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To: All Community Pharmacy Contractors

1st May 2020

Dear Colleague

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) – UPDATE AND REORDERING PROCESS

This communication supercedes previous advice issued on this topic subject (10th April 2020).

In order to ensure that pharmacy staff has access to PPE in line with current scientific and clinical guidance a reordering process will commence this week. Equipment available to reorder and quantities anticipated have been based on the advice produced by Public Health England (PHE) which has been adopted across the United Kingdom. The guidance was updated on 10th April and again on 24th April 2020 and can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

It is important that a consistent approach is adopted across the community pharmacy network and that supplies of Government PPE made to community pharmacies are used appropriately and in line with current PHE guidance.

Further supplies of Government PPE stock were delivered to pharmacies on 10th and 11th April. Additional supplies can now be ordered, every 4 weeks, as per the replenishment process outlined in Appendix 1. Please ensure that these supplies are only used in line with the revised PHE guidance as outlined above, and that every effort is made to maintain social distancing where possible.

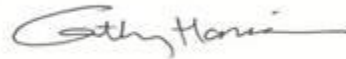
Guidance on the appropriate use of PPE is constantly changing and any further revisions that are relevant to the community pharmacy sector will be communicated.

We would like to take this opportunity once again to repeat my/our thanks to each of you and your teams for your immense public service during this unprecedented situation. The work that you are all doing in responding to the current national emergency is outstanding, and we remain uplifted by the remarkable professionalism, outstanding public service and kindness that you and your staff are providing to your communities.

Yours sincerely,



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Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines
Management, HSCB



Cathy Harrison
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Enc. Appendix 1: Process for replenishment of PPE (1st May onwards)

PROCESS FOR REPLENISHMENT OF PPE (1st May onwards)

1. Community Pharmacist submits an order for PPE by completing the form available at (<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/hsc-new-models-of-prescribing/ppe-replenishment>). Orders should only be submitted on a **4 weekly cycle**. Quantities delivered should be adequate for 4 weeks. All orders must be submitted by close of play on a Wednesday to be delivered by the following Tuesday.
2. An excel spreadsheet will be populated with orders on a weekly basis and shared with nominated Local Advisers by 12pm on Thursday each week.
3. Local Adviser will verify that each order is appropriate, taking into consideration last delivery date, as stated in the spreadsheet and maximum quantities to be supplied every 4 weeks. This will be completed by 12pm each Friday. Local Advisers will also have to take into consideration need of local pharmacy to obtain PPE e.g.

Scenario 1: Supervision of oral substitution therapy

In the event that supervision of oral substitution therapy consumption by community pharmacists is reinstated for high risk patients, then those members of the pharmacy profession fulfilling this role will require access to PPE (gloves, masks, and aprons). Eye protection has already been supplied and is not part of the replenishment process. In some cases patients will require daily supervision.

Scenario 2: Direct contact with suspected Covid-19 patient

In this scenario pharmacists are advised that if entry to the designated isolation space or contact with the patient is unavoidable in an emergency, PPE, as detailed in Additional considerations (Table 4) COVID-19, should be worn by the staff member in line with standard infection control precautions and exposure kept to a minimum. This includes gloves, aprons, FRSMs and eye protection. Eye protection has already been supplied to pharmacies and is not part of the replenishment process.

Scenario 3: Queue management and controlling access

Members of staff managing queues in order to control access to pharmacies may need to wear FRSMs where they are unable to maintain social distancing of 2 metres.

Scenario 4: Delivering medicines to patient's homes

Community pharmacy teams have been advised on possible ways to avoid spread and to protect staff while making essential deliveries ([FAQ Q17](#)). This includes the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitiser regularly between each drop off and regularly in between. However, this will not always be practical and so in some circumstances there will be a requirement to use gloves. It is the responsibility of individual community pharmacy contractors to provide gloves to any volunteers carrying out deliveries as part of the partnership arrangements with the Community and Voluntary sector.

Scenario 5: Working in the pharmacy

For community pharmacy staff who are not providing direct patient care and where social distancing of 2m cannot be maintained, 'sessional' use of fluid-resistant surgical masks is only recommended for staff in contact with possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

4. Order spreadsheet will be forwarded to BSO PaLS for processing by 3pm each Friday.
5. Deliveries will be completed by Tuesday of the following week.