

21 May 2020

**For general practice in Kent and Medway**

## COVID-19 Update 20

This update is 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 [kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net](mailto:kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net)

***Highlight:***

Information about DES/LES/AQP/Community contracts financial arrangements for quarter 1 2020/21 and beyond is available in the Finance section on page 8.

## Clinical Advice & Support

### Symptoms

In Update 19 we provided a link to the UK Chief Medical Officers' letter about coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms now including Anosmia that didn't work. Apologies the content of the letter can be found [here](#)

### Screening

NHS Cervical Screening Programme Restoration Guidance has been published by Public Health England and the NHS. It is attached

- Women who are eligible and due for cervical screening should be offered appointments
- Invitation and reminder letters will begin to be issued from the beginning of June 2020
- Individuals who request screening should be offered an appointment
- Some older women who are due or became overdue in the last 6 months should be offered the opportunity to attend (final non-responder lists can help with this). Where there is concern that the sample may be rejected, the form should be clearly marked **“test delayed due to COVID-19”**

On page six of the document there is a section for “sample taking providers”. If there are any questions regarding this guidance please send them to [phst@nhs.net](mailto:phst@nhs.net)

### **COVID-19 Respiratory, Thromboembolism and ITU Complications in Practice. *A best practice webinar on Tuesday 26 May 7pm – 8:45pm***

Following the last five successful webinars, we are delighted to share with you an opportunity to join the next one. There will be an opportunity for discussion with an expert guest panel around key issues and areas of focus, such as

- What are key respiratory complications and how should we manage these?
- What investigations should be considered and when for persistent symptoms?
- What are the key criteria for hospital escalations and or ITU?
- What nontherapeutic and therapeutic options are optimal?
- COVID-19 and complicating coagulopathy, should all be on anticoagulant prophylaxis?
- What rehabilitation and holistic medical support is required for patients discharged from ITU?

- COVID-19 complications can be multi systems wide, are you aware of them

These webinars offer a chance to share expertise from across all areas to help resolve issues and share learning in relation to the current challenges presented by COVID-19 and include case and situational based discussions. All attendees have the opportunity to ask the expert panel questions and raise discussion points using interactive chat forum.

To see more detailed information on the event and to register for a place please use this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/covid-19-respiratory-thromboembolism-itu-complication-in-practice-2605-tickets-106067262036>

ZOOM details will be sent on confirmation of booking a place and will be found towards the bottom of the confirmation email.

For any other queries please contact Rakesh Korla on [r.korla@nhs.net](mailto:r.korla@nhs.net)

### **Latest NICE rapid guidelines**

In response to COVID-19 the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) continues to produce a series of [rapid guidelines](#) to support clinicians manage specific patient groups. The latest guidelines are listed and linked to below:

- [Chronic Kidney Disease](#)
- [Interstitial lung disease](#)

## Safeguarding

### Video and email consultations

During the COVID-19 pandemic the use of virtual consultations has escalated. As GPs move towards a future where a large percentage of consultations will be done via video link, e-mail or telephone we need to be aware of new safeguarding issues that may arise.

As well as understanding how to enquire about a person's safety with relation to domestic abuse, how to check if children in the household are at risk and how to protect the frail and vulnerable, we also need to ensure that images are not sent that are illegal or inappropriate.

Do not request or accept video or photographic images from a patient that would include any intimate body part. This may seem rather fundamental advice but there has been a case recently where a Kent and Medway GP received such an image electronically. The GP raised the matter with the safeguarding team, and this is now being discussed at a national level. Please do not hesitate to contact the Safeguarding Team if you have been sent inappropriate images at [kmccg.safeguarding@nhs.net](mailto:kmccg.safeguarding@nhs.net)

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/making-and-using-visual-and-audio-recordings-of-patients>

<https://www.themdu.com/guidance-and-advice/latest-updates-and-advice/receiving-and-storing-patient-images-from-online-consultations>

### Suicide and young people

There has, sadly, been a number of suicides and attempted suicides across Kent and Medway by young people in the past few weeks, one of which has received attention in the press. One common factor is the lockdown situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic with increased family tensions. The number in Kent and Medway is higher than the national average but the reason for this is at present uncertain.

Several of the young people have been on the autistic spectrum or have been receiving medication for Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. Those who take medication should not stop it without consultation.

The links below may be of help if you need to signpost a child or young person or you speak to a parent who is worried.

The Single Point of Access for mental health is still available.

**Kent** - 0300 123 4496

**Medway** - 0300 300 1981

**Mental Health Matters** can be rung on 0800 107 0160

**Release the Pressure – 24-hour mental health crisis support:**

Text "Kent" to 85258 for 24hr mental health crisis support via text from trained volunteers. This service is for all ages and is provided by SHOUT.

Website: <https://www.giveusashout.org/>

**Cognitive behaviour therapy:** This free resource is specifically aimed at young people aged 12-18, and their families to help with the fallout of the Covid crisis:

<https://elearning.10minutecbt.co.uk/courses/10-minute-steps-to-wellbeing-during-covid-19-young-people-and-families>

**Help is at Hand:** This is a support after suicide charity:

- Website: <https://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/support-guides/help-is-at-hand/>
- Support booklet: [https://issuu.com/reset-magazine/docs/england\\_-\\_help\\_is\\_at\\_hand](https://issuu.com/reset-magazine/docs/england_-_help_is_at_hand)

**Kooth:** For children aged between 10-16 in need of mental health support, including online counselling, if they visit [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) they can join a supportive online community with lots of guided support courses and resources.

**Big White Wall:** mental health support, including online counselling, for young people aged 16-18 in Kent. They can visit [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com) to access this supportive online community.

## IT

### IT support over weekends (and bank holidays)

- Computer issues? Computers, log-ins, devices etc. - the NEL Standard Desk Service is available on 03000 424242 8am-8pm Monday to Sunday (including bank holidays) for all users.
- Connectivity Issues? Network problems? If there are issues with connectivity with the Health and Social Care Network (HSCN) please call 0344 573 4695 with your postcode and full site details. If you can advise if there are any specific issues such as power loss or an issue with the connection to HSCN, an application or the internet it will help the team diagnose your issue. This number will be answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by someone who can help address your connectivity issue.
- Away From My Desk: remote working solution, registration and activation issues. If you have any issues you can contact Away From My Desk helpline on 01173250060 (option 1 for tech support) or by emailing [support@awayfrommydesk.com](mailto:support@awayfrommydesk.com)

### IT User Guides

The challenges presented by COVID-19 has seen practices adopting new IT systems for remote working at speed and in difficult circumstances. The introduction of the new IT systems has been overseen by a group that includes practice staff and the LMC. They have helped with the attached user guides. There is a step by step guide for “Remote Working”, a user guide for “Red Centric VPN Tokens” and one for “Away From My Desk”. Any suggested improvements would be welcome – please email: [dan.campbell@nhs.net](mailto:dan.campbell@nhs.net)

## Infection Protection & Control

### Testing update

#### ***Patient testing through the national programme***

Symptomatic patients can now access testing via the NHS Pillar 2 programme [via the gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk). This is both for patients able to travel to swabbing sites or patients who are in their own homes. Pillar 2 utilises national lab capacity, this allows our local lab capacity to continue to be focused on inpatients and NHS and Care staff.

#### ***Accessing patient coronavirus test results***

GPs can access coronavirus test results for those who are tested at hospital – either patients or essential workers – through their local order comms system. Log in to your local system (ICE for West Kent, DART for East Kent and North Kent) and search for your patient with surname, first name and date of birth. Please note that a search by NHS number will not work for most patients.

#### ***Useful links***

- Government portal for individuals with coronavirus symptoms to request testing:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

### **Public Health England warning over home-testing kits**

Some manufacturers are selling products for the diagnosis of COVID-19 infection in community settings, such as pharmacies or at home. The current view by PHE is that use of these products is not advised. [More information here](#).

### **Donated PPE**

The CCG is still supporting validation of donated PPE. This can be challenging particularly when items (visors for example) have been homemade and hence don't have quality symbols. If you would welcome this support, please send information about offers to [kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net](mailto:kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net). put DONATION OF PPE and the area you are from in the subject line of the email.

## Finance

### **DES/LES/AQP Financial arrangements – quarter 1 2020/21**

We recognise that there has been some uncertainty with regards to the CCG's offer to guarantee income security for the first three months of the financial year (with the proviso that the practice release resource delivering these services to support Covid). The timings of the payment of LES and DES services is often in arrears as it is not on a NHS standard contract, therefore as the intention was to fix income for the first three months for services we can clarify for practices that the block arrangement for these services will apply into the month of July to ensure payment of the June 'activity'.

The CCG will be writing out next week with an extension to this period of financial security for DES/LES to extend towards the end of October supporting the restore period, where we can expect services to resume towards normal levels in primary care. The CCG will set up a clinical working group to review the current LES and DES services to agree what will be required to continue through this period (such as warfarin services), services that will be expected to restart and other services that the CCG believes critical to restart and preparation for future peaks. The CCG's expectation is that the resource funded through the LES and DES payments will be released to support these work areas. Post the Covid recovery stage the LES and DES services will revert back to the contracted arrangements before Covid impacted on service delivery.

For AQP and community contracts, like UTC services on a standard contract, the current arrangements still cover the practice for services provided to 30 June 2020 and activity will not need to be reconciled. The CCG will continue to work with LMC and will be providing practices with further guidance in coming days.

### **Recovering Statutory Sick Pay payments**

A new online service will be launched on 26 May for small and medium-sized employers to recover Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payments they have made to their employees. [The Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#) was announced at Budget as part of a package of support measures for businesses affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.



## Prescribing & Medicines Management

### **Bank Holiday Monday 25 May**

Just as for general practice NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) has not directed pharmacies in England to open on the 25 May. However, of course there is adequate access to pharmaceutical services and the list of pharmacies scheduled to open across Kent and Medway can be found here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south-east/our-work/pharmacy-opening-hours/>

### **Transmission of prescriptions from Primary Care Treatment Centres (PCTC)**

It has been noted that some COVID-19 symptomatic patients have been given prescriptions to source from community pharmacy. This should be avoided on all accounts. Infection Prevention Control should be considered when issuing hard copy prescriptions to patients with COVID-19 symptoms or those who have been in contact with symptomatic patients to mitigate risk of transmission. Prescriptions should be sent to pharmacies via EPS and we encourage a discussion with patients about how they can use friends/family or carers to collect the medication on their behalf.

As a Kent and Medway response to COVID-19 each PCTC has an aligned pharmacy who is willing to accept emailed prescriptions (should EPS not be an option) and will deliver medication to patients, if you require further information please do email us at [medwayswale.meds@nhs.net](mailto:medwayswale.meds@nhs.net). We request that all emails to community pharmacies clearly state when delivery is required.

As part of the national response to COVID-19, the NHS has commissioned a delivery service from community pharmacies to support shielded patients who have no one to collect their prescription for them. Patients who have been advised to shield or the prescriber should contact the pharmacy to make arrangements. Details [here](#).

## Communications

### **Easy Read Coronavirus guide to accessing services**

Two new documents about accessing NHS services during coronavirus – one in easy read and the other in plain English – have been published.

[Easy read document.](#)

[Plain English document.](#)