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| **Weekly Update**Tuesday 13th February 2024 |

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| **NEW this week** |

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| Covid-19 Vaccinations |

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| **Covid-19 Vaccination Programme**

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| NHS England has written to pharmacies currently providing the COVID-19 vaccination service to ask whether they would be willing to extend the duration of their current contract to provide the service until 31st August 2024.This extension is being considered in anticipation of a potential Spring booster programme, pending guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Pharmacies that are contracted to provide the COVID-19 vaccination service have been asked to inform their local commissioner by**22nd February 2024**, if they can continue offering the service from 31st March 2024  to 31st August 2024. The Enhanced Service specification has been updated and published on the [NHS England website](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=1f0164598c&e=3e5221b889). Minimal changes have been made to it, except the end date and payment arrangements from 1st April 2024. [More information](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=e61ca03a3c&e=3e5221b889) |

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| Pharmacy First FAQs |

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| **Pharmacy First FAQs and patient leaflets**As pharmacy owners and their teams continue to implement the Pharmacy First service, Community Pharmacy England (CPE) have been actively addressing questions through online drop-in events. The most frequently asked questions have been compiled and added to their [Pharmacy First FAQ webpage](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=ae1bbd0ae0&e=3e5221b889).Other resources includes a comprehensive list of [patient-facing leaflets](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=a3e1ea3a86&e=3e5221b889)as well as website links. These can be accessed through QR codes or hyperlinks, allowing patients to easily access relevant information on their mobile phones. |

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| PQS - Claim now! |

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| **Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) - claim now**Declaration period for the PQS 23 23 is now open for your pharmacy to claim payment. The MYS portal will remain open between 09.00am on 5th February 2024 until; 23.59 on 1st March 2024. Please remember that you must have evidence to demonstrate meeting the quality criteria you have claimed for by 31st March 2024. |

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| Contraception Service |

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| **NHS Contraception Service - opt in**If your pharmacy signed up for the oral contraction service before 1st December 2023 you must be ready to offer the expanded service (ie ongoing supply and initiation) by the 29th February 2024. Your pharmacy must completed the opt-in declaration on the MYS portal. |

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| Cetostearyl Alcohol |

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| **Epimax and products containing cetostearyl alcohol - please advise patients**BNSSG ICB have been made aware from one of the acute trusts/Bristol Eye Hospital of increasing reports of patients presenting to Emergency Eye Services with ocular toxicity related to Epimax emollient use. It causes corneal epithelial loss (like a corneal abrasion) where patients are using it on the eye area.  It seems to be due to the ingredient that is contained in Epimax but also a number of other emollients called cetostearyl alcohol. The products do say to avoid contact with the eyes but I think perhaps this is not being communicated well to patients. There was an MHRA FSN published last year about it and SPC updated too. BNSSG ICB will be sending the attached article out in GP bulletin to primary care to remind clinicians to ensure patients using these emollients containing cetostearyl alcohol to avoid contact of these products with their eyes/eyelids and wash their hands after use. We are sharing with you for information as appreciate a number of these products can be bought OTC. [Article shared by the trust that is helpful info too:](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=e0e817e63e&e=3e5221b889) |

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| VirtualOutcomes Free Training |

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| **NEW FREE VirtualOutcomes Training - Pharmacy First**The training consists of an introductory module which will cover the background of the service and what your pharmacy needs to do plus a short module with key hints and tips on each of the 7 Clinical Pathway Consultations is now available for pharmacists and their teams. The introductory module is approximately 20 mins and the individual modules on each common condition range from 7 to 9 mins long. To access this FREE training please use this [link](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=84742ac6da&e=3e5221b889) and then enter your F code. |

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| Pharmacy First Online Training |

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| **Pharmacy First Training - Monday 19th February 2024****Online Training**Due to the popularity of the face to face Pharmacy First workshops we are now offering an online workshop to those that were unable to attend or those wanting extra support to feel confident to provide the service.The session will cover each PGD to ensure you have the required knowledge to get you started.We will also cover the Pharmacy Contraception Service.7.30pm - 9pmClick below to book a place, the zoom link will be sent nearer the time.[Click here to book a place.](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=7b24d41d65&e=3e5221b889) |

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| **Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework** |

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| Oral Contraception Service |

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| **NHSE Oral Contraception Service - Local Formularies**Please find links below for the BNSSG and BSW formularies which you will need to use when providing the new oral contraceptive service.[BNSSG](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=c363740440&e=3e5221b889)[BSW](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=c27db6b4eb&e=3e5221b889)BSW have also pulled together the [page with all the contraception advice](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=1bcc313f58&e=3e5221b889) |

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| Safe Service Provision |

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| **GPhC issues guidance on safe service provision**

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| The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has released advice for pharmacy owners and superintendents on safely implementing pharmacy services following the start of the Pharmacy First Service across England. This advice comes amidst persistent pressures and demands on community pharmacy services, as well as the growing suite of services offered by pharmacy teams.The GPhC has emphasised the importance of regular assessments of staffing levels and skill mix to prioritise patient safety, to ensure that there are sufficient staff members who are equipped with the required training, knowledge, and skills to deliver all pharmacy services safely and effectively. [Read more](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=7c3d1a71b9&e=3e5221b889) |

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| EPS Information |

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| **Patients can view EPS information within the NHS App**As previously reported, NHS App now allows patients to view their EPS prescribed items, including prescriber information. While most patients will continue to have their prescriptions dispensed by their local pharmacy, some may choose to take their non-nominated prescriptions to other pharmacies within England. The presence of EPS barcode numbers in the app can assist pharmacy teams in dealing with outlier situations such as Phase 4 prescriptions and prescriptions which have been returned to the Spine by another pharmacy. [Read further details on this change](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=dbda45a423&e=3e5221b889) |

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| Aide-Memoire |

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| **Pharmacy First Aide- Memoire for GP practices**At the Pharmacy first evening training we shared with you that we had created an aide-memoire for GP practices. The LPC has shared this with all GP practices across Avon and asked them to destroy the local one they have been using but we have had numerous requests from pharmacists wanting a copy. We have now updated our Pharmacy First page on the Community Pharmacy Avon website to include a copy of this document.Please note it does not have all exclusions as from experience we have learnt to keep the document as simple as possible. The document can be [found here](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=8ea9fb0b9f&e=3e5221b889)  |

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| Valproate Safety Measures |

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| **MHRA issues new materials for valproate safety measures**The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has released new safety and educational materials to support the implementation of regulatory measures for valproate-containing products.These measures aim to reduce known risks, such as harm to babies during pregnancy and impaired fertility in males. The materials include updated guides, acknowledgment forms, patient cards, posters, and warning stickers.Pharmacy owners are encouraged to put in place a plan to implement the first phase of[new regulatory measures](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=918cc1a21e&e=3e5221b889), which came into force on 31st January 2024. |

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| Pharmacy First Document |

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| **Pharmacy First - Master PGD and Protocol sheet has been published**This sheet allows all pharmacists and the authorising manager to sign all the 23 PGDs and 1 Clinical Protocol on 1 document.This document can be found [here](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=b57e6495d2&e=3e5221b889). The document is at the bottom of the page. |

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| SSP's |

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| **Serious shortage protocols (SSP’s)**SSPs are a potential way to help pharmacies to manage any serious shortages of medicines that may occur, without needing to refer patients back to prescribers.Please ensure all your team are aware of the current SSP’s in force currently. More information is available [here](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=c6a5aaee2e&e=3e5221b889) |

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| **Local Services & Information** |

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| Key Contacts |

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| **Pharmacy First Key Contacts - BNSSG Pharmacies Only**Please find the updated list of key contacts for BNSSG.We suggest you print a copy and keep ensure that the pharmacy team including Locums know where it is.[Click here.](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=b75e198c5f&e=3e5221b889) |

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| Oral Contraception Service |

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| **NHSE Contraception Service Notification for 3 local GP practices**Community Pharmacy Avon have created a simple template on PharmOutcomes to help your pharmacy inform 3 of your local GP practices that you can now provide both the initiation and continuing supply of oral contraception. Once you have pharmacists who are ready to complete the service AND you have visibility of the  contraception service on PharmOutcomes please use this quick and easy form to notify your GP practices that you are live. |

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| Contact Information - BSW |

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| **BSW  Pharmacies only - updated key contact information**Key Local Contact Information is available [here](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=b2270b88cd&e=3e5221b889) – please be aware that some of these contacts are not public facing.   |

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| **Training - VirtualOutcomes** |

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| Avon is very lucky to have access to VirtualOutcomes online training, please have a look and make use of this valuable resource.Please see below for details of the most recent training module  |

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| [**Click here for VirtualOutcomes**](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=3c575f0850&e=3e5221b889) |

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| **Training** |

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| Technicians |

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| **Community Pharmacy Technicians**Training options are available for those who are newly qualified or returning to learning, or for those looking for further professional development to deliver more services.[Please click here for more information](https://avonlpc.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4c41af9cdb2c8602a37b9d52d&id=7271b9b075&e=3e5221b889) |

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