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Welcome

As we approach the one year anniversary of the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, our thoughts and sympathies are with all those that have suffered and lost loved ones to this dreadful disease. It is also an opportunity for us to reflect on what has been a very challenging time for the whole of community pharmacy, and to pause to appreciate how much hard work and dedication all our pharmacy teams have put in over the last 12 months. It is a great testament to our teams that, despite the difficulties, our pharmacies have been open and available throughout, ensuring that their patients receive the medicines and healthcare advice they need.

I'm pleased to say that the invaluable service you provide is now being more widely recognised and appreciated, and your LPC is keen to spread that message even more widely. To that end, we are organising a "Community Pharmacy Hero" Award to recognise some of your incredible work. If you have a "good news story" about a Berkshire or Oxfordshire community pharmacy team (or a particular individual within it), please let us have the [details here](#) (and please feel free to share the link with your patients, GPs, Healthwatches, etc). We are looking for brief details of that act of kindness or one of the many examples of someone "going the extra mile". You have until 31st March to get your nominations in, when a panel will pick a winner from each county to receive an award and £200 prize. We will also be using the awards as an opportunity to reach out to local media to further raise the profile of community pharmacy in our area.



As always, there is a lot going on, and to help support you we are rolling out more training. This month we will focus on PQS Part 2 and the criteria for claiming the maximum points available to you. In March we will be running webinars on GP CPCS, which will start to go live in a phased roll-out across the Thames Valley Area, to ensure you are aware of the service requirements and process for claiming your £300 set-up fee. Then in April we will run training sessions on the new Discharge Medicine Service (DMS) which, again, will start to be rolled out at a hospital near you over the coming months. Now that HLP is part of CPCF, we have also partnered with HEE to secure 97 fully-funded places on Pharmacy Complete's Health Champion course (more details on page 4). Don't miss this great opportunity to upskill your team. Do get in touch with me, Kevin or Amanda (by email, phone or the Signal Group) if you have any comments, issues or queries - we are here to help.

David Dean, Chief Officer

Community Pharmacy Hero Awards

Nominate the Thames Valley Community Pharmacy team member (or whole team) that you would like to see recognised at:

app.involve.me/ptv/hero



An Update from our Contractor Support Officer



I have been employed by the LPC for almost a year now and what a year it has been! Whilst there have been many high and lows over the past 11 months, the two major highlights were the incredible commitment of our teams that meant our pharmacies remained open throughout the pandemic, and the tremendous success of the pharmacy flu programme.

Against all the odds, and when everyone else either closed their doors or moved online (for everything from consultations to shopping), community pharmacies stayed open. Yes, we did make some adjustments (restricting the number of patients allowed in our pharmacies or reducing hours during lockdown 1), but we continued to provide all the services that we could. This commitment has raised the profile of community pharmacy and your hard work is finally starting to be appreciated.

With regard to flu, Thames Valley pharmacies achieved a fantastic 77% increase in vaccinations (as at 6th February 2021) and are still vaccinating. In the East Berkshire CCG area, pharmacies almost doubled the number of vaccinations provided in the previous year and hopefully will be challenging Berkshire West in total numbers vaccinated in 2021/22.

Elsewhere, the Pharmacy Quality Scheme (PQS) is now in its last full month with claiming to be completed by the 1st March 2021 - don't leave it too late to claim! I have already started to receive submission forms for PQS Part 2.

Many thanks to those who managed to complete the PSNC Pharmacy Advice Audit. Whilst I believe in offering fantastic patient care, if we continue doing too many tasks for free we may not be around in a few years to provide it. We lost 9 pharmacies last year in Oxfordshire so, with this in mind, we need to review everything we do in pharmacy and make those hard business decisions about which services are financially viable going forward.

Whilst GP CPCS has been launched nationally, it needs to be supported by the local CCGs and GPs. During the current phase of the Covid pandemic, and given the current GP workload, the CCGs have decided not to launch the service until later in the year (I can hear you say that GP CPCS would help and support GPs!). Whilst this is disappointing, please make sure that your pharmacy team is fully trained and ready for when GP CPCS is launched. There is a very good training pack on [Virtual Outcomes](#) which every pharmacy across the LPC has access to free via their ODS code.

The LPC has also been working with the 3 CCGs to agree to a process regarding MCAs. Whilst the work has not yet been finalised, the committee felt it was important that we make our position known to the CCGs and all contractors, and so have published a statement which is available [on our website](#). It is important that all community pharmacies do regular assessments of their MCA patients under the Equality Act 2021, as it may be that some can be transferred to original packs following patient and GP consultations.

In summary, a huge thank you to all our pharmacies for their hard work and commitment this year. To ensure we can continue to be here for our patients going forward we need to review everything we do to ensure it is financially viable.

As always, if you need any support or advice please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kevin Barnes, Contractor Support Officer

Ask for ANI

The Home Office has launched the Ask for ANI codeword scheme to enable victims of domestic abuse to discreetly request immediate help from the police or other support services from the safety of their local pharmacy. As part of the scheme, you will be required to ensure that staff are familiar with the training information provided. The training resources include a short video and two guidance documents on adopting the scheme and responding to the codeword.



To sign up, please [click here](#) or to access the training and promotional materials, [click here](#).

Hepatitis C Testing



If your pharmacy has expressed an interest in offering the NHS England Community Pharmacy Testing Service for Hepatitis C, or if you feel that, prior to commencing the programme, you and your team would benefit from either a phone conversation or meeting with one of the Thames Valley Hepatology Team, they would be very happy to arrange this. Also, if you have any questions about the referral pathway or treatment options, they would also be able to discuss this with you. Please feel free to contact them on orh-tr.hcvoxcommunity@nhs.net.

Smartcard Self-Unlocking



If you have not already done so, do sign up for the self-service Smartcard unlocking service. You can register on the portal using your nhs.net email address. For step-by-step instructions [click here](#).

Healthwatch East Berkshire



To provide a coordinated approach, from now on Healthwatch Slough, Healthwatch Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead, and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest will be working together for everyone across East Berkshire. This move includes creating a new single phone number for all three organisations 0300 0120184 (10am to 4pm) and appointing a Healthwatch East Berkshire Manager, Rachel Stanton, who can be contacted on rachel.stanton@healthwatchhampshire.co.uk.

Smoking Cessation



No Smoking Day is on the 10th March this year, with the message - "Quitting smoking doesn't have to be stressful." Using NRT can increase the chance of successful quitting by up to 1.5 times by helping smokers to manage their cravings. Being one of the main sources of NRT, and having hundreds of conversations with customers a day, pharmacies can play a central role in helping quitters. To support pharmacists in having those conversations with customers, Oxfordshire Public Health have commissioned a series of free one hour online training sessions which you can [book here](#).

Physical Activity in Clinical Care



Public Health England's are offering free online Physical Activity in Clinical Care Training for healthcare professionals.

This training is delivered by a PHE Physical Activity Clinical Champion. You'll learn more about the benefits of physical activity, current CMO guidelines, how to provide brief advice during consultations and signposting. CPD certificates are provided. Plus hear from your local Active Partnerships about local physical activity opportunities.

Training is being held on Zoom on the following dates:

Thursday 4th March, 1-2pm - [click here to book](#); Tuesday 9th March, 1-2pm - [click here to book](#)

Achieve Oxfordshire



Achieve Oxfordshire is a free weight management service for the county. If you have patients looking for nutrition education, Slimming World or WW vouchers, or a male-only group, Achieve Oxfordshire can help. Courses are currently running via video calls, and Achieve Oxfordshire are still taking new referrals. More information is available at: www.achieveoxfordshire.org.uk.

Health Champion Training



The CPCF requires that, with effect from 1st January 2021, all pharmacies meet HLP requirements, which includes having at least one RSPH Level 2 qualified Health Champion. To support contractors in achieving this criterion, the LPC have partnered with HEE and Pharmacy Complete, to secure a number of fully funded Health Champion training places, which will be offered on a first come, first served basis.

The Health Champion role should be undertaken by a member of the public-facing healthcare team, usually a Healthcare or Medicines Counter Assistant. Enrolled learners will be sent an engaging workbook and information to complete their self-directed training and assessment. This includes access to an online mock assessment ahead of requesting the full invigilator pack. The RSPH assessment is paper-based and taken in the pharmacy, invigilated by a GPhC registrant. Funded places are limited to one team member per pharmacy. For full details and information on how to signup [click here](#).

CPPE Training



As all CPPE training is now delivered online, there is a national delivery programme rather than localised regional events. This means more flexibility of delivery, a much wider choice of topics, and a bigger range of dates available. The Spring/Summer Programme includes: COPD, Dementia, Deprescribing, Emergency Contraception, Asthma, Consultation Skills, Medicines Optimisation in Care Homes, the Mental Capacity Act, NHS CPCS, Antimicrobial Stewardship, Falls Prevention, Depression and Neurology & Dementia.

The Spring/Summer Programme can be [downloaded here](#), or visit the CPPE web site at www.cppe.ac.uk.

Upcoming Events



For details of these and all our events visit: www.pharmacythamesvalley.org.uk/our-events/

Date	Event	Audience	Venue
19.30-20.30, 17/2/2021	PQS Part 2 Webinar	Pharmacists	Online
19.30-20.30, 17/2/2021	PSNC/Pharmacist Support Wellbeing Workshop	Pharmacy Teams	Online
19.30-20.30, 10/3/2021	GP CPCS Set-Up Webinar	Pharmacists	Online
19.30-20.30, 17/3/2021	GP CPCS Set-Up Webinar	Pharmacists	Online
19.30-20.30, 29/3/2021	PSNC/Pharmacist Support Wellbeing Workshop	Pharmacy Teams	Online

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