

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Communications and Public Affairs (CPA) Subcommittee Agenda
Wednesday 13th May 2020 at 7pm
Meeting to be held remotely via Zoom

Members: David Broome, Jas Heer, Tricia Kennerley (Chair), Clare Kerr, Fin McCaul, Jay Patel, Prakash Patel, Stephen Thomas.

1. Welcome from Chair
2. Apologies for absence
3. Conflicts or declarations of interest
4. Minutes of the last meeting

Action

5. Planning and CPA Objectives **Appendix 02/05/2020**
6. PSNC Policy Asks **Appendix 03/05/2020**
7. COVID-19 Communications and Public Affairs Wash-Up **Appendix 04/05/2020**

Report

8. Pharmacy Communications during COVID-19 **Appendix 05/05/2020**
9. Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs during COVID-19 **Appendix 06/05/2020**
10. Digital Communications Report **Appendix 07/05/2020**
11. Any other business

Subject	Planning and CPA Objectives
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not Confidential
Overview	Reviewing plans for PSNC's communications and public affairs work in 2020.
Proposed action(s)	Discuss and agree revised plans for 2020.
Author(s) of the paper	Zoe Long

Communications and CPA Objectives

Background and Agreed Subcommittee Workplan for 2020

In February 2020 the subcommittee considered communications and public affairs plans for 2020 – these can be seen in [Appendix CPA 02/02/2020](#). The plans set out how we would meet the subcommittee’s objectives for the year which were set as:

- Ensure that contractors understand the work that PSNC does and the value of it. This will include work to ensure that all PSNC subcommittees are communicating effectively.
- Improve contractor understanding of the environment in which they are working and of how pharmacy funding works at a macro level.
- Build the media profiles of both PSNC and community pharmacy to help promote the sector.
- Carry out a strategic influencing programme to improve policy makers’ perceptions and ambitions for the sector.
- Improve understanding and coverage of our core messages about the need to protect pharmacies, and their potential and value.
- Enhance collaborative working arrangements – both with the national pharmacy organisations and LPCs – to ensure that community pharmacy is unified wherever possible.

We need to review some of our specific plans in light of COVID-19, and also consider what activities we now need to take on as a consequence of the pandemic and the impact it is having on the sector.

Communications Plan Changes

We have set out in [Appendix 05/05/2020](#) how we adapted our communications at the beginning of the pandemic, including launching new daily update emails for contractors; the launch of Richard Brown’s LPC Rapid Action Team (RAT) and holding press briefings and contractor webinars. All of these continue for now and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future. This work is contributing to our key communications objectives as agreed in February.

Some of the communications actions that we identified in February have now been paused as follows:

- PSNC Website upgrade: traffic to our website has increased significantly, and we now have a completely new COVID-19 section which is being updated on a daily basis, so with all this going on now does not seem the time to pursue a new website.
- Independent Review: this was paused in May, but Professor Wright now intends to publish his report in June with a virtual PSNC/LPC event to be held in July.
- CPCF One Year On: we had thought that the summer would offer a key opportunity to develop messaging for contractors about the next four years and beyond. These messages will likely now need to be replaced with communications around the ‘restore and recovery’ phase of the pandemic and what we think pharmacy’s ‘new normal’ will look like. This is all subject to PSNC discussions and ongoing negotiations.
- Using case studies to help contractors to engage with the CPCF – we had been working on a plan for this with Pfizer, which could look to update now in light of the pandemic.

We are now restarting work on the Annual Report as planned, as well as continuing to highlight the work that PSNC is going through our CPCF and COVID-19 announcements. We will also continue with the plans to review Community Pharmacy News and PSNC publications; to build on the CEO blog to improve visibility of Committee Members; and to make better use of digital communications.

Public Affairs Plan Changes

In February we agreed on some of our key audiences and how we would engage with them throughout this year. Again, some of our plans have been paused or cancelled as follows:

- GP CPCS Comms Plan: we had planned to begin communicating with GPs to ensure they understand community pharmacy and to promote the extension of referrals to the CPCS. Given the pausing of the CPCS extension and the significant changes that GPs have been through in response to COVID-19 this work has all been paused.
- Hospital Trusts: we had planned to engage with trusts about the Medicines Reconciliation Service which has also been paused. All other communications plans around the service have also been paused.
- Parliamentary Reception: given the closure of Parliament this event was not able to go ahead.
- Charity training: we have had contact with a number of charities in recent weeks but discussions have been focused on the impact of COVID-19, so there has been little appetite for more general updates about community pharmacy.

The RCGP Conference, which we were due to exhibit at in October has been postponed until February 2021. We expect that the political party conferences will also not go ahead in their usual format so have held off any further planning for those yet.

Next Steps and Planning

In addition to the plans outlined above, over the coming weeks our communications and priorities will include:

- Engaging with Parliamentarians to ensure they understand the sector: with so many new MPs in Parliament, and so much change going on in pharmacy, it is vital that we continue to educate MPs as much as possible about the sector. We will need to find new ways to engage MPs digitally, replacing the pharmacy visits that are no longer possible.
- Developing a new APPG workplan: the APPG should be able to support our policy asks and help us to reach a wider group of MPs, so we will work with the other pharmacy organisations and Lexington Communications on a revised plan for them.
- Contractor engagement: with so much more engagement from contractors we need to develop a programme of engaging, digital communications to make the most of this opportunity to educate them better both about funding and about PSNC's vital role.
- GP Communications: we need to review our key messages for GPs and consider how best to get them across to them, and when.
- Public-facing communications: with so many changes in community pharmacy we should consider how to leverage the media to ensure that people understand the value of the sector and why we are making the changes we are making.

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider each of the five next steps outlined above and to give feedback on how they can be achieved and what our key priorities should be.

Subject	PSNC Policy Asks
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not confidential
Overview	A review of PSNC's policy asks.
Proposed action(s)	The subcommittee are asked to review the updated policy asks.
Author(s) of the paper	Zoe Long

PSNC Policy Asks

Introduction and Purpose

In 2019 the subcommittee agreed that PSNC should have a set of policy asks which it would keep under review. These were updated following the five-year agreement on the CCPF and reviewed in February 2020, but now need to be adjusted in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PSNC Policy Asks

The subcommittee reviewed the policy asks in February and an updated version of these is listed below this appendix. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we suggest prioritising the following revised (draft) policy asks over the coming weeks and months:

PSNC believes that community pharmacy needs additional funding to cover the costs of COVID-19 and to maintain current service levels. In particular, we are asking for:

- The £300m cash advance payment to pharmacies to be reconciled, not repaid, to help cover costs associated with COVID-19.
- Provision of additional monies (over and above the global sum) to protect pharmacies, recognising the additional costs brought about by COVID-19 and their unknown duration.
- Fair and transparent long-term funding to give NHS community pharmacy contractors certainty about the future.
- A commitment from the NHS and HM Government to support and safeguard the network of 11,500 community pharmacies, who are at the heart of the local response to this pandemic.

Pharmacies are playing a critical role in the NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic, improving local resilience. PSNC would like to see this role supported with developments to include:

- Clarity from HM Government about the role it wants the network of 11,500 pharmacies to play after the pandemic and in any future crises.
- Continued development of and investment in community pharmacy services, recognising the costs and scale of the new services and achievability in the new environment.
- Access to priority COVID-19 testing for pharmacists and their teams and to sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect frontline staff.
- National commissioning of a range of vaccination services from community pharmacies.
- Community pharmacies to be included in IT systems that fully integrate local health and care records where appropriate permissions are given, including patient consent.
- Changes to allow community pharmacists to generically substitute clinically appropriate medicines where this could reduce NHS costs, and to allow original pack dispensing for all prescribed items.
- A DHSC-endorsed best practice guide to encourage manufacturers and wholesalers to ensure that ordering processes are consistent and as easy as possible for community pharmacy contractors.
- Changes which are fair to all parts of the sector and which allow contractors to free up capacity in the dispensing process.
- Removal of the NHS Prescription Charge for the duration of the pandemic.

Next Steps

Many of these policy asks are likely to be influenced by the discussions that PSNC will have during its May and June meetings. They will need to be kept under regular review and be used to develop key messaging within our briefings to MPs, officials and others.

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider:

- The prioritised policy asks – what amendments or additions are needed?
- Priorities – are any of these more important than others?
- Support – are other organisations well placed to support PSNC in any of these asks?
- Next steps – how else should we be building the case for these asks?

For information only: Policy Asks following February review

The list of policy asks reviewed in February is copied below. Many of these remain relevant or may become so again in the future, so we will keep these under review.

Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework

- Continued development of and investment in community pharmacy services in line with the five-year CPCF agreement, recognising the costs and scale of the new services.
- Investment in community pharmacy services over and above the agreed £2.592bn per annum, to fund the further expansion of clinical services.
- Closer alignment of the CPCF with the GP contract to allow community pharmacies to help GPs with their capacity crisis.
- Development of the CPCF which ensures that all essential services are available and achievable to all contractors.

Pharmacy Funding (including distribution and reimbursement)

- A fair approach, based on costs and value, to funding NHS pharmaceutical services.
- A fair and transparent approach to pharmacy funding distribution that doesn't expose individual pharmacy owners to unreasonable risks.
- Exemption for all healthcare services provided in NHS community pharmacies from VAT on the basis that these are NHS healthcare services.
- Reimbursement of business rate costs for NHS pharmacies (over and above the global sum), recognising that these are healthcare premises and bringing pharmacies in line with General Practice.
- Fair funding for pharmacies to recognise the increasing advice and support they are giving patients walking into pharmacies seeking advice on minor ailments and self-care.

Service Development

- Commissioning of national public health services from community pharmacies, beginning with stop smoking and EHC services.
- National commissioning of a range of vaccination services from community pharmacies.
- National commissioning of the NHS Health Check service from pharmacies, to address the current patchy local commissioning. The service should include greater follow-up support for people who have agreed lifestyle changes following their check, provided by pharmacies.
- National commissioning of services enabling pharmacies to monitor and provide routine management and advice for patients with long-term conditions and on certain long-term medications such as contraceptives.

PCNs and Local Commissioning

- Government should take steps to improve rural pharmaceutical services.
- Collaborative development and joint publication of wider standard service specifications with NHSE&I and Public Health England. These specifications will then support the commissioning of local community pharmacy services by local commissioners.

Integration and Enablers

- Community pharmacies to be included in IT systems that fully integrate local health and care records where appropriate permissions are given, including patient consent.
- Medicines for all patients with long-term conditions should be prescribed via the electronic repeat dispensing service, where this is appropriate for the individual.
- Implementation of consistent IT links between pharmacies and hospitals to support the planned pharmacy Medicines Reconciliation Service.
- Careful introduction of planned legislation around hub and spoke dispensing and supervision to ensure that no parts of the pharmacy sector are unfairly impacted by these changes.
- Changes to make it easier for community pharmacists to support GPs and prescribing eg by becoming independent prescribers.

Medicines Supply

- Changes to allow community pharmacists to generically substitute clinically appropriate medicines where this could reduce NHS costs.
- Changes to allow original pack dispensing for all prescribed items.
- A DHSC-endorsed best practice guide to encourage manufacturers and wholesalers to ensure that ordering processes are consistent and as easy as possible for community pharmacy contractors.
- Changes which are fair to all parts of the sector and which allow contractors to free up capacity in the dispensing process.

Subject	COVID-19 Communications and Public Affairs Wash-Up
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not confidential
Overview	A paper on our COVID-19 communications and public affairs activities.
Proposed action(s)	Reflect on the activities to date and consider future plans.
Author(s) of the paper	Zoe Long

COVID-19 Communications and Public Affairs Wash-Up

Introduction

We have set out in [Appendix 05/05/2020](#) and [Appendix 06/05/2020](#) how we adapted our communications and public affairs work in response to the pandemic.

As subcommittee members will see, this notably included the introduction of new daily emails and sections of the website, and a change in focus of our Parliamentary work, including asking Lexington Communications to switch from APPG activity to wider lobbying on behalf of community pharmacy. While much of this seems to have been successful (we have seen considerably more engagement with our emails and website than previously) it would be useful to consider what we could improve going forwards and in any future crises.

Subcommittee Action

The subcommittee is asked to consider:

- What elements of our COVID-19 contractor communications are working well and what should we continue doing?
- How could we better communicate with contractors during a crisis?
- Are there any suggestions for further improving our communications with LPCs?
- How could we work more closely with the other pharmacy organisations in any future crisis?
- Could we make better use of the pharmacy press in future?
- How could we engage with MPs more effectively during any future crises?

Subject	Pharmacy Communications during COVID-19
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not confidential
Overview	A summary of PSNC's work to try and communicate as effectively as possible with community pharmacy contractors, pharmacy teams and LPCs during the COVID-19 outbreak.
Proposed action(s)	None
Author(s) of the paper	Melinda Mabbutt

Pharmacy Communications during COVID-19

Introduction

This paper gives a summary of PSNC's work to try and communicate as effectively as possible with community pharmacy contractors, pharmacy teams and LPCs during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Changes to the PSNC website

The website is PSNC's primary method of communication, with all information flowing from or to it. It is also our public presence, particularly with events and conferences being cancelled.

Homepage

As the vast majority of work at PSNC diverted to supporting the COVID-19 response, we made a couple of small but significant changes to our website homepage to help prioritise the news and information we were posting.

Firstly, we created a homepage 'button' to direct those looking for information about the outbreak to the most appropriate place. It has been through a few different designs, but the button now looks like this:



Later, we changed the top scrolling news banner on the homepage to 'COVID-19 Updates', instead of the 'CPCF News' category. This helped give prominence to news stories relating to the pandemic.

COVID-19 Hub

PSNC created a dedicated section of its website on the COVID-19 coronavirus. This hub brings together a wide array of useful information, guidance and resources for community pharmacy teams. It is still reviewed on a daily basis and updated as required. The hub's initial landing page has had over 45,000 unique visitors in just March and April.

[Visit PSNC's COVID-19 Hub](#)

The hub can also be reached using the following shortlinks (note, capital letters are not mandatory):

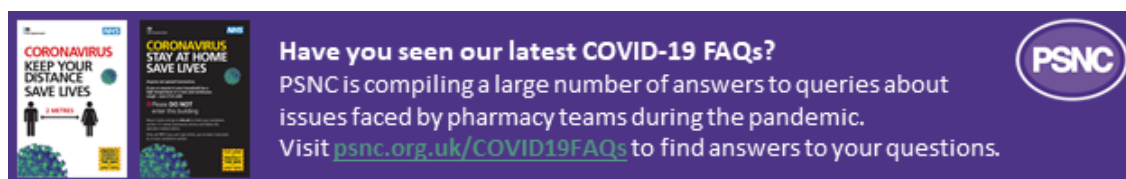
- psnc.org.uk/coronavirus
- psnc.org.uk/COVID-19
- psnc.org.uk/COVID19

FAQs library

Within the COVID-19 Hub, we have created a reference point for the significant number of queries we have answered about the impact of and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been compiled from the queries being asked by contractors, pharmacy teams and LPCs, and they are updated on an almost daily basis. Launched at the end of March, the FAQs webpage has had over 7,000 unique visitors since its launch at the end of March.

[View our COVID-19 FAQs page](#)

Additionally, the promotional banner that automatically appears at the bottom of our website news stories has now been updated to refer to our COVID-19 hub and, specifically, the FAQs page. It looks like this:



Weekly news round-ups

PSNC has begun producing a weekly COVID-19 news round-up. The round-ups are published every Monday and include all the key news and guidance from the previous week. With so much information being sent out during this fast-moving situation, this weekly series aims to help busy pharmacy teams keep track of all the latest COVID-19 updates. Whilst originally created to help LPCs – and many still use this content in their newsletters or on their website – these round-ups are now published in an open access area of our COVID-19 hub.

[View the Key News and Guidance: COVID-19 updates index page](#)

Contractor information

PSNC's primary function is to support and represent community pharmacy contractors. As our key audience, we focussed on providing as much timely information on COVID-19 as we could.

Email series

We launched a daily PSNC update email for community pharmacy teams about the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK for those already signed up to our mailing list. This ensures that news, updates and guidance are sent out as quickly as possible. We have had over 800 new subscribers to the list since launching the emails and seen a 25% increase in our average email open rate.

[View the PSNC email archive](#)

PSNC Negotiations Action List

From the outset, the team at PSNC has been conscious of the need to balance the confidential negotiations with NHS and HM Government against the desire for contractors and their teams to know that action is being taken to support them in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, on 27th March 2020, PSNC published a list of the possible action points that we were in urgent negotiations with the NHS and Government about. There have been almost 1,500 unique views of this PSNC Briefing since its publication.

[Read PSNC Briefing 016/20: COVID-19 Response – PSNC Negotiations Action List](#)

CEO videos and webinar

Conscious of the lack of information we could give in the early days of the outbreak, PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes recorded some videos for the sector to explain the work PSNC was doing behind the scenes to support community pharmacy teams. The videos had over 1,000 views each.

[Watch CEO video message from 23rd March 2020](#)

[Watch the CEO video message from 31st March 2020](#)

On 15th April, Simon hosted a COVID-19 webinar for pharmacy contractors to provide a negotiations update. The webinar covered how PSNC is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including working

with others and negotiating for additional funding for the sector, and Simon answered questions from contractors. A recording was made available for anyone who wasn't able to join live. Over 300 attended live and almost 200 have watched on-demand since. We also used the questions asked on the night as the basis for a series of new FAQs for our library (see above).

[Watch the on-demand version of COVID-19 webinar for pharmacy contractors](#)

CEO blog and CPN magazine

The April 2020 blog from PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes focussed on community pharmacy's role in the COVID-19 response, discussing the pressures that pharmacy teams are under and the financial support needed urgently.

[Read the April 2020 CEO Blog](#)

The April 2020 edition of PSNC's regular Community Pharmacy News (CPN) magazine became a COVID-19 special issue, featuring:

- Plans put in place to support community pharmacy teams through the pandemic;
- Full details on the Pandemic Delivery Service;
- Protections to safeguard the pharmacy workforce; and
- A guide to COVID-19 related payments.

[Read April's CPN magazine](#)

Digital guides

PSNC has published a digital guide to the Pandemic Delivery Service for community pharmacy contractors. The 30-minute video features Alastair Buxton, PSNC's Director of NHS Services, walking contractors through both the changes to the terms of service and the new Advanced service. It had over 700 plays in the first week after publication.

[Watch the Pandemic Delivery Service digital guide](#)

LPC support

Our support for LPCs during this unprecedented situation has been important in helping provide consistent messaging across the community pharmacy network as well as in addressing issues on the ground.

Email updates

The COVID-19 pandemic created a significant amount of work for LPCs as well as pharmacy teams. With that in mind, emails focussed on news that is more relevant to LPC Officers, Members and staff have been sent to those on our LPC mailing list. These have had an average open rate of 43%.

Rapid Action Team

Richard Brown, CEO of Avon LPC, joined the PSNC team on a part-time basis with a focus on helping LPCs in their work to support contractors through the pandemic. Richard launched a COVID-19 Rapid Action Team, which has become an important communication channel between LPCs and PSNC.

This group of 13 LPC Chief Officers – representing every region of England – has been holding virtual meetings twice a week to discuss local issues and hear updates on the national picture. Sometimes they have also been joined by guests from the national pharmacy organisations or NHS England and

NHS Improvement (NHSE&I). The Team has been instrumental in driving forward key issues for community pharmacy contractors by feeding into PSNC's work. The meetings and the associated email group have provided a useful forum to highlight challenges, consider new ways of working, bounce around ideas, and share resources.

Chief Officers webinar

On the afternoon of 15th April, ahead of a contractor webinar, PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes hosted a COVID-19 webinar for LPC Chief Officers. The webinar was an update on negotiations but also outlined PSNC's strategy, looking at how we are working together with LPCs and what we can do to strengthen that going forwards. Representatives from 46 LPCs joined the online event.

Conclusion

This paper has been created just for review; no action is required. However, subcommittee members are welcome to share their feedback or questions on any of the above.

Subject	Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs during COVID-19
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not confidential
Overview	A summary of PSNC's public affairs work and engagement with external stakeholders in recent months.
Proposed action(s)	None
Author(s) of the paper	Jessica Ferguson

Parliamentary Engagement and Public Affairs during COVID-19

Introduction

This paper presents an overview of the public affairs work PSNC has carried out since the last committee meeting, as the COVID-19 outbreak has taken hold.

MP engagement

Parliament broke for an extended Easter recess in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, but despite this, the PSNC team has been working to support LPCs with local MP queries, while also briefing MPs on national matters.

Support for LPCs

LPCs have reported many queries from their local MPs about the community pharmacy response to COVID-19. To help LPCs communicate with their local MPs, PSNC developed a template letter and a key messages document to help inform any discussions. Many LPCs have been in touch to ask for help drafting parliamentary questions for MPs and we are also seeing an increase in written letters to the Minister about support for the sector.

Zoom Meeting with Alex Norris MP

Alex Norris is the Labour MP for Nottingham North and was recently appointed as the Shadow Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care – Jo Churchill's opposite number. PSNC was invited to join a Zoom meeting with Alex and the Nottinghamshire LPC, where we were able to provide an update on the national picture.

PSNC MP engagement

Although there are numerous demands for the attention of MPs at the moment, many are submitting questions about the sector to officials. The following are examples of some of the pharmacy-specific parliamentary questions which have been put to the government:

- Lord Mawson, crossbench peer, asking what percentage of pharmacies in England have received the basic equipment needed to handle safely the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Alexander Stafford, Conservative MP for Rother Valley, asking what plans there are for the future funding of community pharmacies.
- Angela Eagle, Labour MP for Wallasey, asking whether the DHSC will take steps for pharmacists who are dealing with members of the public to be issued protective clothing and equipment.
- Thangam Debbonaire, Labour MP for Bristol West, asking what steps are being taken to ensure that pharmacies do not run out of medical supplies during the COVID-19 crisis.

PSNC has also been in contact with supportive MPs to provide briefing information and key asks for the sector. Now that Parliament has returned from an extended Easter recess, we expect to see more requests for briefings and parliamentary questions and will be continuing to contact MPs ahead of oral question sessions and debates, as well as reactively responding to any queries.

Health and Social Care Select Committee

The Health and Social Care Select Committee held an inquiry into the management of the COVID-19 outbreak, of which the last session took place on 5 May. The sessions have largely covered the national

overarching issues relating to the outbreak, including testing, PPE, and lockdown measures, however pharmacy was directly mentioned in a question on 17 April.

All-Party Pharmacy Group (APPG)

While the APPG is not yet re-registered (as the AGM was not able to be held before Easter recess), Lexington Communications are still able to build support for the pharmacy sector in Parliament on our behalf. The agency has coordinated a joint briefing on behalf of the five national pharmacy organisations which has so far been circulated to approximately 100 MPs. This briefing has also been made available for LPCs to use in their discussions with local MPs. They are also hosting a digital meeting between the CEOs of the pharmacy bodies and MPs who have agreed to be involved with the APPG on Tuesday 12th May.

National media coverage

The hard work undertaken by pharmacy teams has been highlighted in the national media as the COVID-19 pandemic has taken hold.

The following pieces of coverage can be attributed directly to PSNC (either to Simon Dukes, a Committee Member, or the organisation as a whole):

BBC News (16th April): reports that local pharmacies are facing a cash crisis, with many supplying prescriptions at a loss. The article features some of the pressures experienced in pharmacies at the moment and includes contributions from PSNC Regional Representative an independent contractor, Mark Burdon, and Chief Executive Officer of Community Pharmacy Lancashire, Kath Gulson.

The Times (14th April): reported that pharmacies are in desperate need of appropriate funding to stay afloat, with PSNC quoted as saying that the sector is heading towards a “cliff-edge”.

BBC Radio 4’s Today programme (7th April): PSNC Chief Executive Simon Dukes discussed the national medicines delivery service for shielded patients, raising concerns that current plans could leave vulnerable people at risk from fraudsters and potentially without their medicines. PSNC Committee Member Mark Burdon also spoke about the impact of the situation on his mental and physical health, as well as on his pharmacy’s bank balance.

The Times (30th March): PSNC was referenced in article that reported that small pharmacies are facing closure as a result of drug price rises. PSNC was referenced in the article.

The Sunday Times (22nd March): PSNC Committee Member Garry Myers was interviewed for an article focusing on the surge in demand for painkillers. The piece explained that the volume of work for pharmacies had doubled overnight, leaving them “on the brink of collapse”.

Below are additional pieces of broader coverage concerning the sector:

BBC News (24th March): This video piece, **Inside a pharmacy coping with coronavirus**, features Marc Borson, a community pharmacist in Manchester, who explains what it is like on the frontline.

iNews (23rd March): Featured an article which reported that pharmacies are urging people to stop stockpiling medicines and medical devices.

The Mail (24th March): Reported that pharmacies are worried they have been 'completely forgotten' by the government due to inadequate supplies of PPE.

Work with other organisations

Joint work with the other pharmacy organisations

All of the national pharmacy bodies have come together under the brand 'pharmacy heroes' to try and promote positive case studies and examples where pharmacy teams have gone above and beyond to help patients and the public during this unprecedented time. To help LPCs and contractors do this, PSNC and the NPA jointly created a media resource hub to help those in the sector share their stories. The hub includes: key messages for use in newspapers/radio/TV; social media resources; a template letter for MPs; links to media resources for LPCs; and an online form for contractors to report case studies.

Joint call for temporary removal of the prescription charge

PSNC, the BMA and DDA wrote to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, to highlight some of the challenges and risks faced by those dispensing and accessing prescriptions during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a joint letter, the three representative bodies have urged the SoS to take action to reduce these risks and have recommended the introduction of a temporary removal of the prescription charge altogether to allow for a smoother and safer prescription procedure for all.

Subject	Digital Communications Report
Date of meeting	May 2020
Committee/Subcommittee	Communications and Public Affairs
Status	Not confidential
Overview	Statistics relating to usage of engagement with PSNC’s digital communication channels.
Proposed action(s)	None
Author(s) of the paper	Melinda Mabbutt

Digital Communications Report

Introduction

Statistics reports relating to usage of engagement with PSNC's digital communication channels since the last PSNC meeting.

PSNC digital communications reports

February 2020 overview: Popular topics this month included information about the arrangements for the CPCF in 2020/21 and guidance on the PQS.

Our largest peak in website numbers on Monday 3rd, when the portal for PQS declarations opened and we sent out both a CPCF Checklist email and a general newsletter. There was a similar peak on Monday 24th, the next working day after details of the 2020/21 CPCF were announced.

March 2020 overview: month the outbreak became prevalent in the UK, our website, emails and social media accounts all increased in popularity.

Our largest peak in website numbers on Monday 23rd, the day after two some key announcements on opening hours flexibility and a medicines delivery service.

April 2020 overview: As was to be expected, popular news and guidance continued to be COVID-19 related. This was the second consecutive month that our website, emails and social media accounts all experienced increases in popularity.

Our largest peak in website numbers on Friday 3rd, when PSNC broken the news that NHSE&I had confirmed to us that they would be requiring all community pharmacies to be open for a few hours on both Good Friday and Easter Monday.

Full statistics reports overleaf.

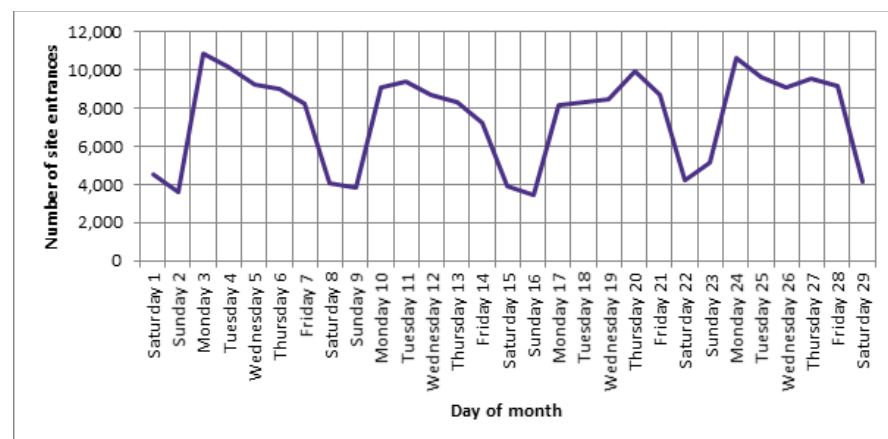
Conclusion

This paper has been created just for review; no action is required.

PSNC digital communications report – February 2020

PSNC Website

Audience	February	January
Number of unique visitors (site entrances)	218,794	240,263
Number of unique pageviews	390,036	415,143



Pages	Views
Price concessions and NCSO	19,379
Pharmacy Quality Scheme	14,080
Controlled Drug prescription forms and validity	5,407
EPS Prescription Tracker	4,357
Medicines Use Review (MUR)	3,905

News stories	Date	Views
CPCF Negotiations Update & Arrangements for 2020/21	23 Feb	3,298
Supply Notice – Ranitidine all formulations updated	27 Nov	2,810
National clinical audit – Antimicrobial stewardship	13 Feb	2,726
Changes to NHS prescription forms and Tokens	21 Jan	2,261
Completing the PQS declaration	31 Jan	2,033

PSNC Briefings	Views
004/20: Pharmacy Quality Scheme – Completing your declaration	4,567
060/19: Pharmacy Quality Scheme – Evidence checklist	1,320
053/19: PQS: Flow chart – How to meet the NSAID quality criterion	807
043/19: PQS – Foot and eye screening checks for patients with diabetes	716
054/19: PQS: Flow chart – How to meet the lithium audit quality criterion	689

Webinars/videos	Plays
Data Security and Protection Toolkit 2019/20 Workshop – ON-DEMAND	182
Data Security and Protection Toolkit 2019/20 Workshop – LIVE	182
Future of Pharmacy animation	180
Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) webinar	19
Pharmacy Quality Scheme 2019/20 webinar	13

PSNC Emails

PSNC Newsletter	Feb	Jan	Other health newsletters
Open rate	31%	31%	23%
Click rate	5%	6%	6%
Clicks to opens	16%	21%	20%

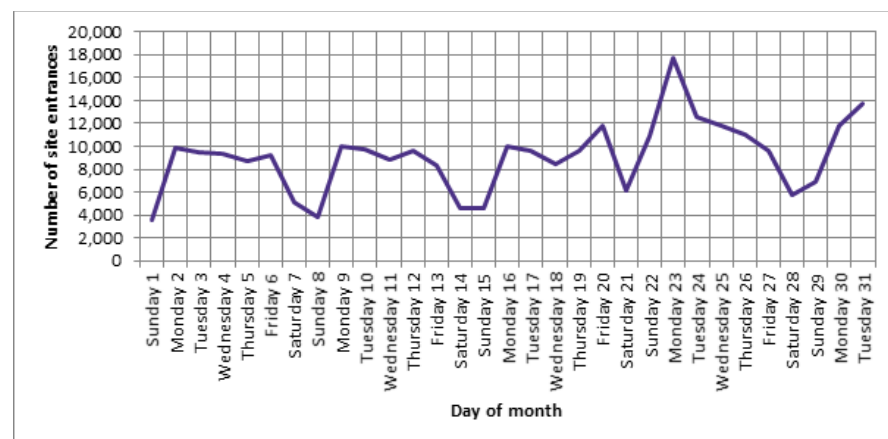
Social media

	Feb	Jan
Twitter reach	121,800	116,600
Twitter interactions	2,673	2,340
Facebook reach	8,479	16,045
Facebook interactions	902	5,105
LinkedIn reach	8,226	7,070
LinkedIn interactions	313	362

PSNC digital communications report – March 2020

PSNC Website

Audience	March	February
Number of unique visitors (site entrances)	282,333	218,794
Number of unique pageviews	460,455	390,036



Pages	Views
COVID-19	34,281
Price concessions and NCSC	23,306
EPS Prescription Tracker	5,887
Controlled Drug prescription forms and validity	5,265
Exemptions from the prescription charge	4,209

News stories	Date	Views
Medicines delivery service & 111 Online CPCS referrals	22 Mar	13,379
Updated COVID-19 SOP and Opening Hours Flexibility	22 Mar	10,047
COVID-19: An update for community pharmacy	4 Mar	6,589
Pharmacy staff included in Govt list of key workers	20 Mar	6,175
COVID-19: PQS, pharmacy services and payments	19 Mar	6,141

PSNC Briefings	Views
016/20: COVID-19 Response – PSNC Negotiations Action List	620
002/20: Changes to FP10 NHS prescription form and EPS Tokens	465
010/20: Community Pharmacy Funding in 2020/21	307
023/19: SSPs – A guide for community pharmacy teams	209
057/19: NHS CPCS – Early learnings and tips for contractors	202

Webinars/videos	Plays
Simon Dukes video message 23rd March 2020	1,648
Simon Dukes video message 31st March 2020	520
Future of Pharmacy animation	128
Data Security and Protection Toolkit 2019/20 Workshop	75
Consolidations and mergers webinar	142

PSNC Emails

PSNC Newsletter	March	Feb	Other health newsletters
Open rate	38%	31%	23%
Click rate	6%	5%	6%
Clicks to opens	15%	16%	20%

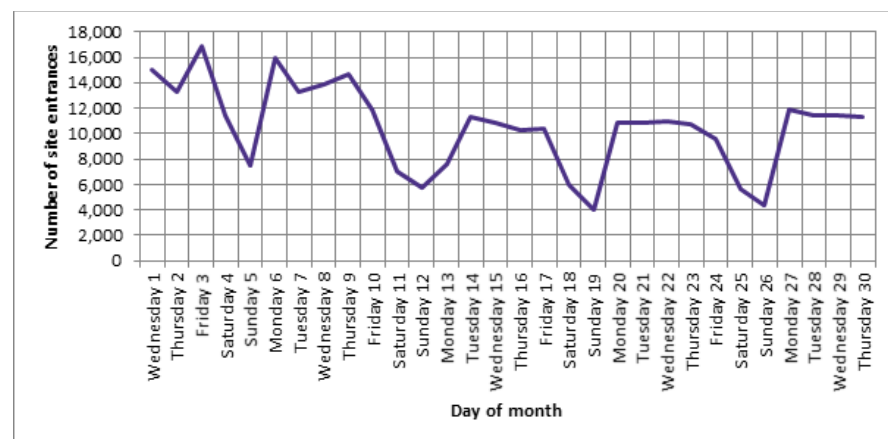
Social media

	March	Feb
Twitter reach	182,100	121,800
Twitter interactions	5,617	2,673
Facebook reach	13,434	8,479
Facebook interactions	2,360	902
LinkedIn reach	10,453	8,226
LinkedIn interactions	952	313

PSNC digital communications report – April 2020

PSNC Website

Audience	April	March
Number of unique visitors (site entrances)	315,936	282,333
Number of unique pageviews	522,895	460,455



Pages	Views
Price concessions and NCSO	28,833
Pandemic Delivery Service	13,254
COVID-19 Hub	11,364
COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions	6,090
Community Pharmacist Consultation Service	5,028

News stories	Date	Views
COVID-19 Easter Opening Hours for Pharmacies	4 April	21,152
Pharmacies required to open Good Friday & Easter Monday	3 April	13,396
Medicines delivery service & 111 Online CPCS referrals	22 Mar	7,290
Service Launch: the Pandemic Delivery Service	10 April	6,343
COVID-19 Update: Easter 2020 Opening Hours	1 April	5,908

PSNC Briefings	Views
016/20: COVID-19 Response – PSNC Negotiations Action List	793
002/20: Changes to FP10 NHS prescription form and EPS Tokens	365
016/19: EPS Controlled Drugs (CD) FAQs	264
023/17: SCR implementation checklist factsheet (updated for 2020)	236
003/20: Updating Smartcards for multi-site and SCR usage	225

Webinars/videos	Plays
A message from the national pharmacy bodies (CEOs thank you)	694
Simon Dukes video message 31st March 2020	517
COVID-19 Webinar for Pharmacy Contractors	463
A digital guide to the Pandemic Delivery Service	225
Future of Pharmacy animation	141

PSNC Emails

PSNC Newsletter	April	March	Other health newsletters
Open rate	38%	38%	23%
Click rate	5%	6%	6%
Clicks to opens	13%	15%	20%

Social media

	April	March
Twitter reach	261,200	182,100
Twitter interactions	9,048	5,617
Facebook reach	43,681	13,434
Facebook interactions	7,344	2,360
LinkedIn reach	12,401	10,453
LinkedIn interactions	1,043	952

