

Welcome to the **Kent & Medway** Medicines Optimisation (MO) news update.

Articles in this week's edition include:

- Community Pharmacy Bank Holiday Opening
- Influenza Prescribing Update [2019/20 Season]
- Public Health England warning over home-testing kits for COVID-19
- MHRA recall of all Emerade 500mcg auto-injectors
- Latest NICE Rapid Guidelines
- EPS Phase 4
- Shortages Update

Access a list of Medical Specialties/ Professional Body advice with direct links to their respective COVID-19 published guidance [here](#)

Please send all medicines queries relating to COVID-19 and any further points of clarification for the articles written to:  
[wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net](mailto:wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net)

### Community Pharmacy Bank Holiday (Monday 25th May) Update

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) will not be directing pharmacies in England to open on the 25 May, as was the case at Easter and 8<sup>th</sup> May bank holidays. The regional teams have been working closely with local providers to ensure they have adequate access to pharmaceutical services on this day for their local populations. The list of pharmacies scheduled to open across Kent & Medway can be found attached with this newsletter. It also includes those that are on the palliative local enhanced scheme (LES) highlighted in green.

### Influenza Prescribing Update [2019/20 Season]

The MHRA has issued an [alert](#) stating that the most recent surveillance data from Public Health England (PHE) indicates that circulation of influenza in the community has returned to baseline levels.

As a result of this, GPs and other prescribers working in primary care **should no longer prescribe oral antiviral medicines, for the prophylaxis and treatment of influenza on an FP10 prescription form for the 2019/20 season.**

Community pharmacists should no longer supply oral antiviral medicines in primary care, on presentation of an FP10 prescription form for the 2019/20 season.

### Public Health England warning over home-testing kits for COVID-19

Public Health England (PHE) have issued a warning stating some manufacturers are selling products containing COVID-19 testing kits that allow samples to be taken at home, providing a rapid result within about 10 minutes. These tests are distinct from the official postal kits that are being used whereby a swab is taken at home and then returned by post or courier. The current view by PHE is that use of these rapid at home tests is not advised as there is very little evidence on the accuracy and suitability of these kits. More information [here](#)

### MHRA recall of all Emerade 500mcg auto-injectors

Pharmaswiss Ceska republika s.r.o. (an affiliate of Bausch & Lomb UK Limited) is recalling all unexpired batches of Emerade 500 microgram auto-injectors from patients due to an error in one component of the auto-injector believed to cause some pens to fail to activate and deliver adrenaline.

Healthcare professionals (GP Practices, Pharmacies) should, contact patients and carers with Emerade 500mcg pens, to inform them of the recall information contained within this alert. A specific letter for patients can be found in the access link below.

No further supplies of Emerade will be available on the UK market until the issue has been resolved, therefore patients and carers should be appropriately trained to use other brands. Jext (300mcg strength) and EpiPen (all strengths) are currently available from Alliance Healthcare. Access full details of drug alert [here](#)

### Latest NICE Rapid Guidelines

In response to COVID-19 the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) has produced a series of rapid guidelines to support clinicians manage specific patient groups. The latest guidelines, and last expected to be produced are listed and linked below:

- [Chronic Kidney Disease](#)
- [Interstitial lung disease](#)

### Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Phase 4

Phase 4 of EPS allows prescriptions for patients without an EPS nomination to be signed, sent and processed electronically. This is currently only available to EMIS practices but Vision is working on providing this soon. For Phase 4 of EPS:

It is preferred that patients have a nominated pharmacy; there will be no change to patients who have a nominated pharmacy with the current service, for these patients the process will continue as normal. However, in instances where there is no nomination, the patient would be provided a token with a barcode to take to any pharmacy that will scan it and “pull down” the prescription from the spine.

During COVID-19 in particular, there may be scenarios where patients cannot collect a printed Phase 4 token. In this instance, alternative information can be provided:

- Ideally the token barcode number or Prescription ID should be provided. EMIS practices can access this by left clicking on “electronic R2” , right clicking on the prescription barcode and left clicking on “copy EPS identifier”, this can then be sent to the patient (via text or email). The patient can give the code to the pharmacy to enter into their pharmacy system and locate the prescription.
- As a last resort, the patient may be given their NHS number and the pharmacy can use the EPS tracker to locate an EPS prescription, however this is time consuming for the pharmacy so should be avoided if possible.

### When using EPS an FP10 may automatically print in the following situations:

- The chosen medication is not in the dm+d items - these medicines will not go via EPS until they are mapped on the clinical system. This may require the non-dm+d drug to be discontinued and the appropriate alternative initiated. Guidance for this can be found in the EMIS Support centre.
- PDS mismatch - In the EMIS Precis bar, the PDS button will be red, click on this to open a new window with one side the Spine Data and one side the GP Local Data. The system will make clear where the PDS mismatch is aligned and this will need to be amended. The PDS button will then turn blue, signalling that there are no further discrepancies.
- No smartcard
- Patients living cross-border
- Private prescriptions
- Instalment prescribing
- Personally Administered items

For further queries regarding EPS Phase 4 please email [wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net](mailto:wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net)

### Shortages Update

<b>Creon 25,000 capsules</b>	Supply disruption expected until end of May. Creon Micro and Creon 10,000 continue to be available. The manufacturer has confirmed that dosing of Creon is based on lipase units and Creon capsules are interchangeable. Patients prescribed Creon 25,000 can reach their recommended dose by taking more of the lower strength capsules. More information available ( <a href="#">here</a> ).
<b>Fluoxetine 40mg capsules</b>	Ongoing supply disruption. Serious shortage protocol (SSP06) issued allowing community pharmacists to supply 2 x 20mg fluoxetine capsules for every 40mg. More information available ( <a href="#">here</a> ).