

Issue 05/15
November 2015

December 26th is a Normal Working Day

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Just to remind contractors with opening hours on Saturdays that December 26th is a Normal Working Day. As, indeed, are December 24th and December 31st.

If you **do not** usually open on Saturdays you can stop reading this now.

If you **do** usually open on Saturdays and you will be opening as usual on Saturday 26th December, you can stop reading this now.

OK, have they gone? Can we get on with the complicated bits?

If you usually have **supplementary** hours on Saturdays you had to **notify** NHS England if you were planning to close on 26th December by 26th September.

If you did this you can **close** on 26th December, if you **did not** do this you will have to **open** on 26th December.

If you have **core** hours on Saturdays you had to **apply** to NHS England if you wished to close (or change hours) on 26th December by 26th September, giving reasons why you thought the needs of the population would be different on that day. NHS England had to consider this within 30 days of your application, and notify you of their decision, in writing, and giving you details of how to appeal that decision. **If you have not received that written notification, including details of how to appeal the decision, we strongly advise you to contact NHS England and record any correspondence.** Our understanding is that NHS England has not written to contractors on this matter within the timescales in the regulations. You may want to look at what the FHS litigation authority determined in similar cases SHA 17608, SHA 17610, SHA 17611, SHA 17612 (and others).

Essex LPC is not able to give legal advice, however we would be very willing to support any contractor who may find themselves subject to a breach notice if they have evidence that they applied to NHS England in good time, and did not receive a written notice of their determination including details of how to appeal that decision.



For calendar events and local pharmacy forum meetings visit www.essexlpc.org.uk



An Inspector Calls



As part of the new approach to inspection, the GPhC is carrying out some unannounced inspection visits, and we are aware that at least three Essex pharmacies have had such a visit in the past few weeks.

Essex LPC asked the first of these, Simmi Sood from Village pharmacy in Doddinghurst, how the experience was for her, and what advice she would want to pass on to other contractors.

Simmi said that at first it came as a bit of a shock, particularly as it was supposed to be her day off. She said that the inspector seemed quite supportive, and was encouraging Simmi to promote what the pharmacy did well and to “sell the positives”, rather than looking for things that were wrong. There was a strong focus on record keeping, such as evidence of staff training; and on being honest where there were gaps, rather than trying to cover them up. Once Simmi’s adrenaline levels had returned to normal, she said it was probably better than an announced visit, because there wasn’t the stress beforehand, and she could feel proud that her pharmacy had come through the process well, without any special treatment.

We have also spoken to a couple of other contractors who have had unannounced inspection visits, one was surprised at the level of detail the inspector went into regarding premises, such as temperature monitoring and compliance with Health and Safety legislation. Another had been caught out with a common problem, in that the inspector asked staff how they performed certain tasks and then compared this to what was written in the SOP folder. The contractor had bought a suite of SOPs from an outside provider and had not adapted them to what actually happened in his pharmacy.

Simmi was already working through the NPA Preparing for Inspection guide, and said this had probably contributed to the positive experience. If you haven’t had an inspection recently you might want to look at this, or the various GPhC guides available. There is also a recording of the “Inspecting community pharmacy” webinar available on the GPhC website, which is worth 38 minutes of your time. Key messages are to brief the whole team, focus on your positives, be honest about any shortcomings and don’t panic!



The CPAF Survey

Very well done to the 331 (out of 336) pharmacies in Essex that completed the Community Pharmacy Assurance Framework (CPAF) survey during October, although we didn’t beat Norfolk on percentage we easily outstripped them on total numbers, and a bit of healthy competition is good.

As the number of non-responders is quite low both locally and nationally it is likely that NHS England will request full CPAF returns from these pharmacies, with a view to conducting monitoring visits.

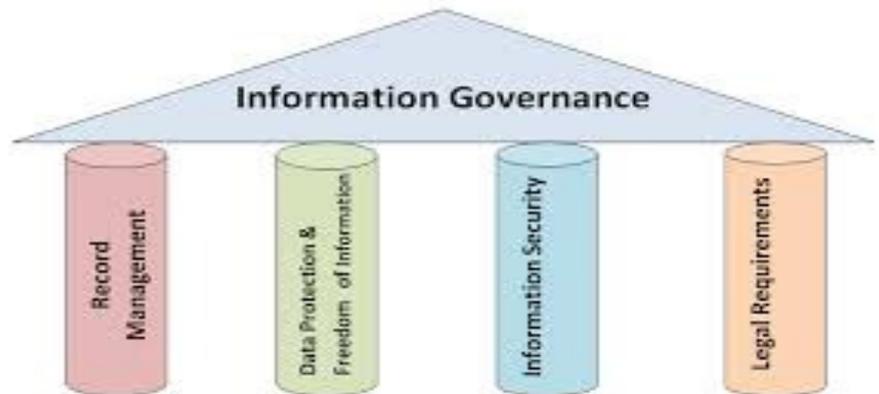
Essex LPC is always happy to attend any monitoring or performance management visit to support contractors, and we can usually help in negotiating action plans and drafting responses. If you ever need such support please contact us in confidence as early in the



For all the latest news, updates and event details, please look at our website www.essexlpc.org.uk

The Show Must Go On

Each year pharmacy contractors are required to complete the Information Governance toolkit, and up until now there has been an exemption from the requirements relating to Business Continuity Planning (BCP). The exemption has not been applied this year, and so you must assume you will need to complete a BCP: However, it is probably a useful thing to have anyway. We have had a couple of quiet winters weather-wise and 'flu-wise, but it doesn't take much of a snow-dump for the entire county to grind to a halt.



We will be focusing on this straight after Christmas, meanwhile you may want to look at the template and checklist on the PSNC website

<http://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/essential-service-clinical-governance/emergency-planning/>

We would strongly recommend that you delegate the checklist to someone as far as possible, as the Business Continuity Plan has to stand up even if you can't!

And one small request. IG toolkit results are now published, so your customers, any commissioners, patients and GP practices can check whether or not your pharmacy is IG compliant: **Please don't leave it until 31st March!**

Primary Care Support England

NHS England have outsourced the Primary Care Support (also known as "contractor services" or "Family Health Services") nationally to Capita. This happened back in July, but until now has not really affected community pharmacy in Essex. The aim is to be more "efficient" by centralising many of the functions and having one Customer Support Centre. We have attended two presentations and it is clear that they see pharmacy as one of their more "low volume, high speciality" services.

The first change you will notice in the coming months is the supplies function, which is due to change in March. PCSE/Capita will contact all pharmacies and set you up on a supplies ordering system for things like EPS tokens, FP57 forms and other stationery and supplies. The preferred option will be for online ordering, although the option to order by phone, fax or carrier pigeon will remain for a while at least. Although we wouldn't wish to encourage stock-piling, just bear in mind that there may be some "settling in" in March/April.

The next major change will be the administration around Market Entry, including contract applications, relocations, changes to core hours, fitness to practise etc. This is currently due to change early in 2017. All paperwork and administrative processes will be managed centrally, although decision making will still happen locally.

There are also changes about things like payments for locally commissioned services (where they exist!).

We are on the User Panel for the new service, so we should be well placed to give you advanced warning as the changes come in.

Banana Skins!



We are still awaiting the results (don't hold your breath) from the national contractual audit which (most of) you completed at Easter: this was to look at the number of emergency requests for and supplies of medicines that pharmacies have to manage over weekend and holiday periods. NHS England appear to be supportive of a commissioned emergency supply service from pharmacies, however, this would have to be commissioned and funded by CCGs (again, don't hold your breath). Meanwhile, as we enter the winter and holiday period we would like to remind you that **there is no legal framework for making "loans" to patients against future prescriptions.**

If a patient makes a request for an emergency supply, you really need to treat it as such, including appropriate labelling and recording of the supply. We know that you have the patient's best interests in mind, but you really do have to consider charging patients: bear in mind that there is no guarantee that a prescription will be forthcoming unless the request has been made by the prescriber.

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, GPhC are conducting unannounced inspection visits across Essex: Don't slip up by making unlawful supplies of prescription only medicines.

Banana Skins 2!

We have been advised that a neighbouring NHS England contracts team have **issued breach notices** to pharmacies who have failed to follow regulations with regard to changes to the directors and/or superintendent pharmacist. You need to notify NHS England within 30 days of appointment that you have a new director or a new superintendent, and to undertake Fitness to Practise declarations if necessary. If you think this might apply to your pharmacy we recommend that you get the notification in as soon as possible, the form is available on our website at http://www.essexlpc2.org.uk/webfm_send/1480



We know that NHS England are strapped for cash at the moment: Don't slip up on a simple matter of paperwork.

Essex LPC Meeting Dates 2016



27th January

16th March

25th May

20th July

28th September

23rd November



Essex LPC Open Meeting



“Do they know it’s Christmas?” Winter planning

The afternoon session of the November 2015 Essex LPC meeting was an open meeting. The theme was winter planning, and we were really pleased to have guests from Living Safe and Well, Provide, NHS England, Essex County Council, two of our CCGs and Open Road.

Discussions were on four subject areas:

Services over the Holiday Period
Business Continuity, especially in Severe Weather
Managing Demand by Keeping Well
Avoiding Hospital Admissions

On each topic we tried to think what we could do this year, with the time and resources we have now, and what we could work towards in future years. These were noted on gift tags, and hung from the Christmas tree: We wanted to think of them as our Christmas presents next year.

Our “quick wins” for this year

Ensure pharmacies are aware of changes to other services’ opening hours over the holidays. We hope to get an updated list of out of hours providers, including dentists, and contact details and opening times for all other services over the 2-week holiday period out to you shortly.

Leave an emergency contact number on the pharmacy answering machine when the pharmacy is closed. That way people can get hold of you if there is sudden severe weather and you can’t get in to work.

Provide self-care advice/signpost to self care website that includes information on how long patients can expect symptoms of common minor winter ailments to last. If patients know that a cough can last for 2 weeks and a sore throat for 7 days they are less likely to use up GP time unnecessarily. Try <http://www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets/>
Hospital Discharge NMS/MURs to try and minimise hospital readmissions. Basildon and Colchester hospitals are both promoting these to some extent, get in touch with us if you want more information on domiciliary and telephone MURs.

We will reveal what was on the gift tags in later newsletters (we couldn’t possibly open them before Christmas after all!).

The dates for next year’s LPC meetings are on page 4 of this newsletter. If you would like something raised for discussion at these meetings please contact your local representative OR the LPC office at least one week before the meeting date.

All Change In Tendring

We are sad to see Emma Nicholson leave the LPC as a CCA member for Tendring. Emma was nominated to the committee in April 2014, but has moved on to do other things: Good luck Emma, and thank-you for your contributions.

We are delighted to welcome Mikey Donnachie from Rowlands in Jaywick to take her place, we will try and persuade him to release a photo and some biographical information before our next newsletter!

For all the latest news, updates and event details, please look at our website www.essexlpc.org.uk



We're on the Web

www.essexlpc.org.uk

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Dates For The Diary

Tuesday 26th January 2016

South East Essex Forum Meeting

Venue: TBA

Start: 7pm

Tuesday 2nd February 2016

Mid Essex Forum Meeting

Venue: TBA

Start: 7pm

Wednesday 3rd February 2016

North East Essex Forum Meeting

Venue: TBA

Start: 7pm

Thursday 4th February 2016

West Essex Forum Meeting

Venue:

Start: 7pm

Wednesday 10th February 2016

South West Essex Forum Meeting

Venue:

Start: 7pm

**For dates of other meetings in 2016,
please refer to www.essexlpc.org.uk**

