

23 June 2020

For general practice in Kent and Medway

COVID-19 Update 29

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

Please make sure that one person from each practice completes the weekly sit rep here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/62MD2B7> by 11am on Thursday 25 June.

Weekly sit rep survey

Many thanks to everyone for continuing to complete the sit rep survey. The summary of last week's responses is attached for your information.

NHS England has provided some clarity on the information they require regarding returning clinicians and those increasing their hours in response to the pandemic. Please pay particular attention to the wording of questions 8-13, as this has changed from previous weeks.

The CCG would like to offer practices a 30-minute digital consultation in order to listen and identify your support needs and how they can help with remote working, GP Connect, EPS-4, Windows 10 and other solutions. Please let us know on the survey whether you would like to book a consultation.

Please make sure that one person from each practice completes the weekly sitrep here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/62MD2B7> by **11am on Thursday 25 June.**

Clinical Advice & Support

Update on Shielding

The Department of Health and Social Care has announced changes for patients who are currently shielding. Further information is available on the [Department's website](#) and we will share more details in a future update.

Clinical Negligence Scheme for Coronavirus

The Clinical Negligence Scheme for Coronavirus (CNSC) provides additional indemnity coverage for clinical negligence liabilities for healthcare workers who are working as part of the coronavirus response.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the CNSC are available online:

<https://resolution.nhs.uk/services/claims-management/clinical-schemes/clinical-negligence-scheme-for-coronavirus/>

A full list of FAQs on CNSC, including one on antibody testing, are available here:

<https://resolution.nhs.uk/faq-section/clinical-negligence-scheme-for-coronavirus/>

Management of Patients with Musculoskeletal and Rheumatic Conditions

The British Society for Rheumatology and other partners have published guidance on the [Management of patients with musculoskeletal and rheumatic conditions who are on corticosteroids, require initiation of oral/IV corticosteroids or a corticosteroid injection](#).

This guidance relates to musculoskeletal (MSK) service provision across primary, community and secondary care and is applicable to adults and children. The use of steroid medication is one of the management options for a range of MSK conditions and in particular rheumatic conditions, and this guidance aims to assist decisions on the use of such medication during the pandemic.

The guidance supersedes the specialist guidance - Management of Patients with Musculoskeletal and Rheumatic Conditions on Corticosteroids - published as part of NHS England and NHS Improvement's phase one response to COVID-19 pandemic.

This information is included in NHS England's primary care bulletin. You can [sign up to the bulletin online](#).

Webinars Hosted by Thrombosis UK

As the UK manages the COVID-19 pandemic and face-to-face educational meetings are currently not possible to hold, Thrombosis UK, a registered charity, has initiated and hosted a range of free, healthcare professional educational webinars focusing on the management of thrombosis in patients with a confirmed diagnoses of, or suspected of having, COVID-19, and also considering those who may be at increased risk of blood clots.

The webinars are led by leading experts in this field and have received CPD accreditation from the Royal College of Pathologists.

- ***Problem areas in thromboprophylaxis and COVID-19***

Thursday 2 July / 4-5pm

Registration: <https://thrombosisuk.org/findevent/hcp-events.php>

- ***How should General Practice consider respiratory issues in a time of COVID-19?***

Thursday 7 July / 7.30-8.30pm

Hosted by Primary Care Cardiovascular Society & Thrombosis UK, the webinar is open to all healthcare and allied professionals but will be of particular interest to those working in General Practice and the community, including care homes, and managing patients with a diagnosis or suspected history of COVID-19.

The live webinar will consider new challenges for primary care practitioners in the management of COVID-19 positive patients presenting with respiratory issues.

Registration: <https://thrombosisuk.org/findevent/hcp-events.php>

Heatwave Plan for England

The Met Office have announced that there is an 80 per cent probability of the heat-health criteria being met between 9am on Wednesday and 9pm on Friday in parts of England. As a result, PHE have issued a [heat health comms toolkit](#) which takes

in to account Covid-19 in assessing the risks for the public and the advice issued. This includes a [poster and messaging](#) which practices can promote to patients where possible.

Infection Prevention & Control

PPE for patients attending secondary care clinics held in primary care and community clinics

Following the recent guidance issued to Trusts and the public about the requirement for patients attending outpatient clinics on acute sites to wear face masks, we now have confirmation that where practices host secondary care clinics within their premises then patients attending these should follow the same guidance that applies to outpatient clinics on hospital sites.

Advice has also been published by Public Health England on the [use of Personal Protective Equipment in primary care](#).

IT

Remote Access

Following NELs security assessment, NEL has confirmed the use of Away From My Desk for personal devices is secure.

However, you will need a NEL provisioned laptop and a Virtual Private Network (VPN) token if you need to use a smart card.

Remote Desktop Services (RDS) are currently only available via a VPN token. RDS gives remote workers a full 'practice desktop' experience but unlike Away From My Desk does not need a user to actually remote control a PC.

If practices want more flexibility, we would encourage them to use NEL provisioned laptops and VPNs. Why not ask your practice manager to book a remote digital consultation to discuss the practice IT needs by emailing eloise.williams1@nhs.net.

Hot Weather and Protecting IT Equipment

Practices are encouraged to check the following in order to minimise any problems as a result of air conditioning failure in server or comms rooms:

- Air conditioners are working, and the room is cool.
- Staff are aware of who to call in the event of a problem with the air conditioning.
- Practices have valid maintenance contracts in place.
- All documentation including user manuals is at hand, should it be required.
- Batteries in remote controls work.
- The last time the air conditioning units were serviced – book a service if this was outside the recommended period.
- Any windows in server rooms are closed and blinds pulled down.
- Doors to the server room are kept closed and locked.
- Only current IT equipment is stored in the server / comms room.

In the event of an air conditioning failure please call your maintenance company first and then inform the NEL Service Desk who will be able to advise on next steps.

Mobile and broadband enhancements for frontline NHS staff

To support colleagues in unprecedented changes to working environments, major network providers have agreed to provide personal mobile data and broadband enhancements to identified frontline NHS staff, who are existing customers, throughout the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To find out about the offers and see if you are eligible [visit the dedicated website](#).

This information is included in NHS England's primary care bulletin. You can [sign up to the bulletin online](#).

Workforce

Grants and Support

NHS England and Improvement has circulated details of charities and organisations which can assist staff who are suffering hardship at the current time through grants and support.

Cavell Nurses Trust

Cavell Nurses Trust is a charity that supports UK nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants, both working and retired, when they're suffering personal or financial hardship often due to illness, disability, older age and domestic abuse. We offer a tailored package of support to help everyone who gets in touch. The trust's experienced and caring Welfare Services Team gives emotional support for those in crisis, advice on maximising benefits, signposting to specialist counselling services, one-off grants to quickly relieve financial hardship and rapid emergency funding for those at great risk.

For more details: www.cavellnursestrust.org

The Ambulance Staff Charity (TASC)

TASC is the leading UK charity providing support to all present and past ambulance staff and their families in time of need, both in the NHS and independent sector. Their services are independent and confidential and include psychological rehabilitation and counselling, including stress and PTSD support; physical rehabilitation; financial grants; debt advice; welfare and other support; and bereavement support. For more details: www.theasc.org.uk

Turn2us

Turn2us helps people in financial need gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help – online, by phone and face to face through partner organisations. Their web site includes a benefits calculator, a grants search database, information and interactive tools providing a wide range of subjects on welfare benefits, charitable grants and managing money. For more details: www.turn2us.org.uk