

Pharmacy & Medicines Directorate Weekly Update



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Wholesalers and Medicines Availability

We are aware that a number of manufacturers are using single wholesaler distribution models, meaning certain branded medications are only available via specific wholesalers e.g. Alliance or Phoenix. Whilst recognising that this adds complexity and potentially additional costs for contractors, we write to remind all pharmacy contractors of the NHS Pharmaceutical Services (Scotland) Regulations (delivery of which is the essence of your Contract with NHS Grampian) requirement regarding the timely supply of medication in response to a prescription.

This means that if a patient presents a prescription in your pharmacy for an item supplied by a wholesaler which you do not use, you are required to do one of the following:

- a) Set up an account with that wholesaler to enable supply of the required medication OR
- b) Source another pharmacy who does have an account and can fulfil the prescription by the next working day for the patient.

Failure to provide a timely supply of medication in response to a prescription, where no mitigation in the form of a recognised shortage is present, will be considered a breach of your contractual obligation and will be escalated to NHS Grampian Pharmacy Performance and Governance Group.

Out of Stock Medicines Procedure

Where there is a genuine medicine shortage and you cannot fulfil the requested prescription, the following actions should be taken:

- a) Check all available wholesalers
- b) Check supplies with all other pharmacies in your network
- c) Review the unavailable medication information / MSAN on SPS: [Medicines supply – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)
- d) Prepare a list of available alternative(s) to share with the patient's practice (please share this with colleagues if e.g. pharmacy dispenser phoning practice to report the shortage)
- e) Contact the practice and provide this alternative information. If there is uncertainty about the indication for treatment and the patient isn't available to confirm this, please discuss with the prescribing clinician.

If you receive a repeat or serial prescription for a known unavailable product, please do not wait until the patient attends for collection before you action this.

Finally, practice teams are generally in touch with each other and with multiple pharmacies; they also have the ability to look at shortage lists and contact wholesalers. Misinforming practices that a supply is not available when in fact it is available but not at the price below the tariff is likely to lead to a complain about failure to deliver contractual obligations. Likewise, patients are increasingly vocal about pharmacies failing to provide certain medicines when they are freely available from other pharmacies. We have seen an increase in complaints regarding these issues and the actions of the few do have the potential to bring the whole contractor network's reputation into question.

The Drug Tariff

All pharmacy contractors are reminded that failure to fulfil a prescription due to the product being above Tariff price is considered a clear breach of your contract. The reimbursement system for community pharmacies is based 'in the round' i.e. not all drugs will return the same margin for contractors and there are specific mechanisms in place to manage situations where the tariff is out of step with the market. Pharmacy contractors must not 'cherry pick' the prescriptions they supply based on the profitability of the supply. Using intermediate buying systems to filter out medications from your order lines based on purchase costs being above tariff is not acceptable.

The PCS regulations only allow refusal to supply under two circumstances; the first is suspicion of a fraudulent prescription (i.e. is not valid) and the second is where the supplying pharmacy has concerns over safety. Where the Board is aware of these measures being implemented by contractors, we will escalate and manage these concerns accordingly. If a professional or premises standard has been breached, this may also include a GPhC referral.

Methylphenidate MR Tablet Shortage

We continue to experience supply disruption across all brands of methylphenidate modified release tablets.

Please find attached a brief update to support with the management of patients who are unable to obtain their prescribed brand of methylphenidate modified release tablets.

Quetiapine Serious Shortage Protocols

To support with the management of ongoing quetiapine shortages the Scottish Government have issued a number of Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for 150mg, 200mg, and 300mg immediate release quetiapine tablets.

Pharmacies are ask to read and adhere to the information within the SSPs to ensure the appropriate management of stocks for the duration of supply issues.

For each strength there are three SSPs:

1. **Substitution** with an alternative strength where the duration of treatment on the prescription is for one month's supply or less and prescribed product **is not** available
2. **Restriction** in quantity to supply where the duration of treatment on the prescription is for more **than one month's supply and prescribed product is available**.
3. **Substitution & restriction** in quantity to supply here the duration of treatment on the prescription is for more than one month's supply and prescribed product **is not** available.

All SSPs can be accessed via this link [NHS Scotland - Publications](#)

Paediatric Physiotherapy Advice Line

The Paediatric Physiotherapy Service run a children and young person's Advice Line twice a week. This is available for anyone who has questions or concerns. We encourage you to share awareness of the Advice Line, details can be found on the attached poster.

Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare in Scotland

Survey: Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (SRH) at the Pharmacy

Please [click here](#) to share your experiences, practice and views on delivery of sexual and reproductive healthcare (SRH) at the pharmacy to help shape future research and development in Scotland. We encourage you to share this with other pharmacists for completion.

The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare Scotland Conference

The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare Scotland conference scheduled to be held via Zoom on 27th September 2024 is available for registration. The conference will provide a comprehensive update on the latest trends, innovations and best practices in SRH in Scotland. Topics include abortion care, contraception, sexual and reproductive justice in Scotland and a round-up of ideas and success stories from across Scotland in providing services. Please [click here](#) to register and view the programme.

CPS Pharmacy First Scotland Service Guidance and Flow Chart

Scottish Government and Community Pharmacy Scotland have produced guidance for the NHS Pharmacy First Scotland service which is available to view [here](#). The information within the guidance has been taken from the 2020 Direction and Service Specification.

Please have a read though this information as it includes a series of key facts, information and a flowchart (attached to this email) showing different scenarios. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Smoking Cessation

Smoking Data for January to March 2024 (Quarter 4)

Below are the total numbers for all the pharmacies in Grampian collectively. These figures make for great reading with fantastic improvements in missed submissions and patients making it to the 12 week mark successfully, well done, keep it up!

Remember to encourage re engagement for those who are lost or unsuccessful at 4 weeks. Also it's worth remembering that patients who have had 2 attempts within pharmacy, should be referred to the specialist smoking service, Healthpoint on 08085 20 20 30.

Your Public Health Practitioner will be in touch with any pharmacy with an unusually high amount of missed submissions over the next month to ensure you are using PCR correctly and have good house-keeping around smoking services.

	October - December 2023	January – March 2024
Total Number Of Sign Ups	776	1124 45% Improvement
Missed Submissions At 4 Weeks	254 (33% of total sign ups)	246 (22% of total sign ups)

Total Submissions Made At 12 Weeks	269 (34% of total sign ups)	485 (43% of total sign ups)
Missed Submissions At 12 Weeks	34	17
Total Number Of Successful Quits	42 (5.4% of all sign ups)	257 (23% of all sign ups)
		512% Overall Improvement In Successful Quits!

Substance Use Service Team Update

Changes in Mental Health and Substance Use Pharmacy Teams

Fiona Raeburn has recently been appointed to the position of Principal Pharmacist for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services following the retirement of Angela MacManus earlier this year. Fiona will be moving on from substance use and beginning her new post from 1st August. We hope you will join us to wish Fiona well in her new role.

Lucy Skea is the Lead Pharmacist for Substance Use in Grampian and leads an expanding team of pharmacists in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire:

Aberdeen City: Bethany Potter and Jill Carnegie.

Aberdeenshire: Alana Gibbs, Andrew McKechnie and Emma Mitton.

Community Pharmacy Scotland Round-Up



PCA(P)(2024)12 -20:
Serious Shortage Protocol
for Quetiapine

The Scottish Government have released Circulars PCA(2024)12 through to 20 advising of Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) that are in place in relation to supply issues with Quetiapine 150mg, 200mg and



NHS Pharmacy First
Scotland (NHS PFS)
Service Guidance and Flow
Chart

guidance for the NHS Pharmacy First Scotland (NHS PFS) service, which is in response to previous questions and outcomes from live events held with the community pharmacy network.

The Happy Place ☺

Cycle to Work Day – 1st August 2024

Cycle to Work Day is back on Thursday 1st August 2024! Whether you've never cycled before, not ridden in a while or cycle every day, Cycle to Work Day is for you. It's a day to get in the saddle and experience the brilliant benefits everyday cycling offers – mental, physical and financial – first-hand. Please [click here](#) for more details on how to save money on the price of a new bike!



We would like to continue this section as an opportunity for reward, recognition and good news stories of the teams who read this! Please submit any items for inclusion to:
gram.pharmaceuticalcareservices@nhs.scot.

All weekly updates are uploaded to the [CP Grampian website](#).

Remember to like our Facebook page for regular updates: [Community Pharmacy Grampian – NHSG](#)