

From Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Primary Care, Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management



By email

To All community pharmacists

Strategic Planning and Performance Group

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Date: 1st February 2023

Dear Colleague,

COMMUNITY PHARMACY MEDICINES ADHERENCE SERVICES

With agreement on funding for medicines adherence support services for the year 2022/23, this correspondence details the investment in this service in this financial year, the associated service requirements for the remainder of 2022/23 and the emerging plan for service from 1st April 2023 onwards.

Medicine Adherence Service funding – 2022/23

The following funding had been committed at the start of 2022/23 for community pharmacy medicines adherence services:

- £2m Medicines Adherence Support Transitional (MAST) Service
- £2m Compliance Support Service General (CSSG)
- £3m Support and Delivery to Domiciliary Care
- £4m Assumed level of payment via Multiple Dispensing Fees
- £4m Development of cohort 3 and cohort 2 services

Additional funding has been secured in the current financial year bringing the total amount of funding to £22m. Payment associated with cohort 3 patients (via ARF form) has now been suspended. It has been agreed with CPNI that the balance of payments that has not yet been allocated through existing funding lines (£10.976m) is paid using the formula used for MAST payments.

Adherence support April 2022 to January 2023

Payment of £8.232m funding has been made with the January payment, to reflect activity from April to Dec 2022 (9 months) and the amount payable to your pharmacy will be shown on your January remittance advice as “Adherence Service 2022/23 – additional funding”. A further allocation of £0.915m will be made in February to reflect activity in January 2023. In order to provide DoH with the necessary assurance in relation to this payment the attached declaration

form ([Appendix 1](#)) must be completed and returned to your local SPPG Primary Care office by Friday 17th February 2023.

Medicines adherence service February– March 2023

The remainder of the funding (£1.829m) will be allocated using the same payment methodology and will be dependent on delivery of the transitional service for the remainder of this financial year. A transitional service specification has been developed in consultation with CPNI and is appended to this correspondence and subsumes the Interim Community Pharmacy Medicines Adherence Service which was introduced in July 2022.

The medicines adherence service Feb-March 23 is a core pharmaceutical service under the agreed community pharmacy contract framework. Every community pharmacy in Northern Ireland must, therefore, offer and participate in the service to ensure that all eligible patients have equity of access to this important support with their medicines.

The aim of the service is to optimise the use of medicines by supporting patients to enable better adherence with their medicines, including those patients already in receipt of adherence support from your pharmacy and those for whom a new adherence need has been identified. In order to target this service to those that would most benefit, the eligibility criteria for new community patients includes the patient being prescribed multiple medicines; taking seven or more regular medicines may be considered as an indicator of complexity thus requiring more support with medicines taking.

Full details of the service are provided in the service specification ([Appendix 2](#)) which should be read in conjunction with the specification for the Interim Community Pharmacy Medicines Adherence Service.

Contract

All community pharmacy contractors must hold a contract with SPPG for provision of this service. A copy of the contract can be found in [Appendix 3](#). A signed copy must be returned to your local SPPG Primary Care office by email by Friday 17th February 2023.

Service Monitoring

Pharmacies are required to complete and submit a monthly monitoring form ([Appendix 4a](#) or [Appendix 4b](#)) to the local SPPG Primary Care office. This should be submitted before the end of the first week of the month relating to service provision for the previous month. In the event where SPPG cannot assure service provision by a pharmacy, or where there is a failure to submit monitoring information, recovery of the payment will be sought.

Medicines Adherence Service 2023/24

A revised adherence service will be commissioned from April onwards, the scope of which will be dependent on available funding. SPPG and CPNI are working to define the service specification to ensure the service will be provided to those patients with the greatest need. The planning assumptions are that a consolidated budget of £18m will be available for this service from 1st April 2023. This includes committing £3m which had originally been allocated for service development in line with the 3-year community pharmacy commissioning plan. In light of the very significant financial constraints that currently exist across the entire HSC it is likely that the medicines adherence service for 2023/24 will be prioritised for defined patient groups e.g. for community

patients, those on the most complex medicines regimens typified by being on 7 or more regular medicines.

Multiple dispensing fees

From April 2023 the adherence service will be separated from the arrangements that exist for those patients where there is abuse / misuse of medicines. This will mean that instalment dispensing endorsements will no longer be applicable for the vast majority of patients receiving the adherence service, and the associated funding (£4m) will transfer into a consolidated budget. In preparation for the 2023/24 service, communication will issue to GP practices and copied to community pharmacies to advise of the need to review multiple dispensing endorsements over the coming weeks. DoH will continue to work with CPNI to determine an appropriate fee payable in respect of instalment dispensing for those patients where there is abuse / misuse of medicines so that this is established for the 1st April 2023.

I trust that this service will be a solid basis upon which we can build upon moving forward.

If you have any queries please contact your local Pharmacy Adviser.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Primary Care
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Contact Details for Local Primary Care Offices:				
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