

To: All Community Pharmacists

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31st March 2020

Dear Colleague

COMMUNITY PHARMACY EMERGENCY SUPPLY DURING A PANDEMIC SERVICE

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) in conjunction with Community Pharmacy NI, is introducing a temporary **Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply during a Pandemic Service**. This service will commence on **Monday 6th April 2020**.

Regulation 226 of Human Medicines Regulations (HMR) 2012¹ enables the “*emergency sale*” of *prescription only medicines by a person lawfully conducting a retail pharmacy business if the following conditions A and B are met:*

- *Condition A is that the supply is made whilst a disease is, or in anticipation of a disease being imminently,*
 - (a) Pandemic; and*
 - (b) A serious risk, or potentially a serious risk, to human health.*
- *Condition B is that the pharmacist by or under whose supervision the prescription only medicine is to be sold or supplied is satisfied*
 - (a) That treatment with the prescription only medicine has on a previous occasion been prescribed by a relevant prescriber for the person to be treated with it; and*
 - (b) As to the dose which in the circumstances it would be appropriate for that person to take.*

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1916/regulation/226/made>

The introduction of a **Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply during a Pandemic Service** would remove the requirement for a patient to pay the costs of medicine(s) received via emergency supply. Community pharmacists will be reimbursed for any supplied medicines; therefore it will not be necessary for pharmacists to request a prescription from the GP practice. The service will:

- Ensure that at this time of unprecedented demand, patients can access an emergency supply of their regular prescription medicines where they are unable to obtain a prescription.
- Ensure equity of access to medicines irrespective of the patient's ability to pay.

This service would be provided by contracted community pharmacies during all of the pharmacy's opening hours.

REMUNERATION FOR THIS SERVICE

- Initial funding of £1 million has been made available to set up and deliver this service during April 2020. A tiered payment model based on prescription volume will be used to allocate this funding.
- Pharmacists will be reimbursed for medicines supplied using a new pharmacy voucher. The new pharmacy voucher will be a duplicate form: the top copy will be submitted for payment and the bottom copy will be sent to the GP practice to provide details of the medicines dispensed.

DISTRIBUTION OF PHARMACY VOUCHERS & SERVICE SPECIFICATION / GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

By Friday 3rd April 2020, it is anticipated that all contractors will have received an initial allocation of **200 x NCR (non-carbon required) duplicate copy pharmacy vouchers (PV1s)**. These PV1s are distinct from those used to deliver the Minor Ailments Service and Smoking Cessation Service.

A copy of the Service Specification / Guidance for Pharmacists for this service will accompany the delivery of PV1s.

ACTION FOR PHARMACY CONTRACTORS

Due to the unprecedented situation contractors are facing, it will not be necessary for a contractor to return a signed contract to HSCB in order to provide this service. Please find enclosed a contract which should be signed by the contractor / Responsible Pharmacist and retained in your pharmacy. This will act as an *Assumed Contract* to enable your pharmacy to provide this service.

Although an Assumed Contract is being issued, contractors are not obliged to offer this service. Should you choose not to provide this service, you must contact your HSCB local office by Friday 3rd April 2020.

Pharmacies offering this service must:

- Retain in the pharmacy, a copy of the contract, signed by the contractor / Registered Pharmacist, as proof of contract.
- Ensure that all pharmacists involved in the provision of this service have relevant knowledge of the Emergency Supply provisions of regulation 226 of the Human Medicines Regulations (HMR) 2012.
- Ensure that all pharmacists are competent in the operation of the Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply during a Pandemic Service.
- Ensure that only the new NCR duplicate copy PV1s are used in the delivery of this service.
- Ensure that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is in place to support delivery of the service. Please note that NPA will be producing an SOP template for their members.

Again, I want to express my sincere gratitude to you, for your continued efforts in providing pharmaceutical services to the people of Northern Ireland, during these most worrying and challenging times.

If you have any query about this service, please contact your local HSCB Pharmacy Adviser.

Yours sincerely



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management

Contact Details for Local Integrated Care Offices:				
Belfast	South Eastern	Southern	Northern	Western
12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	Tower Hill Armagh. BT61 9DR	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road Ballymena BT42 1QB	Gransha Park House 15 Gransha Park Clooney Road Londonderry BT47 6FN
Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 2104	Tel: 028 9536 2812	Tel: 028 9536 1082
pharmacyservicesbelfast@hscni.net	pharmacyservicesse@hscni.net	pharmacyservicesouth@hscni.net	pharmacyservicesnorth@hscni.net	pharmacyserviceswest@hscni.net

Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply during a Pandemic Service Contract

Period of Contract:

This is a **temporary service** implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The service will commence on a date specified by the HSCB. This contract may be terminated by either the purchaser or provider by giving notice of 1 week.

Indemnities:

The provider hereby agrees to indemnify the purchaser against any claims for damages for loss, damage, injury (including death), plus all associated costs arising out of the acts or omissions of the provider, his servants or agents.

Payment:

The fees payable to Pharmacy contractors for this service:

- Initial funding of £1 million has been made available to set up and deliver this service during April 2020. A tiered payment model based on prescription volume will be used to allocate this funding.
- Pharmacists will be reimbursed for medicines supplied using a new pharmacy voucher. The new pharmacy voucher will be a duplicate form: the top copy will be submitted for payment and the bottom copy will be sent to the GP practice to provide details of the medicines dispensed.

Please note:

Contractors must ensure that the service is provided in accordance with the Service Specification / Guidance for Pharmacists and that it operates in accordance with all relevant Acts of Parliament, statutory regulations or other laws. Contractors will be expected to comply with formulated guidance.

Service Monitoring:

The pharmacy contractor will be required to submit any records requested by HSCB in relation to the service within 14 days of receipt of the request.

Signing of the Agreement:

This document comprises the agreement between the Health and Social Care Board (purchaser) and the Pharmacy Contractor (provider). I would like to participate in the above service. I agree to provide the service in line with the Service Specification / Guidance for Pharmacists.

Name of Pharmacy Contractor provider:

Contractor number: _____

E-mail contact: _____

Pharmacist's signature: _____

Date: _____