

16 April 2020

For general practice in Kent and Medway

COVID-19 Update 10

This is the tenth update provided by Kent and Medway CCG to provide information to help practices deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have any feedback or ideas to make the Updates more useful to you please email wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net.

Highlight:

The latest [guidance letter for general practice](#) contains updates on changes to the GP contract regulations, NHS immunisations and other recently published guidance.

The information in these updates is up to date when sent out but it is always important to check that this reflects the most recent guidance by following links. The NHS guidance for primary care can be found [here](#).

We acknowledge this is a difficult time for all those staff working in primary care and we would like to thank you for all of your hard work and dedication in this challenging time.



Caroline Selkirk



Navin Kumta

IT

Away From My Desk

When you receive your token/s please distribute them to the correct user. Away From My Desk will activate these within 48 hours and the user details will be emailed to each individual on the email address provided after they have checked that the token has been delivered and the computers have been installed. Please remember to check your junk email.

Some people are ringing the usual IT helpdesk phone number for help with Away From My Desk. To get help with Away From My Desk you need to ring their helpdesk on 0117 325 0060 and select option 1 or email support@awayfrommydesk.com. The helpline is open from 8:30am until 8pm 7 days a week. All calls and emails will be returned within 24 hours, usually before the end of the day. After 5pm and at weekends this number will go directly to a voicemail system, please leave your name, number and a short description of the problem and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Anyone who rings the normal IT helpdesk with queries about Away From My Desk will be redirected to the above phone number.

Technical items about GP Connect (for practice managers).

Please find attached the latest set-up guides for EMIS entitled: "EMIS Guidance CCAS V8.0" and TPP entitled "TPP SystemOne CCAS User Guide V2.0" to use GP Connect in the CCAS process. Please note that there is a change in the 'Kind' option in EMIS. This will need to be updated retrospectively where configuration has already taken place.

Notification of Priority Changes to the Kent and Medway MIG Service

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, priority changes will be made to the Kent and Medway Medical Interoperability (MIG) service in line with national guidance and the 'Control of Patient Information Guidance' (COPI) requirements. These changes will rapidly enhance patient record sharing via existing means (MIG) across the county and help provide better care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A summary of these changes is attached in a file entitled: "KM MIG Service Covid Response Changes"

Electronic Prescription Service for clinical services

NHS Digital delivers the [Electronic Prescription Service](#) (EPS) which enables patients to nominate the most convenient dispenser to collect their medication from. If a patient has nominated a dispenser, you can digitally sign electronic prescriptions for that patient, and then transmit them to the dispenser, ready for the patient to collect their medication.

EMIS are now ready to take EPS one step further and make electronic prescriptions the most common method of issuing prescriptions. Patients without a nominated pharmacy will receive a “prescription token” that they can take to their pharmacy of choice to sign up to the system.

To find out more and register your practice’s interest you can find more information: [EPS Phase 4](#).

Use of Eclipse software to help identify patients for shielding

For practices where the Eclipse software is used, the CCG Medicines Optimisation Team (in conjunction with the Eclipse team) has developed a pathway which offers a step by step approach to identifying high risk patients, applying the correct codes on the clinical system and prioritising and flagging high risk patients for the shielding list.

The CCG Medicines Optimisation Team are also offering one to one support to practices to help them follow the pathway. If you would like their help please email WKCCG.Medman@nhs.net.

There will also be a webinar on the Eclipse COVID Protect Project on 22 April 2020. This will be open to all practices. You can join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking this link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/737354957>.

If you have not used GoToMeeting before you will need to install the app before the meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/737354957>.

You can also dial in by calling 0330 221 0088 with access code: 737354957.

Clinical

Shielding Guidance

Advice on Covid-19 is changing day by day. The Royal College of GPs have produced a short video that explains the actions that GPs need to take now to identify the group who need to shield.

<https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/course/view.php?id=377>

Changes in law for doctors certifying death and issuing crem 4 forms

Kent and Medway Registrars and Kent Coroners have issued a joint summary of the recent changes in law for doctors certifying death and issuing crem 4 forms. It is attached entitled: "Summary of changes for doctors certifying death and issuing CREM 4 forms"

Referral Advice

We are aware that the major changes to referral processes are making it very difficult for general practice to operate. We are seeking a better way of giving you access to this information but in the meantime, you will find updates below from providers who have notified us about changes.

Cancer referrals

As promised in Update 8 attached is the Primary Care Cancer referral guidance (file name: SE Primary Care COVID19 Cancer Referral Guidance). This was drafted by colleagues from across the South East region specifically for primary care. Also attached is a revised letter (file name: SE Cancer Referral COVID-19 Patient Information) to give to a patient following a two week wait rule referral. It explains what a patient can expect during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note that on page two of this patient letter references the hospital's contact details, so this will need to be populated for local use before it is shared with patient. The Kent and Medway Cancer Alliance asked us to send these to you.

Medway Community Health (MCH)

MCHFT have created a page on their website that explains the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their services and how to

<https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/latest-news/coronavirus-covid-19>

Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT)

A-Z information about KCHFT services and how they are operating during the COVID-19 pandemic is accessible here:

<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/our-services/>

Medicines & Prescribing Guidance

New guidance for community pharmacy

The NHS has published the next of our [regular updates for community pharmacy](#) colleagues which includes information on PPE following the updated guidance which was published by Public Health England on 12 April 2020, the NHS Home Delivery service and the use of NHS Volunteers for collecting medicines, amongst other guidance.

Home delivery of medicines during the COVID-19 outbreak

A new amendment to NHS regulations means that, while patients meeting the COVID-19 shielding criteria need to stay at home and away from community pharmacy and dispensing doctor premises, they must be offered a home delivery option for their prescription items unless a family member, friend, relative or volunteer can collect the medicine for them. More information about what action community pharmacies and dispensing doctors need to do can be found here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0265-Pharmacy-letter-re-delivery-service-10-April-20.pdf>

Guidance on Provision of Vitamin B12 Injections during COVID-19

The British Society for Haematology (BSH) has produced guidance on B12 supplements during the pandemic.

- For non-diet related deficiency, BSH suggest omitting hydroxycobalamin injections until the COVID-19 outbreak surge has passed, as liver stores last for a year. Oral cyanocobalamin 50-150 micrograms per day can be offered to patients who report symptoms in the weeks preceding B12 injection as an alternative.
- In diet related deficiency, the BSH advise suspending supplementation, or offering oral cyanocobalamin 50 mcg to be taken daily between meals only if needed.

Access the full BSH guidance ([here](#)): click on General Haematology then on BSH advice on B12 supplements. See the [NICE CKS](#) guidance also.

Controlled drugs

Julie McCann, Controlled Drugs Accountable Officer for NHS England and NHS Improvement South East Region has written a letter about arrangements for the safe handling and use of controlled drugs during pandemic. It has some important information about temporary changes that are in place and is attached called: “Safe handling and use of controlled drugs”.

Palliative Care Locally Enhanced Service Update

Kent and Medway CCG has commissioned a number of pharmacies to stock limited supplies of end of life drugs. The list of pharmacies and the drugs stocked are on the attached spreadsheet entitled “K&M Out of Hours Pharmacy and EOL drugs List”

We have established a communication cascade to all providers involved in palliative care in the community to ensure rapid communication regarding stock issues. Any concerns should be sent to WKCCG.Medman@nhs.net.

Clinical guidance has been produced that provides clinical and dosing information for all the drugs that could be used at end of life to ensure that alternative options for treatment are available. This is attached entitled: K&M management of symptoms for all COVID-19 patients

We recommend that patients should not be provided with stocks of anticipatory care medications too far in advance of need in order to conserve supplies. This will require clinician discretion. However, we recognise that if following clinical assessment, patients are likely to require end of life medication within a few days a prescription is issued. It is recommended that this is only for a few days’ supply to avoid waste. Out of hours services and the Home Treatment teams are all able to carry stat doses of end of life drugs to enable treatment to be initiated quickly. Care homes are being advised that where it is possible to safely store a deceased patient’s end of life drugs and there are no safety concerns, these should NOT currently be returned for destruction.

It is hoped that these actions will prevent a situation where a patient does not have access to end of life medication in a timely manner. Regulations have not changed and do not permit the administration of another patient’s medication. However for the period of this COVID -19 pandemic it has been agreed in Kent and Medway that in a care home, where it is absolutely impossible to access medication for a patient through the processes outlined above, and where an end of life medication from another patient is available: doctors are advised to use their clinical discretion

regarding administration of another patient's medication, community nurses are advised to contact their Chief Pharmacist for advice and nursing home nurses are advised to contact an out of hours service for advice.

Finance

Good Friday and Easter Monday reimbursement rates

For Good Friday or Easter Monday, practices can seek reimbursement for additional staffing costs incurred on these days, in line with the respective rates as set out below.

- Sessional GPs: up to a maximum of £250 a session or £500 per day;
- Overtime for salaried GPs in line with the individual's contractual arrangements;
- Additional capacity from GP Partners to recognise up to two additional sessions on each of Good Friday and Easter Monday at a rate of £289 per session plus applicable employer National Insurance and pension costs;
- Overtime for non-GP practice staff in line with the individual's contractual arrangements.

These reimbursement rates were published in the NHS primary care bulletin of Wednesday April 8.

Payment for Easter Weekend Bank Holiday working

The claim form attached (entitled Easter Claims) should be used by practices to claim reimbursement from Kent and Medway CCG. Please direct these claim forms to your Primary Care team for onward processing, using the subject heading "Easter Weekend". The CCG will initiate payment in each month once approved. There is no need for the practice to raise an invoice.

East Kent: Eastkent.primarycare@nhs.net

West Kent: Wkccg.primarycare@nhs.net

DGS: Dgscg.primarycare@nhs.net

Medway: Mccg.primarycare@nhs.net

Swale: Swccg.primarycare@nhs.net

Please make sure that your claims have been submitted by 21 April as anything not into the CCG by that date will miss the national reimbursement dates.

Extended Primary Care Centres – financing

The CCG will shortly be writing to each PCN Clinical Director to confirm arrangements for setting up and financing of their Primary Care Treatment Centre; this communication will include guidance as to how the CCG will reimburse agreed costs.

Communications

NHS Health at Home

The NHS Health at Home campaign signposts to useful information about how the public can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions, manage their wellbeing and existing conditions – without leaving their home.

The COVID-19 outbreak means the public need to stay at home except for very limited reasons but this campaign reminds them that they can still contact their GP. Indeed it is important that people understand that their GP is still available for consultations.

Resources for download from <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/nhs-resources-facilities/resources/health-at-home/> include a toolkit with newsletter copy, website copy and social media post content and a link to 'Contacting your GP remotely' video.

You may want to promote on your website and any social media platforms you own.

Looking out for each other

Public Health England have launched a new campaign to inform those who are well and not at risk, on the things that they can do to help support their friends and neighbours who need to stay at home.

The “Looking Out For Each Other” campaign materials direct to www.gov.uk/safehelp for more information and explain you should only leave your house for one of four reasons, including to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.

If you wish to use campaign materials on social media or on your websites they are available here:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5085>.

New Materials for NHS healthcare settings

- Updated 'Do not enter' posters for healthcare settings including GP and pharmacies (for those with symptoms of coronavirus).

- New GP access poster for practices – promoting online and phone consultations for non-COVID-19 related issues.
- New Pharmacy opening times poster – for use when pharmacy may be closed to the public during normal opening hours.

All downloadable [here](#).