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| Directorate for Community Health and Social CarePrimary Care Division T: 0131 244 71 66Enquiries: Craig.Graham@gov.scot**Chief Executives****eHealth Leads****Directors of Pharmacy****Primary Care Leads****Information Governance Leads****Joint Chairs of the Scottish GP IT Group****17 MARCH 2020** |  |

Dear colleagues,

**COMMUNITY PHARMACY – ACCESS TO EMERGENCY CARE SUMMARY DATA – COVID-19 RESPONSE**

The Scottish Government has been preparing to issue Directions regulating access to the data processed by the Emergency Care Summary (“ECS”) system. It is intended that those Directions will supersede the existing Chief Medical Officer and Chief Dental Officer letters on the subject.

The intention is that the Directions will also inc[[1]](#footnote-1)lude pharmacists and pharmacy technicians working in Community Pharmacy amongst the staff groups to whom access could be granted for the purposes of providing health care. These Directions are in the process of being prepared and will be issued in due course.

However, in light of the outbreak of Covid-19 in Scotland, **we are now informing Health Boards that they may provide access to the ECS data set to pharmacists and pharmacy technicians as part of their Covid-19 response**, providing that it is practical to do so and Health Boards are satisfied that they can appropriately discharge their data protection obligations. This measure will assist in increasing the ability of community pharmacists to manage patients in the community at a time of unprecedented demand for health services.

This measure is supported by the Scottish General Practitioners’ Committee of the BMA.

The intention is that Directions regulating access to the ECS system will be issued in due course.

The Information Commissioner’s Office has issued guidance relating to data protection and the Covid-19 outbreak which health organisations should be aware of: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-and-coronavirus/> .

Yours Sincerely,

**AIDAN GRISEWOOD**

Deputy Director, Primary Care



**JONATHAN CAMERON**

Deputy Director, Digital Health and Care



**ROSE MARIE PARR**

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

1. SEHD/CMO(2006)6, CMO(2008)5, CMO(2011)16, CMO(2014)05, CDO(2015)03 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)