

**From Pharmacy Lead, SPPG**  
**Kathryn Turner**



**By email**

**To: All Community Pharmacists**

**Strategic Planning and Performance Group**  
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Date: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear Colleague

## **COMMUNITY PHARMACY EMERGENCY SUPPLY SERVICE – CESSATION OF PANDEMIC SERVICE AND COMMENCEMENT OF ROUTINE SERVICE**

I wrote to you previously on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022, to advise that the Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply during a Pandemic Service would continue to be provided in its current format until formalised funding arrangements were finalised for the 2022/23 year. I am pleased to confirm that funding has now been secured and an updated “**routine**” **Emergency Supply Service will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022**. From that date, the Pandemic Service will cease to operate.

### **Core Pharmaceutical Service**

This Emergency Supply Service is now considered a core pharmaceutical service. Therefore every community pharmacy in Northern Ireland must offer and participate (in the service), to ensure that all communities have equity of access to this important service.

This will ensure that patients can access an urgent supply of their regular prescription medicines where they are unable to obtain a prescription, irrespective of their ability to pay for an emergency supply.

### **Service specification and guidance document**

The routine service will be provided under Regulation 225<sup>1</sup> of the Human Medicines Regulations (HMR) 2012. This is in contrast to the pandemic service which was provided under Regulation 226<sup>2</sup> of HMR 2012. There are some differences in the requirements of Regulation 225 compared to Regulation 226 (pandemic service), therefore a new service specification and guidance document has been developed for the routine service; please

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1916/regulation/225/made>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1916/regulation/226/made>

refer to Appendix 1. The new service specification and guidance document is available on the [Primary Care Intranet](#) (PCI) and [BSO website](#)

### **New service element**

The outcomes of the survey undertaken by community pharmacists in February 2022 have shown that a large proportion of emergency supply requests are due to patients not ordering their repeat prescription (42%). In addition, it is not clear whether those patients who had ordered their prescription (49%) had presented too early in the pharmacy to collect their prescription i.e. having unrealistic expectations of how long it takes a GP practice to process prescription requests and for your pharmacies to dispense medicines.

For this reason the patient consultation process will now include a discussion with the patient on the importance of avoiding running out of medicines, for example by ordering prescriptions in a timely manner from their GP practice and planning ahead for weekends and public holidays. It is anticipated that this discussion may help influence future patient behaviour and reduce the need for further emergency supplies.

### **Remuneration for this service**

Service funding will be allocated to pharmacies on the following basis:

- One third divided equally amongst contractors
- The remaining two thirds allocated on ESS activity volume, based on latest month's available data e.g. October 2022 payment will be based on number of ESS consultations in July 2022.

### **ECHO training session**

A recording of the ECHO "Emergency Supply Service" training session from the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022 is available to view; however, pharmacists must be registered with ECHO to view the recording. The link to registration is <https://tinyurl.com/C19CommPharmacyECHO>. There is also a short video available [here](#) to assist with registration. If you experience any problems when registering, please contact Elaine Kane at [e.kane@hospiceuk.org](mailto:e.kane@hospiceuk.org) Tel: 028 95582393.

### **Action for Pharmacy Contractors**

- Ensure that all pharmacists involved in the provision of this service have relevant knowledge of the Emergency Supply provisions of Regulation 225 of the Human Medicines Regulations (HMR) 2012.
- The pharmacy contractor is responsible for ensuring that the service is delivered in line with the new service specification and guidance, by suitably trained pharmacists.
- Ensure that all pharmacists are competent in the operation of the service, bearing in mind the differing requirements of this service compared to the pandemic service.
- Ensure that only NCR duplicate copy PV1s are used in the delivery of this service.
- Ensure that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is in place to support delivery of the service.

Please note, as this service is a core pharmaceutical service there is no requirement for contractors to return a signed contract to SPPG. GP practices and out-of-hours medical service providers have been informed that all community pharmacies now offer and participate in this service.

If you have any query about this service, please contact your local SPPG Pharmacy Adviser.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn Turner".

**Kathryn Turner**  
**Pharmacy Lead**  
**Strategic Planning and Performance Group**