

NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework

Enhanced Service – Emergency Hormonal Contraception Service

1. Service description

- 1.1 Pharmacists will supply Levonorgestrel Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) when appropriate to clients in line with the requirements of a locally agreed Patient Group Direction (PGD)¹. The PGD will specify the age range of clients that are eligible for the service; it may facilitate supply to young persons under 16 in appropriate circumstances.
- 1.2 Pharmacies will offer a user-friendly, non-judgmental, client-centred and confidential service.
- 1.3 The supply will be made free of charge to the client at NHS expense.
- 1.4 Pharmacists will link into existing networks for community contraceptive services so that women who need to see a doctor can be referred on rapidly.
- 1.5 Clients excluded from the PGD criteria will be referred to another local service that will be able to assist them, as soon as possible, e.g. GP, community contraception service, or will be invited to purchase the Pharmacy medicine product if the exclusion from supply via the PGD is only due to an administrative matter, e.g. age range determined by the commissioner².
- 1.6 The pharmacy will provide support and advice to clients accessing the service, including advice on the avoidance of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) through safer sex and condom use, advice on the use of regular contraceptive methods and provide onward signposting to services that provide long-term contraceptive methods and diagnosis and management of STIs.

2. Aims and intended service outcomes

- 2.1 To increase the knowledge, especially among young people, of the availability of emergency contraception³ and contraception from pharmacies.
- 2.2 To improve access to emergency contraception and sexual health advice.
- 2.3 To increase the use of EHC by women who have had unprotected sex and help contribute to a reduction in the number of unplanned pregnancies in the client group.
- 2.4 To refer clients, especially those from hard to reach groups, into mainstream contraceptive services.
- 2.5 To increase the knowledge of risks associated with STIs.
- 2.6 To refer clients who may have been at risk of STIs to an appropriate service.
- 2.7 To strengthen the local network of contraceptive and sexual health services to help ensure easy and swift access to advice.

3. Service outline

- 3.1 The part of the pharmacy used for provision of the service provides a sufficient level of privacy (ideally at the level required for the provision of the Medicines Use Review service⁴) and safety and meets other locally agreed criteria.

¹ Example PGDs are available on the National Electronic Library for Medicines PGD portal: www.nelm.nhs.uk.

² EHC is available for sale in pharmacies as a Pharmacy medicine only in compliance with the requirements of the marketing authorisation for the over the counter product.

³ Emergency contraception methods are not limited to EHC and include the use of Intra-uterine devices (IUDs). Though this service would only supply EHC, it would raise awareness of other methods of emergency contraception that are available and facilitate access to these.

⁴ The requirements for consultation areas are detailed in The Pharmaceutical Services (Advanced and Enhanced Services) (England) Directions 2005 as amended (www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/10/75/97/04107597.pdf)

- 3.2 A service will be provided that assesses the need and suitability for a client to receive EHC, in line with the PGD⁵. Where appropriate a supply will be made; where a supply of EHC is not appropriate, advice and referral to another source of assistance, if appropriate, will be provided. Clients who have exceeded the time limit for EHC will be informed about the possibility of use of an IUD and should be referred to a local service as soon as possible.
- 3.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria, which are detailed in the PGD, will be applied during provision of the service. The Summary of Product Characteristics should be consulted when service documentation is being developed (www.medicines.org.uk).
- 3.4 The service will be provided in compliance with Fraser guidance⁶ and Department of Health guidance on confidential sexual health advice and treatment for young people aged under 16⁷.
- 3.5 The service protocols should reflect national and local child and vulnerable adult protection guidelines⁸.
- 3.6 Verbal and written advice on the avoidance of STIs and the use of regular contraceptive methods, including advice on the use of condoms⁹, will be provided to the client. This should be supplemented by a referral to a service that can provide treatment and further advice and care.
- 3.7 The pharmacy contractor has a duty to ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service have relevant knowledge and are appropriately trained in the operation of the service, including sensitive, client centred communication skills. This may be facilitated by the provision of local training by the PCO.
- 3.8 The pharmacy contractor has a duty to ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of and operate within local protocols.
- 3.9 The pharmacy must maintain appropriate records to ensure effective ongoing service delivery and audit. Records will be confidential and should be stored securely and for a length of time in line with local NHS record retention policies.
- 3.10 Pharmacists may need to share relevant information with other health care professionals and agencies, in line with locally determined confidentiality arrangements, including, where appropriate, the need for the permission of the client to share the information.
- 3.11 The PCO should arrange at least one contractor meeting per year to promote service development and update pharmacy staff with new developments, knowledge and evidence.
- 3.12 The PCO will need to provide a framework for the recording of relevant service information for the purposes of audit and the claiming of payment.
- 3.13 The PCO will need to provide up to date details of other services which pharmacy staff can use to refer service users who require further assistance. The information should include the location, hours of opening and services provided by each service provider. Details of services for young people can be obtained from the local Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator.

⁵ Commissioners may wish to consider the inclusion of pregnancy testing as part of the service.

⁶ Fraser Guidelines – based on a House of Lords Ruling; A health professional can give advice or treatment to a person under 16 without parental consent providing they are satisfied that;

- The young person will understand the advice;
- The young person cannot be persuaded to tell his or her parents or allow the doctor to tell them that they are seeking contraceptive advice;
- The young person is likely to begin or continue having unprotected sex with or without contraceptive treatment; and
- The young person's physical or mental health is likely to suffer unless he or she receives contraceptive advice or treatment.

⁷ Guidance available at www.dh.gov.uk/sexualhealth.

⁸ The cross government guidance on child protection, Working Together to Safeguard Children, should be referred to and is available at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/workingtogether

⁹ Commissioners may wish to consider the inclusion of condom supply as part of the service and the integration of participating pharmacies into the local Chlamydia screening programme.

- 3.14 The PCO will be responsible for the promotion of the service locally, including the development of publicity materials, which pharmacies can use to promote the service to the public.
- 3.15 The PCO will be responsible for the provision of health promotion material, including leaflets on EHC, long-term contraception and STIs to pharmacies.

4. Suggested Quality Indicators

- 4.1 The pharmacy has appropriate PCO provided health promotion material available for the client group, actively promotes its uptake and is able to discuss the contents of the material with the client, where appropriate.
- 4.2 The pharmacy reviews its standard operating procedures and the referral pathways for the service on an annual basis.
- 4.3 The pharmacy participates in an annual PCO organised audit of service provision.
- 4.4 The pharmacy co-operates with any locally agreed PCO-led assessment of service user experience.
- 4.5 Pharmacists and appropriate support staff attend a PCO organised update meeting each year.

Background information – not part of the service specification

Reducing the under-18 conception rate by 50% by 2010 is a Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills Public Service Agreement.

All areas have agreed 2010 local reduction targets for under 18 conception rates.

Choosing Health Through Pharmacy A programme for pharmaceutical Public Health, published in April 2005 encourages PCTs to consider commissioning sexual health services through pharmacy, including access to EHC, condoms and signposting to appropriate sources of advice and support, particularly in disadvantaged areas

CPPE training which may support this service:

Emergency Hormonal Contraception Open Learning Pack
Emergency Hormonal Contraception Workshop
Sexual Health: testing and treating Open Learning Pack
Sexual Health: testing and treating Workshop
Contraception Open Learning Pack
Child Protection: a guide for the pharmacy team Open Learning Pack