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Welcome

As I write this, we are only days away from the start of yet another flu vaccination campaign. Contractors in the Thames Valley LPC Area administered over 126,000 NHS vaccinations last year – more than double the previous year. This was, of course, helped by the addition of the healthy 50-64 year old cohort, which, after a late amendment, has been added again this year. All contractors should be reengaging with these patients and booking them in for a vaccine this year, which is likely to be even busier than last! There are two parts of the service I would like you to focus on: First we have a real opportunity with those patients that qualify for their flu vaccination due to underlying health issues. The numbers vaccinated last year fall short of what is needed to protect them, so I would like to think, that with your local knowledge, we can increase the level of vaccination in this cohort. Second, regarding signposting for Covid boosters, if you are already signed up for the Covid vaccination programme then it is preferable to co-administer, but, if not, then please direct eligible patients to the National Booking Service so that they can get booked in to their local vaccination centre (preferably a community pharmacy).

The LPC and the Committee understand that the industry has some serious challenges ahead in terms of rising costs for workforce, energy, remuneration of dispensing, and more. We are here to support and I am happy to pass on any examples that you have of excessive increases to the PSNC, or if you prefer, you can direct them to your trade body (CCA/NPA/AIMp) if you are a member. These are challenging times for the country and we must do our best to ensure that Community Pharmacy continues to be a key healthcare provider across our area.

The LPC is also here to help you get more out of all the services that are available to you, such as NMS, GP CPCS, and Hypertensive Case finding, and we are happy to talk you through the best way to maximise these in your pharmacy.



And finally, with regard to the positive RSG vote for the PSNC/LPC restructure that took place this summer, we are just waiting for guidance from the PSNC on what is required from the LPC. We already know that we should be changing our name to Community Pharmacy Thames Valley (the PSNC will rebrand to Community Pharmacy England), reducing the size of the committee, and ensuring we look at ways we can remain efficient, whilst continuing to support and represent Community Pharmacy.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any feedback or issues you wish to discuss.

David Dean, Chief Officer



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Contractor Support Officer Update



GP CPCS

Over 75% of all practices across the Thames Valley LPC area have made at least 1 GP CPCS referral this NHS year, with most referrals now being made by PharmOutcomes (over 99.5%). The challenge is for the practices to start referring in sufficient quantities that GP CPCS becomes part of a pharmacy's normal daily routine, and starts to change patients' mindsets about seeing GPs for minor conditions. For us to gain the confidence of the GPs, we need to ensure that all referrals are opened and completed. We still have too many referrals that are not dealt with. Table 1 [linked here](#) shows YTD referral history. The biggest reason given for dropped referrals (230 of the 435) is due to the patient being uncontactable so we are working with both Frimley and BOB to remind practices to check the patients telephone numbers when they are doing the referral.

The most common reason I hear from community pharmacies for a referral not being completed is “we have a locum in the pharmacy”. Other than the consultation and completing the PharmOutcomes referral, which the pharmacist must do, a staff member of the pharmacy can complete the administration. It takes organisation and getting into a routine of looking at PharmOutcomes for a GP referral at least 5 times a day. Whilst having a locum is an extra challenge as they may not know the practices within a pharmacy, it cannot be used as an excuse for not completing a referral.

Almost 66% of all referrals occur over the telephone, so these can be completed at a time that suits the pharmacy's daily work schedule. The 483 patients referred and not accepted by community pharmacy amounts to a loss of income of £6,762.

DMS

In 2021, Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust led the way, using PharmOutcomes to send DMS referrals, with the other Trusts still using NHSmail. Unfortunately we have seen a reduction across the whole LPC area in referrals for DMS. This is being taken up by David Dean with NHS SE England at the highest level and we should see an improvement soon. We have taken the stance that the lack of DMS is hurting community pharmacies financially in lost income, as demonstrated in Table 2 [linked here](#).

MCA/Nomads/Community Dossett Trays

Please can I ask everyone to do regular Equality Act assessments on their MCA patients and move to original packs if the patients do not require an MCA. I must stress that you must consult with the practice and the patient prior to any move from an MCA to original packs if that is the outcome of the assessment. Healthwatch Oxfordshire are doing a patient survey in September/October asking their views on the availability of MCA across Oxfordshire. Our statement explaining the LPC stance on MCAs is [linked here](#).

Any questions, please give me a call.

Kevin Barnes, Contractor Support Officer

Xaqua (Metolazone) - Safety Information

Xaqua[®], a new 5mg scored tablet preparation of metolazone, was launched in July 2022. Whereas previously only imported, unlicensed versions of metolazone have been available in the UK (eg Zaroxolyn[®]), Xaqua[®] is licensed in the UK for hypertension and oedema related to kidney diseases and congestive heart failure. Xaqua[®] tablets are NOT INTERCHANGABLE with other metolazone preparations, due to the potential, significant difference in bioavailability (up to two-fold), compared to other metolazone products. The manufacturer recommends that a dose adjustment may be necessary and individualised titration based on patient's response and tolerability is advised if switching from Xaqua[®] tablets to another metolazone product, or vice versa. See [SPC](#) for further details.

On receipt of a prescription for Xaqua or generic metolazone, it would be advisable for pharmacists to check which product the patient has previously taken, and to avoid any inadvertent switching by ensuring that the prescriber is aware of the difference in bioavailability between the licensed and unlicensed versions of metolazone. Patients will require additional monitoring for dehydration and electrolyte disturbances if switched between metolazone preparations, so it is essential that prescribers are aware.

Integrated Care Systems



With effect from 1st July 2022, NHS structures have changed with the formal introduction of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs). We have two ICSs on our patch - Frimley, which includes East Berkshire, and BOB, which covers Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West. Each ICS is made up to two core parts - Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) which replace the old CCGs and are responsible for commissioning; and Integrated Care Partnership (ICPs), which bring together the NHS with Local Authorities and other key partners. Find out more at: [BOB ICS](#); [Frimley ICS](#).

Medicines Optimisation Communications

Following the structural changes mentioned above, Medicines Optimisation communications previously published by CCGs, will now be produced by the ICBs. This means Prescribing Points (Oxfordshire CCG), MOP UP (Berkshire West CCG) and the Medicines Management newsletter (Buckinghamshire CCG) have been replaced by the BOB Medicines Optimisation Bulletin, and Frimley CCG Prescribing Newsletter will become the Frimley ICB Prescribing Newsletter:

[BOB MOB Newsletter](#); [Frimley ICB Prescribing Newsletter](#)

Early Careers

The registration process and access to the HEE Foundation Training Year E-portfolio for 2022/23 is now open for all trainee pharmacists and HEE will be hosting E-Portfolio Orientation Workshops for Trainee Pharmacists, Designated Supervisors and Educational Leads. The sessions will provide an overview of the Foundation Training Year e-portfolio functionality, latest developments and Q&A's. These sessions complement the national webinars which provide further details on specific elements of the programme. For more details see: [HEE Early Careers](#)



Health Education England

Dental Health Factsheets

Dental symptoms are one of the most common symptom groups for callers to NHS 111 and they, along with many patients visiting emergency departments, could be managed by other services including pharmacies. To support pharmacy teams in advising and signposting these patients, as well as in offering patients advice about oral hygiene and providing ongoing support to patients once the acute problem has resolved, HEE has created a series of factsheets - [click here](#).

Healthwatch Oxfordshire



Healthwatch Oxfordshire has published a new report about people's experiences of getting prescriptions from their local pharmacies. The report, which is based on the views of 469 people who completed a survey, illustrates good practice and care, but also highlights some of the challenges patients are facing in getting prescriptions at the current time. Healthwatch Oxfordshire will hold a round table discussion with stakeholders later this month to explore the issues raised in its report. The report can be [read here](#).

Oxfordshire Approved Providers



The Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Dynamic Approved Provider List (DAPL) for Community Healthcare Services, which re-commenced in April 2022, is still open for applications. These healthcare services are split into 3 lots:

Lot 1 – Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC);

Lot 2 – Pharmacist Supervised Consumption of Prescribed Opiate Substitution Therapy (PSC); and

Lot 3 - Needle Exchange Programme – Sterile Works from Oxfordshire Premises (SWOP).

Providers can register interest via the South East Business Portal, under DAPL Reopening – [Healthcare Services – i-1428](#). If you have any queries, contact Laura Kelson at Laura.Kelson@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

CPPE Autumn/Winter Workshops



From October to December, CPPE will be offering morning sessions on CPCS and Medicines Optimisation in Care Homes, as well as evening workshops in the topics below. For full details [click here](#).

New - Opioid Deprescribing in Chronic Pain – develop your skills and confidence to support people living with chronic pain. Consider the safe and effective use of medicines, focusing on opioids, and how to empower people to live well with pain. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/e/pain-ew-01>

Type 2 Diabetes - supporting people better - update your knowledge of the management of type 2 diabetes in line with new NICE guidance, help your patients to better manage this condition, including reducing complications and improving outcomes. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/e/diabetes-ew-01>

COPD - learn to interpret and apply clinical guidance to support people living with COPD. Consider how to optimise treatment and empower people living with COPD to self-manage their condition. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/copd-ew-01/>

Mental Capacity - manage and optimise care for patients who might lack mental capacity to make a specific decision relating to their medicines. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/mentalcap-ew-01/>

Hypertension - interpret and apply clinical guidance to support people with hypertension. You will consider how to optimise their treatment and use a shared decision-making approach to empower people with hypertension to self-manage their condition. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/hyper-ew-01/>

Emergency Contraception - acquire the knowledge, develop the skills and demonstrate the behaviours needed to provide high-quality emergency contraception services as part of their pharmacy practice. <https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/ehc-ew-01/>

Upcoming Events

For details of these and all our events visit: www.pharmacythamesvalley.org.uk/our-events/

Date	Event	Audience	Venue
8th September 2022, 19.30-20.30	Contractor Briefing - Contraception	Pharmacists & Technicians	Online
13th September 2022, 18.45-21.15	React Mental Health - Become a Trainer	Pharmacists, Technicians & Team Members	Online
16th September 2022, 13.00-14.00	Frimley ICS Polypharmacy Community of Practice	Pharmacists, Technicians & Team Members	Online
28th September 2022, 09.15-12.15	Patient Services Training	All Patient-facing staff	Online
28th September 2022, 13.00	Thames Valley LPC AGM 2022	All contractors	Online
6th October 2022, 19.30-20.30	Contractor Briefing - Dermatology	Pharmacists, Technicians & Team Members	Online
10th November 2022, 09.00-14.45	End of Life Care for Pharmacists	Pharmacists & Technicians	Online

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