

Planning to provide COVID-19 vaccinations in community pharmacies in England

24th February 2021

There are many considerations for providing COVID-19 vaccinations in a community pharmacy, including the contractual requirements set out in the [NHSE&I Enhanced service specification](#). This document provides some of the questions contractors should answer before applying to provide this service.

Pharmacy premises

- **Pre-arrival information for patients:**
 - How will you ensure patients receive appropriate information in advance, so their vaccination experience is positive and efficient, e.g. provision of pharmacy location details, parking arrangements, process on arrival, and advice on what to / what not to bring to the appointment?
- **Queue management outside the pharmacy:**
 - What is the local parking situation for an anticipated increase in footfall?
 - How are early arrivals managed?
 - If patients are queuing outside the pharmacy how are they separated from 'normal' patient footfall, other high street footfall and protected from the weather?
- **Managing social distancing inside the pharmacy:**
 - Will existing fixtures and fittings need to be removed or relocated to support social distancing and flow of patients?
 - How are patients guided into the pharmacy whilst maintaining social distancing?
 - How are patients successfully guided through the pathway from entrance, to vaccination and then the exit?
 - If there is a clinical decision to observe the patient following vaccination, where can this happen?
 - What considerations are needed for additional site security?
- **Providing vaccinations**
 - How are normal pharmaceutical services maintained, does the pharmacy have a second consultation room or space for a temporary private area?
 - How are appropriate infection control procedures maintained, e.g. adequate hand washing / sanitising facilities?
 - Is there adequate space for sharps boxes and associated clinical waste immediately post vaccination?
 - Is there adequate space for waste storage, away from public access, pending collection?
 - Have you reviewed your regular cleaning routines and the frequency of these to manage the infection control and prevention risks of increased footfall?
- **Vaccine storage**
 - How are vaccines secured to prevent security issues, e.g. stored in a locked fridge or in a fridge in a locked room?
 - How is the cold chain maintained?
 - Is there adequate room in current fridges to receive and store vaccines?

Workforce and clinical governance

- **Legal mechanisms**
 - What [legal mechanism](#) will be used to provide vaccinations – PGD or National Protocol (or a combination)?
 - What are your staffing plans for provision of the service?
 - Are all staff clear on the requirements and individual responsibilities under the different legal mechanisms in use?
- **Training**
 - Are all staff trained appropriately and evidence of this is available upon request?
 - Do all team members understand the process, patient flows and are able to support the vaccination process if needed?

- How will updates (new clinical information, operational changes, learnings etc.) be communicated to all team members?
- **Teamwork**
 - Do all team members understand the service and requirements?
 - If temporary staff or volunteers are being used, how will they be best used and integrated into the wider team?
 - What considerations have been given to consider staff workload and pressures?
- **Accountability**
 - Is there clarity in each pharmacy – who is the Responsible Pharmacist?
 - Is there clarity on the responsibilities of all team members (particularly if there are 2 pharmacists on site)?
 - What processes are in place to protect against staff shortages, e.g. self-isolation, sickness?
 - Have the likely PPE needs of all staff been determined? Where will this be stored?
- **Workforce**
 - How have staff workloads and pressures been considered and mitigated?
 - Have sufficient breaks (mental and physical) been included in rotas?
 - What additional wellbeing support is available and do team members know how to access this?
 - Have holidays/annual leave been accounted for in rotas and workforce needs?

Managing patients

- **Patient information and records**
 - Where will the team check patients in for their appointment, confirm patient eligibility (where required) and obtain additional patient information required before vaccination? Which team members will do this?
 - Which team members will complete the clinical record of the vaccination and where will this be done?
- **Appointments**
 - Have the appointment times been decided?
 - Who will be responsible for updating the National Booking System (NBS) with appointment slots and other relevant information?
 - What steps can be taken to minimise the potential for wasted vaccine?

Governance and business continuity

- **Insurance**
 - Is the necessary insurance in place?
 - How will you maintain appropriate records of the staff providing or supporting vaccination?
- **Standard Operating Procedures**
 - Have you reviewed the [NHSE&I SOP](#) for vaccination sites and considered its practical application at the site? How will you review operations against the SOP?
 - Have you reviewed the [SPS SOPs](#) for handling COVID-19 vaccines and considered their practical application at the site? How will you review the appropriate handling and management of COVID-19 vaccines to ensure that the safety, quality and efficacy of the vaccine is not compromised?
- **Business/service continuity**
 - Have business continuity plans been updated to include the COVID-19 vaccination service?
 - How will you alert local pharmacies (and others) regarding the vaccination site?
 - Are all future staff (e.g. locums) aware of the service and any requirements this may place on them?

Providing pharmaceutical care

- **Maintaining normal care**
 - Is there clarity on the shared and separate responsibilities of the team(s)?
 - Is there any equipment that will need to be shared and how is equal access to this ensured?