

Thank You to all Pharmacy Teams for your continued hard work and support!

A large, vibrant rainbow arches across the background of the main text, symbolizing hope and resilience.

Andrew Lane– Gloucestershire LPC Chair and NPA Chair

"It can't be stressed enough how much Pharmacy Teams have stepped up in this crisis

You have demonstrated resilience across the network and remained open when many in Primary Care had moved to telephone triage, risking both your lives and that of your families

This needs to be recognised at the highest levels of Government and we have seen thanks from both The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Health supporting your heroic work as part of the NHS frontline in this pandemic

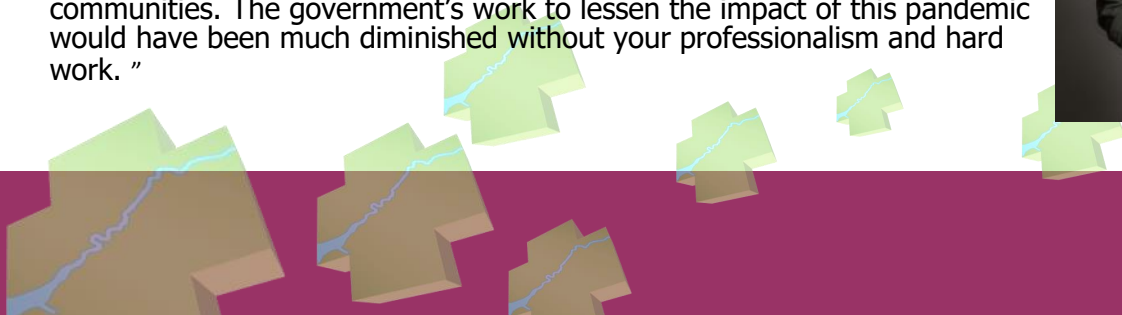
The Deputy CMO only said yesterday that this virus likely to be with us for a long time and I know you are being called on daily to keep people supplied with their essential medicines and the advice you provide to face and on the phone, We can only ask this continued heroism is met with proper support both in the form of PPE and the funding to allow you to keep the doors open when many have had to close theirs."

Siobhan Baillie– MP for Stroud

"I would like to thank all our local pharmacists for their important work during the COVID-19 lockdown.

You have all done a tremendous job at the frontline helping everyone with advice and the supply of medicines while I'm sure, at times, putting yourselves at risk.

I know everyone has really appreciated pharmacies remaining open in our communities. The government's work to lessen the impact of this pandemic would have been much diminished without your professionalism and hard work. "



Laurence Robertson– MP for Tewkesbury

"I should like to thank you, our pharmacies, for the enormous amount of work you have been doing during this Coronavirus outbreak. Extra pressure has, of course, been placed on all parts of our health services and it is great that you have responded to the challenges in such a positive and effective way. For a long time we have been promoting the value of consulting pharmacies more often when people need medical advice and the work you have done, particularly recently, has demonstrated the benefits of this policy. I wish you well."



Richard Graham– MP for Gloucester

"Gloucester's 25 pharmacies have been open for all our community throughout this pandemic. Wonderful dedication and I thank you all, on behalf of our city, from the bottom of my heart. Keep going! (and Stay Safe)"



Alex Chalk– MP for Cheltenham

"Please can I take this opportunity to pass on my personal thanks to all the pharmacy teams for your dedicated work, support and advice. I know from speaking to constituents how valued you are in Cheltenham. Your commitment, professionalism and resilience at this time is hugely appreciated."



Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown – MP for Cotswolds

"Along with other front line workers, community pharmacists have performed a vital role during this Covid-19 crisis. They have often gone over and above the call of duty during this period to make people receive their vital medication, arranging for safe, home deliveries throughout lockdown. I pay great tribute to them and all the work they are doing."

STOP PRESS * STOP PRESS *** STOP PRESS *** STOP PRESS *** STOP PRESS *** STOP PRESS *****

A Track and Trace service for Covid cases will be starting in the UK at the end of May. Please can you make sure that you are aware of the guidance– which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works> .

Where Track and Trace impacts on your pharmacy staffing or services **PLEASE** can you make sure that you get in touch with Sharon at NHSE as soon as possible so that they can help support you and your patients!!

We are still waiting for more feedback on how this may impact pharmacies, will share if we hear anything

Frontline Staff Testing

Testing is picking up nationwide, and here in Gloucestershire we are fortunate to have had access to a local testing facility at Edward Jenner House since Easter, as well as access to the national test centres.

There are now several ways that you can access testing. If you live in Gloucestershire and can get to Edward Jenner house for a test then please continue to email Sam with details and we will liaise with the centre for booking. If you would find it easier to access one of the national centres- Bristol, Worcester or Edgbaston, or a mobile centre- then you can use the self referral portal and book an appointment yourself. All sites are drive-thru at the moment, so if you don't drive then you will need to use the self referral portal to book a home test.

Speed is of the essence so please isolate and get in touch immediately if you start to experience symptoms of coronavirus (cough, temperature, SOB, loss of taste/smell)



To further support care homes, the NHS will bring forward to October to May 2020 the national roll out of key elements of the primary and community health service-led Enhanced Health in Care Homes service.

Further detail will be set out shortly but we know that this will mean GPs taking more involvement in care homes and implementing fortnightly 'ward rounds'. We would encourage pharmacists who provide medication to care homes to get involved and try to join multidisciplinary team meetings where possible now.

We are also working with the CCG and GHT to start sending discharge information for care homes patients through to pharmacies, which should help ensure patients always get the correct medication and will give you a chance to undertake NMS where new meds are started.

We are hopeful that starting using referrals for care homes patients will also allow us to start to send discharge information from hospital to community pharmacy for other patients. This will mean that we are in a good place to start the NHSE Advanced Discharge Service when it starts hopefully later this year



Deliveries to shielded patients.

Delivery services seem to be well maintained across the county and we are not aware of any shielded patients not being able to access deliveries. **Thank you** to all pharmacies and pharmacy team who have stepped up services so that patient needs are met.

One of the big successes in Gloucestershire has been that way that the volunteer teams have been able to support Pharmacy Deliveries, and we are extremely grateful to a large local organisation who have helped to coordinate and mobilise mutual aid and volunteer teams .

With an easing of lockdown on the horizon and people set to return to work, we hope that we will still be able to maintain volunteer networks across the County in areas that need them. **To that end please can you check in with any volunteers who may be providing essential support to you, and find out how many of them will be expecting to return to work and how many are retired/able to continue volunteering.** We are still working with our local teams, and linking in with other local charities who should be able to plug up any gaps in the system when we lose volunteers back to their regular jobs. Please let us know if you think you will need replacement volunteers!

It has been clarified that shielding will remain in place for vulnerable patients until 30th June, so national funding for this cohort of patients will remain in place for at least that long, and we will update you when we hear anything further. Don't forget to make sure that you claim for any deliveries made under the shielded patient advanced service **EACH MONTH**. If you have missed the May 5th deadline for claiming April deliveries please get in touch ASAP.



A Team Leader's Feedback...

'We are enormously grateful to all those who agreed to help so readily and enthusiastically and are doing great work in support of stretched community pharmacy services. Drivers report that they are enjoying doing something useful, discovering new areas of the town (and the wider county!) and that it is very rewarding and worthwhile work —

people are pleased not only to have their medicines delivered, but also for the few minutes of human contact often on an otherwise pretty lonely, necessarily isolated day. In addition, drivers are able to pass on specific concerns – for example a diabetic resident who was unable to get a food delivery order and was getting increasingly worried about running out of items he needed. A quick referral led to help with shopping being identified within half an hour.

Reflecting on this local response, I am hugely encouraged to see the rekindling of a community spirit that was perhaps always there, but had become buried in the busy-ness and pace of our daily lives. My sense is that the desire to help others in need had never really gone away and once the need became clear, I was not surprised to see how keenly people wished to help. My hope for the future is that we can have a big local conversation about how we capture the spirit of goodwill and neighbourliness of so many people, and how can we apply it longer term so that we can better support those most vulnerable in our towns and villages as we slowly, over time, become once again busy people.

Guidance from Public Health England for PPE is still that face masks only are needed **if social distancing with patients is not possible**. Face shields (re-usable) are also available from many suppliers, and we would recommend investing in some of these for your business.

The usual handwashing and cleaning procedures should be followed. If you have not installed some sort of Perspex screening on counters we suggest that you do so now

PPE should still be ordered through the mainline wholesalers- AAH, Alliance and Phoenix-but if you are unable to get any masks from them then we do have a supply of masks from the Local Resilience Forum that we can deliver out to you.

Please use PPE in line with national guidance so that we have PPE available when it is needed.

PSNC are currently working with NHSE to develop guidance for the upcoming flu vaccination season.



Dental Services

There are now 4 Urgent Dental Treatment Centres in operation in Gloucestershire– mainly seeing patients who require extractions or other serious urgent treatment.

The pathway to access dental services for patients is still to contact their usual registered dentist who will triage the patient by phone, and who will refer them to an urgent treatment centre if necessary. Dentists are also still issuing prescriptions for patients (sometimes paper and sometimes via email to the pharmacy with paper prescription following in the post)

Patients who do not have a registered dentist should phone NHS111, who will triage them to the Urgent Treatment Centre if required.

Dentists have been advised that they can reopen from 8th June if they have infection control procedures in place.

Optician Services

Information about Opticians open during this time can be found on the LOC website at

<http://www.glosloc.co.uk/content.asp?pid=348>.

There is also a 'Covid Urgent Eyecare Service' (CUES) being commissioned nationally, which should be up and running soon (again a list of opticians participating should be found on the LOC website when it is live.) This service will provide remote specialist ophthalmic advice for patients with conditions such as red or painful eye, foreign body, sudden change in vision, or flashes and floaters which might suggest retinal detachment, who would otherwise need to be referred to general practice, hospital services and A&E. Pharmacy will be able to refer to this service instead.

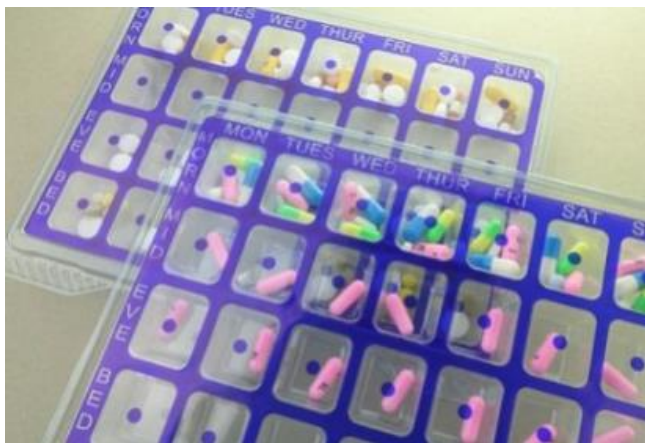
For URGENT eye triage (such as penetrating eye injury) you can already call 0300 422 3578 (8am to 8pm) 7 days a week to access the East Block Eye Out Patients at CGH (please note the line is not answered between the 1-2 lunch break). For Out of hours provision - Call CGH Switchboard 0300 422 2222 and ask for On Call Ophthalmologist. Out of Hours Eye A&E is currently operating out of the A&E Department at CGH.



Recovery and Restoration

As numbers of cases drop we are starting to turn our attention towards restoration of services and recovery of regular operating. This is an excellent time to review many of your systems and procedures, and make changes that will benefit your business going forward.

All pharmacies should be starting to think about returning to normal hours if staffing and work levels permit. We would also suggest that you use this opportunity to look at your previous opening hours and if necessary put in applications to amend hours to making ongoing working conditions better. Would opening for an extra half hour in the evening, but shutting for lunch allow you more time to catch up on essential jobs such as claiming EPS, cleaning and replenishing?



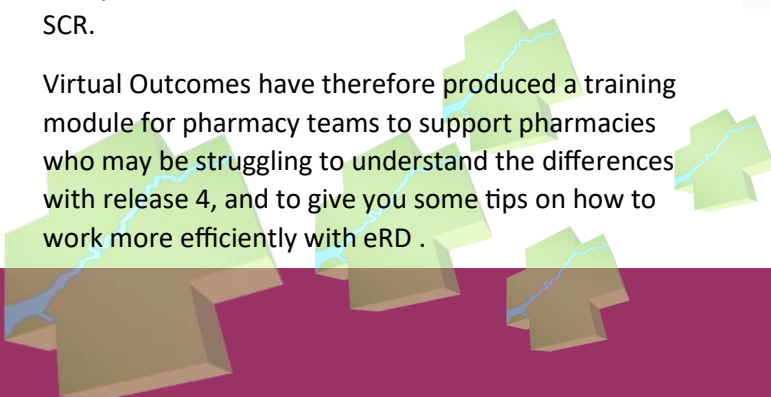
If you stopped making dosette trays, we suggest that you review all patients needs individually before just restarting trays. Dosettes are not always the best adjustment to make for patients and you may find that your patients can manage their medications well with original packs and MAR charts, or another adjustment. There is an assessment form on the LPC website that you may want to use if you do not currently have one in your business. The LPC will also be working with the CCG, GHT and GHC to produce a local policy aimed at stopping unnecessary trays.

Hopefully you will also be seeing the number of electronic prescriptions and electronic Repeat Dispensing increasing, and so may need to adjust the way you make up prescriptions or order stock to account for these changes. The Minor Injuries Unit and Community Nursing Teams operating from Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust will also soon be starting to use electronic prescriptions. It is vitally important that all staff and locums therefore have working Smart Cards, and that you know how to use tools like the EPS tracker and SCR.

Virtual Outcomes have therefore produced a training module for pharmacy teams to support pharmacies who may be struggling to understand the differences with release 4, and to give you some tips on how to work more efficiently with eRD .



VIRTUAL
OUTCOMES



Changes in ways of working

While we are still awaiting clarity on getting physical signatures for consent from patients, it is important that services like [NMS and MURs](#) are re-started and maintained so that we can support patients with their medication and maximise income whilst it is available.

NMS can be completed almost entirely by telephone for shielded patients if necessary (you can recommend the patient watches videos on Asthma UK or you tube in order to see inhaler technique) and MURs can be completed by telephone if you fill in a PREM2 form and submit to NHSE in advance. As we only have 100 to complete this year- you may want to focus on your shielded patients in the next few months and use the opportunity of a captured audience to check concordance with prescription meds. You may also want to check if patients need to purchase any OTC or other pharmacy supplies, take payment by phone and deliver with regular prescriptions to help patients.

Other services can also be undertaken by telephone. If you previously offered private PGD services such as erectile dysfunction, EHC, hair loss or others then there is no reason that these cannot continue to be provided remotely. The local EHC service can also be undertaken remotely and we are currently awaiting sign off of guidance to support pharmacists in delivering remote consultations.

Seasonal Influenza Advanced Service

The LPC is currently monitoring what will happen with flu vaccines and the nationally commissioned advanced service- but it may be worth starting to think about how this service could be delivered in your pharmacy now.

We will probably still be wearing PPE in clinical settings in September- so different PPE will be needed for face to face clinical services (likely to be mask, visor, gloves and aprons). This may be sessional use for some items- and so vaccines may need to be scheduled rather than offering a fully flexible walk in service. It may also be prudent to think about how inclusion/exclusion criteria can be captured remotely ahead of appointment time in order to minimise face to face contact time. You may also need to review the workflow and patient flow within your pharmacies to manage an increase in volume that flu vaccines, and winter pressures in general, will bring.

PSNC have created a Social Distancing and Infection Control Risk Assessment template which we would encourage you to complete and action if you have not already done so.

A Patient Safety Culture

Now more than ever a safety and learning culture is vital. All our staff should feel able to raise concerns safely. Local Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are able to provide guidance and support with this for any concerned member of staff. As we know, diverse and inclusive teams make better decisions, including in the Covid19 response.

You should all have a Freedom to Speak up Guardian within your organisation and this will be specified in your whistleblowing policy. Those of you that don't have large organisations can buddy up with other local pharmacies to be each other's guardian, or can use the LPC as a guardian.

Contact Becky Myers at partnerships@lpcoffice.org.uk for more details.

New LPC member

We are pleased to welcome Mohammed Rahmen (Milak) back onto the committee. Milak joins us as a CCA representative from Lloyds pharmacy and has represented the CCA before on Gloucestershire LPC, most recently back in 2016.

We are also in the process of re-booting the election process for an independent member following the retirement of long standing committee member Mike Powis from Painswick pharmacy. Independent contractors will have received notification of this process and we hope to be able to announce another new committee member soon.



Contact us!

Sam Bradshaw– Contractor Support Manager 07895 731973 supportglos@lpcoffice.org.uk

Rebecca Myers– Partnerships Manager 07504 550722 partnerships@lpcoffice.org.uk

Committee meetings

Whilst structured formal LPC meetings are currently suspended, we are still carrying out our contractual committee responsibilities virtually. The LPC and Exec have been meeting every few weeks online to discuss issues and make sure that we are aware of any local problems. Now that things are settling down a bit we will be reverting to more regular work, and so will be able to open meetings up to observers again. Meetings will still be online for the foreseeable future, but any contractor who wishes to attend will be able to do so.

The next committee meeting will be online on Thursday 18th June at 7pm. Please get in touch if you wish to attend.

Upcoming meetings

In addition to regular committee meetings the LPC is holding some Contractor Update Meetings on Zoom. The meetings last approximately half an hour and are during the daytime on a regular working day. The next **Contractor Update meeting** will be on **Thursday 4th June at 1pm**. An invite with details has been sent to pharmacy NHS email addresses. If you are unable to attend but want to talk to someone from the LPC then please email Sam on supportglos@lpcoffice.org.uk or Becky on partnerships@lpcoffice.org.uk– or contact one of the LPC committee members (details on LPC website).

NHSE have arranged an **Infection Control for Pharmacy Webinar**– which will take place on **2nd June at 1pm**. The webinar will provide advice and support about infection control for those teams that are still concerned about what PPE you should be using, inappropriate use of gloves etc. The Webinar will be recorded so if you are unable to attend then you will be able to view it at a later date.

The next **NHSE Primary Care webinar** with Nikki Kanani and Ed Waller is on **Thursday 4th June 5-6pm**. The next Pharmacy webinar has not yet been announced, but you can view past pharmacy webinars at the NHS futures website (https://future.nhs.uk/connect.ti/P_C_N/view?objectId=19549008)