

Community Pharmacy Bulletin

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Headline News

Christmas & New Year 2024/25 – Expression of Interest

Thank you to those contractors who have submitted an expression of interest to support over Christmas and New Year 2024/25 following circulation of the Winter Planning letter in July. We will be reviewing these submissions and contacting contractors within the next couple of weeks where we would like to agree some commissioned hours on either Christmas Day, Boxing Day or New Years Day.

If any other contractors would like to submit an EOI please do so via the link below by Tuesday 3rd September in order for us to ensure your offer of support is included in the review.

[MS Forms EOI Winter 2024](#)

The current hourly rates for pharmacies to claim which open for commissioned hours on bank holidays across the South West is £391.45 for Christmas Day and £307.57 for Boxing Day and New Years Day.

Bank Holiday Claims

We would like to thank those contractors who provided commissioned cover on Monday 26th August. In order for the associated payments to be made activity data must be submitted on MS Forms via this link [Bank Holiday Claim Form](#)

Please note this form has recently changed, any submissions made via the MS Form used for previous bank holiday claims cannot be accessed by our team so will not prompt payment.

NBS for flu only Community Pharmacies

Following the successful proof of concept in which community pharmacy contractors in the North West were able to upload seasonal flu appointment calendars onto the National Booking System (NBS), this Autumn NHS England are offering all flu only community pharmacies the opportunity to use NBS and upload flu appointments for eligible patients to book.

If you would like to take up this offer, and you do not already have access to NBS as part of the COVID-19 vaccination service, **please complete this form by 1 September: [NBS flu Form](#)**. We require your pharmacy ODS code (code starting with F) and the name and secure email addresses of two pharmacy representatives who will be given access to NBS.

A secure email address must be from the authorised list available at the following link: [The secure email standard - NHS England Digital](#).

Following registration, you will be sent login details, training details and further information.

Any queries can be directed to: england.vacspolicyandcontracts@nhs.net

Reminder: Flu vaccination start dates and new comms for patients

NHS England previously announced that the start date for the Flu vaccination service for the 2024/25 campaign will be **Thursday 3rd October 2024**, with an exception for pregnant women who will be from 01 September 2024. Data will be collected on PharmaOutcomes as we do every year.

Please note the [service specification](#) is clear that the NHS will not pay for vaccinations administered outside of the announced and authorised dates for vaccination.

The [annual flu letter](#), published on 12th March 2024, announced the delayed start to the main flu vaccination programme compared to previous years, where the programme had commenced on 1st September.

[Further guidance and resources for patients can be found here](#)

NHSmal multi-factor authentication (MFA) rolls out for all users

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) will soon be mandatory for all NHSmal users. The NHSmal team has announced that users will be prompted to enable MFA from mid-August, and an MFA timeline will be introduced to support the rollout

What is MFA?

Normally, you use your email address and password to log into your NHSmal account. MFA is an additional security measure that verifies your identity when logging in, helping to prevent unauthorised access to NHSmal accounts. It will become the default method for accessing NHSmal accounts.

How do I enable MFA on my NHSmal account?

Instructions for enabling MFA can be found on the [NHSmal support website MFA webpages](#).

Advanced Services

Pharmacy First myth busting series (#1)

Community Pharmacy England have set out the first of a series of articles to tackle some of the misconceptions around Pharmacy First. The articles will cover a variety of aspects of Pharmacy First and aims to myth bust, to increase understanding of the service.

Click the link to read further: [Pharmacy First myth busting series \(#1\) - Community Pharmacy England \(cpe.org.uk\)](#)

LFD Test Service: Common problems that Patients are facing

Some patients have been experiencing problems in accessing LFD Tests.

1. One of the main issues appears to be supply of the LFD Tests and as per the service specification:

“LFDs tests are not provided centrally by the NHS, therefore community pharmacies must order stocks of LFD tests through their usual suppliers, for which they will be reimbursed in accordance with section 7 of the Drug Tariff”

There has been some disruption in supply for AAH but other suppliers specifically Phoenix, Alliance and Sigma report no current issues. If contractors use AAH as their main supplier, they are advised to procure LFD Tests by ordering from other suppliers.

2. A specific cohort are eligible for **free** LFD Tests **whilst other patients can still purchase tests**. The eligible patients entitled to free LFD tests are listed here: [1 Recommendations | Nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir, sotrovimab and tocilizumab for treating COVID-19 | Guidance | NICE](#)

3. Patients/carers can locate a community pharmacy providing the LFD Test supply service on service finder: [Find a pharmacy that offers free COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

4. Finally, as per the service specification,

“If a patient tests positive, they have been advised to call their general practice, NHS 111 or hospital specialist as soon as possible”.

Further details can be found in the service specification: [NHS England » NHS lateral flow device tests supply service for patients potentially eligible for COVID-19 treatment: service specification](#)

Pharmacy teams could raise awareness of the service to people in the 85 years and over group (or their carers) by speaking to them ahead of the start of autumn to encourage them to keep a box of LFD test kits at home in case they develop COVID-19 symptoms.

Community Pharmacy England have produced a range of resources that contractors can use to promote the service. For further details click here [LFD Resources](#)

Quality & Regulations

Updating Directory of Services (DoS) - Temporary Suspension of Service

This is a reminder as part of the requirement for business continuity planning when a contractor is required to temporary suspend pharmaceutical services; DoS must be kept up to date.

Please ensure appropriate team members have the necessary requirements to access and login to NHS Profile Manager to update DoS and NHS UK for the premises.

5.4.2 Arrangements for updating the pharmacy profile

Since 29 November 2020, pharmacy contractors have been required to ensure that there is a comprehensive and accurate profile for their pharmacy premises on both NHS England's directory of services and the NHS website (paragraph 29C(3) and (4), Schedule 4). Each profile must be verified at least once each quarter of the financial year, and also updated each quarter as required. This is undertaken via the NHS Profile Manager.

The plan for each pharmacy premises will need to include the arrangements for updating the pharmacy's profile on the directory of services and NHS website regarding:

- any temporary suspension, and
- the subsequent re-opening of the pharmacy premises for the provision of pharmaceutical services (paragraph 29D(2)(b), Schedule 4).

Regulation Reminder: Quarterly Verification of DoS Profiles

Contractors must ensure there is a comprehensive and accurate profile for their pharmacy in the Directory of Services (DoS). Contractors must also ensure they verify and, where necessary, update the information contained in DoS at least once each quarter of the financial year.

Contractors are able to search and update their DoS profiles using the [DoS Profile Updater](#). As all DoS profiles should contain the ODS code, contractors should search by ODS code or postcode to ensure all their service profiles are included on the DoS. The tool includes a '*Date Last Reviewed*'. When pharmacy team members first begin a review of a pharmacy, the updating tool will show the date that it was last reviewed.

Further guidance on how to access and use the DoS Profile Updater can be found on the Community Pharmacy England [DoS webpage](#).

GPhC launches new survey on pharmacy professionals' experiences of revalidation

The General Pharmaceutical Council is launching a new survey to seek views from pharmacy technicians and pharmacists who have submitted revalidation since October 2022. The purpose of this survey is to ensure that the current revalidation process is effective and meets the needs of professionals and the public.

This survey is anonymous and confidential; no personally identifiable data will be required, and no comments will be attributable to individuals. [The survey](#) is open until **8 September 2024**.

Healthy Living

Blood Pressure Campaign: Know Your Numbers Week 2 -8 September 2024.

Every September, blood pressure checks are taken by thousands to prevent heart attacks and strokes.

Know Your Numbers! Week reaches those who have high blood pressure and don't know it, so they can get the treatment and support they need to bring it under control.

This year's campaign will take place from 2-8 September 2024. Contractors can support the campaign and take part in the UK's biggest blood pressure testing and awareness event. Resources to support the campaign can be found via the following link: [Blood Pressure UK](#). **Please note that this is not a mandatory campaign.**

Stoptober – Quit Smoking Campaign 1 September – 31 October 2024

Stoptober is the Department of Health and Social Care's annual stop smoking campaign, based on evidence that if a smoker makes it to 28 days smoke-free, they are five times more likely to quit for good. With your help, this year the aim is to encourage the remaining 5 million smokers in England to give quitting a go this October and support them to quit successfully.

Searching 'Stoptober' directs smokers to the Better Health website, where they can access a range of free support, tools, information and advice on quitting smoking. There is also a postcode lookup tool to help them find their local stop smoking service. Stoptober is a little different this year as there will be no national paid media campaign, so your support is more important than ever.

Stoptober campaign resources are now available to download from the [Campaign Resource Centre](#). These can be used throughout September and October to help raise awareness of the campaign and encourage smokers to plan their quit attempt. **Please note that this is not a mandatory campaign.**

Training & Development

NHS Funded Training for Community Pharmacy

A range of NHS funding training is now available for community pharmacy, training covers:

- Education Supervisor Training including DPP training
- Community Pharmacy Technician Advancing your role
- Independent Prescribing for Community Pharmacists
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For further details on the courses and how to apply please see the attached training document on the email.

Shortages

Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs)

All current Serious Shortage Protocols can be viewed via [BSA website](#).

If you have any questions regarding SSPs please contact the NHS Prescription Service:

- Email: nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
- Telephone: 0300 330 1349
- Textphone: 18001 0300 330 1349

DHSC Medicine Supply Notifications

DHSC and NHSE/I have now launched an online [Medicines Supply Tool](#), which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. The contents of these MSNs can now be viewed on the Tool. The Tool also details any changes to resupply dates and updates to the entries. To access the Tool, you will be required to register with the [SPS website](#).

The Medicine Supply Tool is moving on the SPS website. Update your links and bookmark its new home in the 'Tools' section: <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/home/tools/medicines-supply-tool/>

Medicine Alerts

For information on medical alerts, recalls and safety information regarding drugs and medical devices please see the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency below:

[Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Updating NHS Website Profile and DoS Profile

Please ensure that any changes to your opening times, contact information and services information including advanced services are updated using Profile Manager. This will ensure your pharmacy's NHS website profile and your DoS profile are kept up to date at all times.

Guidance and helpful video tutorials on how to check and update your profile using NHS Profile Manager can be found here [NHS Profile Manager](#).

NHS Smart Card

Could all contractors please ensure all pharmacists, especially locums, are reminded to ensure they have their smartcard with them for all shifts. This is especially critical at weekends and on bank holidays as there is likely to be more limited access to pharmaceutical services on these days.

If you have received automated messages about NHS smartcard renewal, please renew them as soon as possible.

If NHS Digital do not manage to increase the rate of renewal now, it will inevitably result in a rush of users requiring smartcard renewals through the Care Identity Service with increasing urgency.

This could lead to delays in access to systems and services, due to backlogs of renewals being requested for processing by Registration Authorities. Any impact on the Care Identity Service will not affect authentication and access to clinical systems for users with a valid smartcard. Please use the link for smartcard renewals [Self-renewal NHS smartcard service - NHS Digital](#)

GDPR email requirements

We would like to remind all contractors any emails containing patient identifiable information must be sent from a secure email address, preferably the pharmacies shared generic nhs.net store email address. Any emails with patient details must not be sent from a non-secure email address as this could result in a breach of GDPR.

Please see attached the guidance regarding the investigation and reporting of incidents where any potential breach of GDPR has occurred.

Email Correspondence – Signature Details

Please can you ensure when communicating with the NHS South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub's Community Pharmacy Team you include the following details within your correspondence to help us with responding to your enquiry. Many thanks.

- Contact Name
- Name of Contractor
- ODS Code (F Code)

Temporary Suspensions of Pharmaceutical Services

Following changes to the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 from 31st July 2023, it is a Terms of Service requirement for each NHS community pharmacy owner to have a business continuity plan for a temporary suspension of service due to illness or other reasons beyond their control, and to action this when necessary.

In accordance with regulations, contractors must notify the commissioner of any temporary suspension in service; including those for reasons due to illness or causes beyond the control of the contractor. In accordance with pharmacy regulations contractors must provide evidence to the commissioner they have undertaken the following:

- Notified the commissioner of the suspension as soon as practical.
- Used all reasonable endeavors to implement the business continuity plan required by paragraph 29D, Schedule 4 of the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, and
- Used all reasonable endeavors to resume the provision of pharmaceutical services as soon as is practicable. (Paragraph 23(10), Schedule 4, of the NHS (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013.

In the event of you being unable to open please complete a Temporary Suspension closure form which can be found [here](#) and send this to our generic email address: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net

Please click the link below to take you to the Microsoft Form:

- [Pharmacy contractor notification of a Temporary Suspension of Services](#)

Pharmaceutical Clinical Waste

If you have any queries with regards the collection of clinical waste from your premises e.g. a missed collection or issues with the frequency of collection; please contact the SW Collaborative hub on england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.

Please note contractors are responsible for the management of their own clinical waste with regards removal of sharps and waste from covid vaccination programmes. It is the responsibility of the contractor to make arrangements and pay for the disposal of their sharps and COVID vaccination clinical waste. The commissioned clinical waste service for your area, will not collect anything other than pharmaceutical waste.

Changes of director and/or superintendent pharmacist

When a body corporate appoints a new director and / or a new superintendent they must inform the commissioner within 30 days of the person taking up that new position. Recent experience suggests that contractors sometimes overlook making these declarations.

To make such a declaration you should go to the Primary Care Support England (PCSE) website at <https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/services/pharmacy-market-administration-services/market-entry/> where you will be able to complete the necessary declarations.

Failure to notify any changes to directors and / or superintendent pharmacist maybe a breach of your terms of service.

Drug and Alcohol Services

Below are the contact details for your local drug and alcohol service. In the event of temporary suspension of service at your premises please ensure you contact your local service provider to make arrangements for the continuity of patient care for those attending the pharmacy regularly for the supervised administration of medicines.

- BSW - Swindon Borough Council - SubstanceMisuseTeam@swindon.gov.uk
 - BSW - Wiltshire - <https://www.turning-point.co.uk/services/connect-wiltshire>
email: substanceUseTeam@wiltshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 0034566
 - BSW - Banes - TheBeehive@dhilbath.org.uk Tel: 01225 329411
 - BNSSG - <https://remedy.bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/adults/drug-and-alcohol-misuse/bristol-drug-and-alcohol-service/>
 - Cornwall and Isles of Scilly - Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) DAAT@cornwall.gov.uk
 - Devon - [Together - EDP Drug & Alcohol Services](#) Tel: 0800 233 5444
 - Dorset - [Dorset HealthCare :: Addictions \(Alcohol and Drugs\)](#)
 - Gloucestershire - <https://www.viaorg.uk/services/gloucestershire-2/>
email: gloucestershire@viaorguk.cjsm.net Tel: 01452 223 014
 - Somerset - <https://www.turning-point.co.uk/services/somerset> Tel: 0300 303 8788
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Pharmacy Support for Health & Wellbeing

Please see below support available for our NHS people with free confidential coaching and support for the primary care workforce.

- Wellbeing apps:
 - NHS staff have been given free access to a number of wellbeing apps to support their mental health and wellbeing.
 - Link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/>
- Mental Health and Wellbeing:
 - Guidance and advice on how you can stay mentally healthy and boost your wellbeing from Pharmacists' Support.
 - Link: <https://pharmacistsupport.org/i-need-help-managing-my/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>
- Addiction support:
 - Information about the free and confidential addiction support provided by Pharmacists Support.
 - Link: <https://pharmacistsupport.org/how-we-can-help/addiction-support-programme/>
- Managing your finances:
 - Information and guidance on money management and finding financial assistance from Pharmacists Support.
 - Link: <https://pharmacistsupport.org/i-need-help-managing-my/finances/>
- Physical Health:
 - Support on Physical Health from Pharmacists Support, including how to easily incorporate exercise and healthy eating into your daily routine, and the benefits of doing so.
 - Link: <https://pharmacistsupport.org/i-need-help-managing-my/physical-health/>
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society Wellbeing Guide
 - Wellbeing Guide from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society
 - Link: <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/pharmacy-guides/your-wellbeing>

Training Resources for Pharmacists

- E-learning: Dealing with difficult discussions:
 - E-learning programme from the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education.
 - Link: <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/diffdisc-e-01>
 - Resource Pack: Stopping violence in the Pharmacy:
 - Resource pack from the pharmacists' defence association.
 - Link: <https://www.the-pda.org/wp-content/uploads/stopping-violence-resources.pdf>
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Interpretation and Translation Services

Interpretation and translation services are available for Community Pharmacies when treating NHS Patients. These services are commissioned and paid for by NHS England.

The information and how to access these are available on the South West Pharmacy website page via the following link [Interpretation & Translation Services](#).

The services commissioned cover the following areas:

- Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG)
 - Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW)
 - Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
 - Devon
 - Dorset
 - Gloucestershire
 - Somerset
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Contact Details and Further Information

South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub Community Pharmacy Contract Management Team contact information: email: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.

Website: [South West Community Pharmacy information](#) for more further information, blank templates, forms, and documents.