

Community Pharmacy Bulletin

Date: 02 February 2026

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Consultation on draft rules and standards for Responsible Pharmacists and Superintendent Pharmacists

We would like to draw your attention to a current consultation on proposed draft rules and standards for Responsible Pharmacists and standards for Superintendent Pharmacists, as well as updates to the standards for pharmacy professionals and registered pharmacies.

Following the introduction of new legislation, this work aims to strengthen pharmacy governance and provide greater clarity around how pharmacies are organised and managed. The intention is to help ensure that patients and the public continue to receive safe, effective, and high-quality pharmacy care.

The proposed changes focus on:

- Clarifying the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of Responsible Pharmacists, Superintendent Pharmacists, and pharmacy owners.
- Supporting the better use of pharmacy teams' skills, enabling pharmacists to deliver more clinical services in the community.
- Helping pharmacy teams contribute more effectively to NHS and social care priorities.

Stakeholders are encouraged to review the draft rules and standards and share their views as part of the consultation process. Your feedback will help shape future pharmacy governance arrangements and professional standards.

Have your say

[Respond to the consultation survey](#)

The survey is open from **17 December 2025** to **25 March 2026**

NHSmail rebrand to NHS.net Connect – information for pharmacy teams

The NHSmail programme is being rebranded to NHS.net Connect. This change introduces a refreshed look and some new features, but there will be no immediate impact on how pharmacy teams use their NHS email accounts.

What's staying the same

- Your existing NHS.net email address will remain unchanged
- Login details will stay the same
- Shared mailboxes and Microsoft Teams access will continue as usual
- Helpdesk support arrangements remain unchanged

What's new

Some users will begin to see a refreshed homepage known as the NHS.net Connect Launchpad, which brings key tools together in one place, including:

- NHS.net Outlook email
- Microsoft Teams
- Shared mailboxes
- Account settings

This update is part of wider NHS digital improvements to make communication across the NHS more joined-up, secure and easier to use.

What pharmacy teams need to do

You don't need to take any action yet. NHS.net Connect will be introduced gradually, and pharmacy teams will receive clear, step-by-step guidance when it's time to switch.

You're existing NHSmail account will continue to work as usual for now. When the change happens, your email address will stay the same, and you'll still be able to access your shared mailbox and Microsoft Teams.

For technical issues-continue to refer to the [NHS.net technical issues and escalation factsheet](#).

Adverse Weather Conditions

We are now entering the winter season where the country may be subjected to some extremely adverse cold weather with snow and heavy rain. If you find that you are unable to open due to adverse weather, then please ensure you report any temporary suspension of service as soon as practicable via one of the following ways: -

- via [Manage Your Service \(MYS\) portal](#).
- Completing the Temporary Suspension Form found [here](#) titled Annex 18 and sending this to england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.
- Completing the SW Online Microsoft Form found [here](#)

As part of implementing your business continuity plan for the closure the following actions should be completed:

1. Update their directory of services (DoS) profiles via Profile Manager to show the temporary suspension of service.
 2. Ensure patients are not referred to the pharmacy premises for directed urgent care services during the temporary suspension where practicable.
 3. Notify other pharmaceutical service providers and GP practices about the suspension, and its anticipated duration, where practicable.
 4. Display the necessary information to patients about the suspension, and its anticipated duration, in the approved manner, so that it is visible from outside the pharmacy (or for DSPs made the necessary changes to their website).
 5. Ensure arrangements are in place for the continuity of patient care, including those patients with booked appointments or those attending the pharmacy regularly for the supervised administration of medicines. (Details on how to find your local Drug and Alcohol Support Service can be found under the Drug & Alcohol Services section of this bulletin).
 6. Use all reasonable endeavours to resume the provision of pharmaceutical services as soon as practicable.
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Human Medicines Order 2025

The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that *The Human Medicines (Authorisation by Pharmacists and Supervision by Pharmacy Technicians) Order 2025* has been approved by Parliament and the Privy Council. The Order will come into force in two stages and introduces important changes to pharmacy practice.

From 7 January 2026

Pharmacists will be able to authorise members of the pharmacy team to hand out prescriptions that have already been checked and bagged.

From 10 December 2026

Pharmacists will be able to authorise pharmacy technicians to undertake, or supervise, the preparation, assembly, dispensing, sale and supply of medicines that would otherwise require a pharmacist's direct involvement.

These changes are intended to support pharmacists to deliver more patient-facing clinical services, while enabling pharmacy technicians to make full use of their skills and expertise.

More information can be found here [Pharmacy supervision legislation to come into force in 2026 - Community Pharmacy England](#)

Dispensing Services Quality Scheme (DSQS)

Thank you, those dispensing practices who have returned their Quarter 3 SEA/Serious Untoward Incidents for 25/26

A gentle reminder that the recommended deadline for the return of these submissions was Wednesday 31st December 2025

Once completed please return on email to england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net

Whilst we recommend you complete the return on the date specified above this is only voluntary and you do still have up until the end of the year; 31 March 2026 to submit all evidence for DSQS.

Patient Returned Medications

We understand it may be a challenging time of year to contain pharmaceutical waste. Please may we remind you that it is a mandatory requirement to accept patient returned medications; patients should not be turned away.

If you feel you are struggling to contain any further pharmaceutical waste, please contact us at england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net and we can support to remove such waste.

Supporting antibiotic stewardship in dentistry – resources for community pharmacies

We are writing to raise awareness of antibiotic stewardship resources in dentistry and to support community pharmacies in conversations with patients about dental pain, antibiotics, and appropriate care. Dentistry accounts for around one in ten antibiotic prescriptions in primary care. However, for most dental conditions, antibiotics are not effective, and operative treatment by a dentist remains the most appropriate management. Community pharmacists therefore play a crucial role in advising on pain relief, managing patient expectations, and signposting patients to urgent dental care services when needed.

To support this role, the South West Dental Public Health Team have brought together a Dental Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMR) communications pack for pharmacies, drawing on nationally recommended resources from the '[Dental Antimicrobial Stewardship Toolkit](#)'.

The attached pack includes:

- Patient-facing materials:
A poster and leaflet from the “*Antibiotics don’t cure toothache*” campaign.
These can be displayed in pharmacies to raise awareness and used to support discussions with patients and the public about why antibiotics are not usually appropriate for dental pain.
- Resources for pharmacists:
Dental factsheets and a pain relief guide to support patients presenting with toothache.
These provide practical advice on pain management and outline the recommended management of common dental conditions, helping pharmacists to confidently reinforce key AMR messages and signpost to dental services where appropriate.

We encourage pharmacies to use these resources to increase patient and public awareness of dental antimicrobial resistance and to support consistent, evidence-based messaging across primary care.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the resources please contact Joelle Booth, joelle.booth@nhs.net (Specialty Registrar in Dental Public Health).

Campaign Information

Reminder: promote Pharmacy First this February

As part of the [Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework \(CPCF\) 2025/26](#) pharmacy contractors are required to take part in two national health campaigns promoting the Pharmacy First service to the public.

The second national campaign runs from 02 - 22 February 2026. Contractors can meet the requirements of the campaign through any of the following activities:

- displaying posters, leaflets or other promotional materials at the pharmacy.
- information on your pharmacy's website.
- information posted your pharmacy's social media channels; and
- including information in emails or SMS sent to patients.

Updated digital materials are available for use [on the DHSC Campaign Resource Centre](#)

This is a mandatory campaign

World Cancer Day – 4 February 2026

World Cancer Day takes place on 4 February 2026 and is an international awareness day focused on improving understanding of cancer and its impact on people's lives.

The day highlights the importance of cancer prevention, early detection, timely diagnosis and access to effective treatment and care. It also recognises the physical, emotional and social challenges faced by people living with cancer, as well as their families and carers.

World Cancer Day is an opportunity to raise awareness, reduce stigma and reinforce the need for equitable, high-quality cancer care for everyone.

This is not a mandatory campaign.

Heart Month – February 2026

February is Heart Month, a national campaign to raise awareness of heart health and encourage people to take simple steps to reduce their risk of heart disease.

Heart and circulatory disease remain one of the leading causes of illness in the UK, but many risk factors can be improved through lifestyle changes and early support. Heart Month is a great opportunity to remind patients, staff, and communities about the importance of looking after their hearts.

Key messages for Heart Month:

- Stop smoking – this is one of the biggest ways to reduce heart disease risk
- Stay active – even small amounts of regular movement can make a difference
- Eat a balanced diet – reducing salt, sugar, and saturated fats helps protect heart health
- Manage stress and get enough rest

- Attend health checks and take prescribed medication as advised

Throughout February, pharmacies and healthcare teams are encouraged to:

- Promote healthy lifestyle advice
- Support blood pressure awareness where appropriate
- Signpost patients to relevant services and resources
- Encourage conversations about heart health and prevention

By raising awareness during Heart Month, we can help empower people to make positive changes and reduce their risk of heart disease.

Let's work together this February to keep hearts healthy.

This is not a mandatory campaign

Time to Talk Day – 6 February 2026

Time to Talk Day is all about starting conversations about mental health. Small chats can make a big difference — whether it's with a friend, family member, colleague, or patient.

Why it matters:

- One in four people experience a mental health problem each year, but many don't feel able to speak about it.
- Talking openly helps break the stigma and lets people know they are not alone.
- Early conversations can encourage people to seek support before problems escalate.

Ways to get involved:

- Ask "How are you really doing?" and listen without judgment.
- Share mental health resources or support services.
- Encourage colleagues and patients to speak up about their wellbeing.
- Join online campaigns and share messages about the importance of talking.

Even a short conversation can have a big impact. On 6 February 2026, let's make mental health a normal part of the conversation — because every chat counts.

This is not a mandatory campaign

Useful Information

GDPR email requirements

We would like to remind all contractors that any email 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.

Email Correspondence – Signature Details

Please ensure that 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 respond to your enquiry. Many thanks.

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

Reporting a Temporary Suspension of Service

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 that 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 via one of the following ways either:

1. via [Manage Your Service \(MYS\) portal](#).

2. Completing the Temporary Suspension Form found [here](#) titled Annex 18 and sending this to the SW generic email address: england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net.

Details of the new Temporary Suspension policy can be found [here](#) the new temporary suspension policy went live on the **01 of April 2025**.

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.

NHSBSA Hints and Tips

Please see below the links to the NHSBSA website and a link for previous back copies

- [GP and Pharmacy support: open days, webinars and newsletters | NHSBSA](#)
 - <https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/7R9K-79Q/sign-up-for-the-hints-tips-bulletin>
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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/>
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Interpretation & 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 [NHS England — South West » Interpretation and 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

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.

Please report any controlled drug incidents to us via our reporting website www.cdreporting.co.uk
The NHSE SW Controlled Drugs Team can be contacted at ENGLAND.southwestcontrolleddrugs@nhs.net

Riddle of the Month

The answer to last month's riddle was an Echo. This month's riddle is What can be touched but can't be seen. What am I?



Send your answers to the pharmacy team at england.pharmacysouthwest@nhs.net. We will share the answer in the next bulletin