

From:
Emma Quinn
Pharmacy Lead SPPG



By email to:
All Community Pharmacy Contractors
(to be shared with all community pharmacists
and locums)

Strategic Planning and Performance
Group

2 Franklin Street
BELFAST
BT2 8DQ

Tel: 028 9536 3683

Email: emma.quinn@hscni.net

13th March 2026

Dear Colleague

PHARMACY FIRST SORE THROAT SERVICE

Funding update

I am writing to inform you that recurrent funding has now been secured for the continued provision of the Pharmacy First Sore Throat service. Community pharmacies who are not yet contracted to provide this service, but now wish to do so, should submit a contract via Microsoft forms at [Pharmacy First: Sore Throat Service](#).

Service resources

Service resources can be accessed on the [BSO website](#). PGDs are available for the provision of antibiotic treatment where appropriate. The PGDs (V01.02) are currently under review. The new versions of the PGDs will be available on the BSO website next week but **will not be valid for use until 1st May 2026**. Please continue to use current versions until 1st May 2026.

Important reminder: PGDs provide the legal framework that allows registered health professionals to supply a specified medicine to a pre-defined group of patients. It is important that the correct versions of the PGDs are being used to provide the service at all times.

Advance notice of further mandatory training requirements

To operate under the updated PGDs, pharmacists will be required to undertake the following additional training:

- [NICPLD Sepsis e-learning](#) module
- NICPLD [Safeguarding Advice & Guidance for Pharmacists](#) recorded webinar

Pharmacists may wish to take this advance notice to complete the required on-line training before May 1st 2026.

Pharmacist training event – 28th April 2026

SPPG will provide further training at 7.30pm on Tuesday 28th April 2026. Meeting details and joining instructions will be issued from project ECHO in due course.

The session will cover:

- Patient Group Direction (PGD) updates
- Legal framework surrounding PGDs
- Competency framework and professional responsibilities

Claims Process - reminder

As with all Pharmacy First services, claims should be submitted on a monthly basis. Pharmacy First service claims should be submitted by the 5th working day of the month to ensure payment in the same month. Claims submitted after the 5th working day may not be paid until the following month.

If you have any queries please contact your pharmacy adviser, contact details are available [here](#).

Yours sincerely



Emma Quinn
Pharmacy Lead SPPG