December price concessions.PQS deadline extension and further measuresPSNC has reached agreement with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on several measures to help ease the immediate pressures on community pharmacies.  Foremost among these is an extension, in line with last year's arrangements, to the deadline for meeting the requirements of the Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS). Pharmacies will still need to make the PQS declaration during the February window, but as last year, this will be a claim for work to be undertaken and evidenced by 30th June 2022. Further details will be published shortly on the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) website.Contractors are also no longer required to complete the Community Pharmacy Patient Questionnaire (CPPQ), a contractor-chosen clinical audit, nor a national audit (which was intended to be on valproate) for 2021/22. These measures are not all that PSNC asked for from NHSE&I and DHSC, but they are the majority, and we are pleased that NHSE&I and DHSC have committed to keeping the situation under review. [**Learn more**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=53eba79e1e&e=d19e9fd41c)Holiday Openings: Boxing Day and New Year’s Day PSNC has been seeking flexibility from NHSE&I about holiday openings this year. In these conversations, NHSE&I has informed PSNC that in some areas, a number of contractors are seeking to close due to pandemic and workforce pressures on two specific days, Boxing Day (Sunday 26th December 2021) and New Year’s Day (Saturday 1st January 2022). These two days are **not**Bank Holidays this year, but normal contractual days.   NHSE&I has agreed that contractors in an area may agree with NHSE&I a pharmacy opening plan for pharmacies in that area, which ensures adequate patient access to pharmaceutical services; recognising the pressures contractors are under. **This applies to Boxing Day and New Year’s Day only**. Applications for such plans will be considered by NHSE&I regional teams, which are keen to ensure fairness between contractors. This is intended for specific areas where there are known difficulties finding a pharmacist for the pharmacy.[**Read more about holiday openings**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=d32c806c46&e=d19e9fd41c)Lateral Flow Test availability: Update for pharmacy teamsPSNC has been in urgent discussions with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) about the availability of NHS Test and Trace Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) to pharmacies.  The UKHSA have confirmed that there are plenty of stocks available in the country, and that they have now activated contingency measures to support the supply of tests to pharmacies. Unfortunately, they are unable to lift the cap of one carton per pharmacy per day due to logistical limitations in the distribution system for the test kits, and we expect the demand for tests to remain high for the next few days.Pharmacies should continue to order stock from Alliance Healthcare using the following PIP code: **PIP: 8943995**‘**DHSC ORIENT GENE test kits**’. If a pharmacy is getting an out-of-stock message from Alliance Healthcare, it is best to try again the next morning as systems will be updated as soon as that day’s UKHSA stock arrives.[**Find out more**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=783feea944&e=d19e9fd41c)December 2021 Price Concessions – First UpdateDHSC has today granted the initial list of price concessions for December 2021. PSNC is still working with DHSC to agree further concessionary prices on other drugs reported to be unavailable at the stated December 2021 Drug Tariff price. [**See the initial list of price concessions**](https://psnc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=86d41ab7fa4c7c2c5d7210782&id=4ddc8e8972&e=d19e9fd41c) |  |
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