

20/03/2020

Dear Colleagues,

Circular PCA(P)(2020) 5 - Extension of Minor Ailment Service in response to COVID-19

The attached Circular contains important information on the extension of the Minor Ailment Service ahead of the formal introduction of the NHS Pharmacy First Service on 22nd April.

Please familiarise yourself with the content particularly the following points –

- the option to supply the 100 pack of paracetamol tablets supported by a PGD that will be circulated on Monday
- available to additional groups with immediate effect although registrations will still be necessary
- current remuneration arrangements to continue until launch of NHS Pharmacy First

David

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Dear Colleague

ADDITIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES EXTENSION OF MINOR AILMENT SERVICE IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Purpose

1. This circular advises of a change to the eligibility criteria for the Minor Ailment Service (MAS) in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

2. NHS Circular PCA (P)(2016) 12, issued on 20 July 2016 provided updated Directions for Health Board Additional Pharmaceutical Services (Minor Ailment Service).

Detail

3. Community pharmacy contractors will be able to offer MAS consultations to **additional groups** presenting at the pharmacy, effective immediately.

4. Community pharmacy teams will be able to offer MAS consultations to anyone presenting at the pharmacy, effective from Monday 23 March 2020. This will support the introduction of local COVID-19 Hub and Assessment Centres. **Please note Hubs will only be announced to the public on Monday once systems are live.**

22 March 2020

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards
Director of Practitioner
Services, NHS NSS

For information

Directors of Pharmacy
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5. Community pharmacy contractors will be able to offer MAS consultations to **anyone** presenting at the pharmacy, effective immediately. This will provide pharmacy teams with the opportunity to:

- Treat everyone in their communities in the same way.
- Develop a single pathway of care for everyone seeking advice for minor conditions.
- Manage workload and queues more effectively.
- Make supplies of medication whilst avoiding the risk of viral transmission that comes with handling payment.
- Make recorded supplies of POM packs of Paracetamol (subject to a PGD being made available).
- Record the outcome of OTC consultations where the circumstances have required a departure from the norm or where the ideal outcome has not been possible.
- Collect information which enables remote Responsible Pharmacist decisions to be made and recorded – only if this should become absolutely necessary, is carried out for the least amount of time possible and is supported by the regulator.
- Improve access to treatment for all by removing the barrier of cost in economically uncertain times.

6. Other primary care services are expected to continue to assess and treat patients.

7. This is an interim measure. The NHS Pharmacy First Scotland service will go live in pharmacies as planned on the 22nd of April, replacing this “Extended MAS. As the current electronic MAS architecture will be used, registrations will still be necessary.

8. Every new patient who historically could not access MAS should be registered as having a War Pension exemption certificate (Exemption K). All claims will be submitted electronically via PMRs as is the case just now.

9. Because eligibility is extended, the paper registration and prescription/supply forms do not need to be signed or submitted to PSD going forward – avoiding another potential viral transmission risk.

10. Other than the change in eligibility and form submission, all other aspects of the service will remain unchanged at this time.

11. Pharmacy teams are trusted to use their expertise and experience to decide how best to deliver this “extended MAS” in their communities, though the expectation is that the service should be used for anyone appropriately referred to pharmacy from NHS24 or other local triage services but can also be used by walk-in consultations.

12. Current remuneration arrangements will stay in place for March 2020, being replaced by the agreed remuneration underpinning the NHS Pharmacy First Scotland service when it is launched in April.

13. A separate circular outlining remuneration arrangements from May 2020 onwards will be issued in due course.

14. Current reimbursement arrangements will continue, with the addition of POM packs of Paracetamol products being allowed (subject to a PGD being made available to facilitate supply).

Consultation

15. Community Pharmacy Scotland has been consulted on the contents of this circular

Action

16. NHS Boards are asked to:
- Note the contents of this circular,
 - Copy this circular to all community pharmacy contractors on their pharmaceutical lists, Health and Social Care partnerships and the Area Pharmaceutical Board.

Yours sincerely,



Rose Marie Parr

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer and Deputy Director,
Pharmacy and Medicines Division