

Coronavirus - COVID 19 Update from Welsh Government

Further Important Information for Community Pharmacies



Community
Pharmacy Wales
Fferylliaeth
Gymunedol Cymru

CONTRACTOR NEWS

Pharmacy Hours

Welsh Government Health Minister, Vaughan Gething has confirmed that community pharmacies will be allowed to open to the public a hour later and close an hour earlier and to close the doors to the public for two hours during the day to allow community pharmacy teams to manage the massive increase in workload and to provide for the wellbeing of team members at this difficult time. The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer has indicated that he will write to all community pharmacies before Monday to confirm.

In this difficult time, Welsh Government and Health Boards appreciate the demands on community pharmacy teams are immense and they understand that the teams are working exceptionally hard in a challenging situation to supply patients with vital medication. They are all agreed that pharmacy teams need space during the day to rest, catch up, order and dispense medication with as little distraction as possible.

Please note any closure with **Limited access** (ie you have closed the doors but are still providing pharmaceutical services) outside of these agreed periods when the pharmacy will be closed to the public should continue to be flagged to the Health Board using the relevant Health Board's agreed temporary closure process.

Any closure with **No access** outside of this time (ie as a result of sickness or staffing shortages) should be flagged to the Health Board and NWSSP using the temporary closure process. This will enable the AWPD and NHS 111 services to be updated.

Health Boards are also supportive of measures that contractors may wish to take to protect themselves and the public including (but not limited to):

- Operating a maximum number of patients in the pharmacy at any one time, e.g. 1 in 1 out with a queue outside (provided there is somewhere safe for people to queue and to do so would not be unreasonable)
- Screening patients at the door and advising patients who should be self-isolating to return home

Coronavirus Testing

The Minister also confirmed that NHS Wales is increasing its capacity on coronavirus testing for “frontline healthcare staff involved in direct patient care”. CPW has been working closely with all seven Welsh Health Boards which have indicated that community pharmacy teams are included in the scope of those having access to testing. Further details will be provided once it is understood how this can be accessed. CPW have created a survey monkey [here](#) at the request of Health Boards to get a sense of how many staff members are currently in self-isolation.

The Minister stated that 800 tests are currently being carried out per day but by the beginning of April that would increase to 6000 per day and to 8000 per day a week later.

Key Workers & Access to School Provision

Earlier this week, in response to the escalating Covid19 outbreak, Welsh Government Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams and the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan announced that schools in Wales should close for children and young people, with the exception of making provision for children who are vulnerable, or whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response, so they can continue to work, where alternative childcare arrangements cannot be made.

In summary, from Monday March 23:

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, they should be
- If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is critical to the Covid-19 response, then provision in an educational or childcare setting should be available for them
- Parents should not rely anyone who has been advised to be following social distancing guidance, such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions, for childcare.
- Parents should do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in ways, which could contribute to spreading coronavirus. Children should observe the same social distancing guidance as adults.
- Residential special schools and special settings should continue to care for children wherever possible.

Welsh Government confirmed that if your work is critical to the Covid-19 response, or if you work in one of the critical sectors listed, you should make arrangements for your child to be safely cared for at home. If there is no safe alternative, provision should be made in schools or other settings.

Qualifying parents who work in the **Health and social care sector** include, but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care

workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Key workers include all staff working in community pharmacies, pharmacy contractors' head office staff, delivery drivers, volunteers, as well as those involved in the manufacturing, assembly and delivery of medicines for supply by community pharmacies, such as staff working for pharmaceutical wholesalers.

The definition of key workers has been deliberately drafted broadly, so that all the people involved in the medicines and pharmacy supply chains who are critical to the supply of medicines, and the delivery of pharmacy services, to patients and the public – including pharmacists and pharmacy staff – are included. Children can attend school if only one parent works is classed as a key worker.

However, CPW is aware that some Local Education Authorities may choose to interpret the definition differently, and we are therefore seeking to reach a shared agreement through the Welsh Local Government Association to ensure the position is consistent across Wales.

We have attached a template letter for contractors to give to parents needing to access this provision.

RUSSELL GOODWAY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

21 March 2020

[Pharmacy letterhead]

[Pharmacy address]

[Telephone number]

21 March 2020

To whom it may concern

Re. [Staff member's name]

Schools have been asked to continue to provide care for children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot safely be cared for at home.

Community pharmacy staff and those involved in the medicines supply chain, including the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector, are key workers critical to the Government's COVID-19 response. The Government has identified the following key workers in health and social care:

Health and Social Care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Key workers include all staff working in community pharmacies, pharmacy company head office staff, delivery drivers and volunteers.

Please accept this letter as confirmation that the above-named member of staff is a key frontline health worker for the purposes of the support available during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have any questions about this employee's status please contact me using the above contact details.

Your sincerely

[Name]

[Superintendent Pharmacist / Director / Business owner]