

**From Interim Head of Pharmacy and Medicine  
Management, SPPG  
Kathryn Turner**



**By email to:  
GP Practices  
(FAO General Practitioners, General Practice  
Pharmacists, Practice Nurses)  
OOH medical services**

**Strategic Planning and Performance  
Group**  
2 Franklin Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8DQ

Tel: 028 9536 3683  
Email: [kathryn.turner@hscni.net](mailto:kathryn.turner@hscni.net)  
Date: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Dear Colleagues

**PHARMACY FIRST PILOT SERVICE FOR THE TREATMENT OF SHINGLES EXTENSION  
UNTIL 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2026**

You will be aware from [previous correspondence](#) that 50 community pharmacies across Northern Ireland have been offering a **Pharmacy First Pilot Service for the treatment of shingles** since 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

**The purpose of this letter is to let you know that this service will now be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

The service facilitates the assessment and treatment of people **aged 18 years and over**, with symptoms of shingles in line with the NI Antimicrobial Guidelines and [Shingles | Health topics A to Z | CKS | NICE](#).

**Service documentation**

All resources including the Service Specification & Guidance document are available at [Pharmacy First Pilot Service for Treatment of Shingles - Business Services Organisation \(BSO\) Website](#)

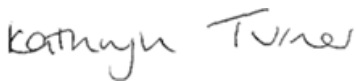
## **Actions for GP practices and out-of-hours medical services**

GP practices and OOHs medical services are encouraged to:

- Confirm which pharmacies are offering the service in your area; refer to the providers list at [Pharmacy-First-Shingles-Pilot-Providers-List-PDF.pdf](#).
- Refer suitable patients, seeking treatment for shingles, to a community pharmacy on the providers list.
- To help manage patient expectations, please DO NOT refer severely immunosuppressed people (*i.e. defined in [Green Book chapter 28a](#) as being eligible for Shingrix® vaccination programme*), patients aged 17 years and under, and pregnant women to the service.
- Promote the availability of the service using the SPPG social media resources available at [Pharmacy First Pilot Service for Treatment of Shingles - Business Services Organisation \(BSO\) Website](#)

If you have any queries in relation to this Pharmacy First Service, please contact your Pharmacy Adviser (for contact details, please refer to [pmmt-contacts.pdf](#)).

Yours sincerely,



**Kathryn Turner**  
**Interim Head of Pharmacy**  
**and Medicine Management**  
**Strategic Planning & Performance**  
**Group**



**Dr Margaret O'Brien**  
**Assistant Director of Primary Care**  
**Head of General Medical Services**  
**Responsible Officer, SPPG**

