



**Note: Summary for medicine delivery options in Gateshead locality in response to Covid19**

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an overview of Medicine Deliveries and the various options that exist across Gateshead. Although the phrase 'prescription delivery' is used, this term is inaccurate as prescriptions themselves are already electronically sent by GPs to community pharmacies. The activity described pertains to the actual deliveries of medicine supplies following being dispensed by the community pharmacy.

**Background**

In response to the need to support access to medicines for people in the community during the Covid19 Pandemic, a number of measures have been set up to build on previous arrangements and set up new initiatives both at a local level and nationally, to further support this process.

The focus of support has been primarily for the shielded patients in the community although the arrangements described are not necessarily exclusive to this cohort.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

New categories of patient being able to directly request support

<https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating> include:

- People aged 70 years and older with underlying health conditions
- If you are in the 'extremely vulnerable' to COVID 19 group and have been sent a letter asking you to shield from the virus
- People who are pregnant
- People who are newly socially vulnerable as a result of COVID 19
- People who are registered disabled
- Others with high-risk conditions could include:
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - People with serious heart conditions
  - People who are immunocompromised including because of cancer treatment

- People of any age with severe obesity e.g. body mass index (BMI) over 40
- Certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, dementia, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk

## Medicine Deliveries

The following summarises the current options and arrangements in place for delivery of medicines from community pharmacy services in the Gateshead Borough.

### 1: The pharmacy pandemic delivery service

- <https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/pandemic-delivery-service/>
- [www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/preparedness-letters-for-community-pharmacy/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/preparedness-letters-for-community-pharmacy/)

Shielded patients should have been notified via a letter, sent out by NHSE&I or their GP or hospital consultant, and have been asked to contact their pharmacy if they need to have their prescriptions delivered. As of 20.4.2020 there were 5,300 shielded residents in the Gateshead borough.

Medicines delivery services for shielded patients only have been commissioned by NHSE&I from pharmacies from 9 April 2020 until 1 July 2020 in the first instance.

The pharmacy will be able to identify a shielded patient by viewing their Summary Care Record (SCR) which now contains the appropriate flag

- <https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/covid-19-update-vulnerability-flag-added-to-scr/>

**There are two commissioned medicines delivery services for pharmacies to support shielded patients:**

**A) A compulsory essential service:** This places a responsibility on pharmacy contractors to make sure that a home delivery option is available to people at high risk of complications from COVID-19 who are advised to isolate at home for 12 weeks and meet the 'shielding' criteria, unless a family member, friend, relative or volunteer can collect the medicine for them. The new monthly payment recognises the administration required in assessing eligibility of patients and using volunteers to support these deliveries.

**B) An opt-in advanced service when:**

- i) Shielded patients cannot make their own arrangements for the prescription items to be collected (Note: Shielded patients can request Community Support volunteers themselves from the NHS Volunteer Responder Service – see below).

**AND**

- ii) No suitable volunteer can be found, or the use of volunteers isn't appropriate (See Delivery of Controlled Drugs [CDs] below).

i.e. Prior to provision of the advanced service the contractor must have established that the medicine cannot be delivered by a friend, relative, carer or volunteer.

**THEN**

The pharmacy can claim for a 'per delivery fee' in order to deliver the medicine itself (Note: The pharmacy can outsource the delivery via a secure delivery method, e.g. using a courier company, or working with another pharmacy to deliver medicines on their behalf).

**2: The National NHS Volunteers Responders**

[www.england.nhs.uk/2020/04/volunteers-ready-to-go-in-nhs-coronavirus-fightback/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/04/volunteers-ready-to-go-in-nhs-coronavirus-fightback/)

NHS Volunteers Responders is enabled by the use of the GoodSam Responders app:

[www.goodsamapp.org/NHS](http://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS).

Referrals are made via the pharmacy NHS mail address to the NHS Volunteer's referrers' portal at [www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral](http://www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral) (alternatively call 0808 196 3382).

Required referral information includes the type of support needed (e.g. requesting a medicine delivery on behalf of an individual patient, or to provide delivery driver support for the pharmacy), the frequency of that support, and how urgent that support is.

**3: Gateshead Council support service**

Gateshead Council has 5 community hubs providing support for residents during the coronavirus pandemic:

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/15181/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Community-support>

In addition, a wide range of businesses and voluntary organisations across Gateshead are working hard to continue to supply of food and other essential goods to people across the Borough:

[https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/covid19vso?view=list&q=\\*&f1=668](https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/covid19vso?view=list&q=*&f1=668)

The community hubs do not deliver medication however, if a resident is unable to get support with medicine delivery, the council hubs will refer the request the volunteer services currently providing support for deliveries.

Gateshead Council recommends that the volunteer services follow the good practice principles set out in **Appendix 1** when supporting the delivery of medicines to residents.

**Note: Volunteers should always check with the pharmacy service regarding the in store protocol for medicine deliveries as these may vary from one service to another.**

**General issues to consider include:**

- i) Delivery of Controlled Drugs (CDs)
  - The pharmacy pandemic delivery service specification states that volunteers should not deliver Schedule 2 and 3 CDs and pharmacists should use their professional judgement to determine whether it is appropriate for a volunteer to deliver Schedule 4 or 5 CDs; and guidance to pharmacies on the NHS Volunteer Responders states that the pharmacy should not include 'any medicines liable to diversion'.
  - In addition, general RPS guidance states that the pharmacy 'may wish to exclude CDs from volunteer deliveries' [www.rpharms.com/resources/pharmacy-guides/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-returning-or-volunteering/volunteer-guidance](http://www.rpharms.com/resources/pharmacy-guides/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-returning-or-volunteering/volunteer-guidance)

**Note: separate arrangements are in place to support patients receiving treatment under the commissioned substance misuse service in Gateshead including provision of prescriptions and collection/ delivery arrangements appropriate for the need of the individual**

For further information contact:

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**Gateshead Council Public Health Team lead for Substance Misuse Service:** Julia Sharp 0191 4332940 [JuliaSharp@Gateshead.Gov.UK](mailto:JuliaSharp@Gateshead.Gov.UK)

- ii) **DBS checks**
  - The NHSE&I community pharmacy 4th preparedness letter states that: The Home Office has issued updated DBS guidance that states that volunteers are able to collect medication for those unable to leave their homes without DBS clearance [www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-factsheet-community-volunteers-during-covid-19-outbreak](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-factsheet-community-volunteers-during-covid-19-outbreak). On accepting a task, the NHS Volunteer Responders are tracked on the Good Sam app. If the medication does not arrive with the intended recipient action will be taken.
  - A joint statement from the RPS and GPhC on the use of NHS volunteers to deliver medicines in England [www.rpharms.com/about-us/news/details/our-joint-statement-with-gphc-on-volunteers-delivering-medicines](http://www.rpharms.com/about-us/news/details/our-joint-statement-with-gphc-on-volunteers-delivering-medicines) states that: The RPS and GPhC would like to reassure pharmacy teams and pharmacy owners that we support the use of NHS volunteers as an option to get medicines to extremely vulnerable people when it's not possible to use patient's own representatives or pharmacy delivery services. Pharmacy professionals acting in accordance with the standards and using NHS Volunteer Responders in good faith in line with the service specifications of the Pandemic Delivery Service will not be regarded as responsible for actions of other people outside of their control.

### Pharmacy selecting its own volunteers

- PSNC advises that <https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/pandemic-delivery-service/>: Where the pharmacy is involved in the selection process of a volunteer, for example, booking a delivery driver for an afternoon, there is an obligation to ensure that the individual is appropriate for the role, in skills and competence, and that other checks have been made, such as the individual having had a recent DBS check. Other matters, such as indemnity insurance need to be considered by contractors in relation to the use of volunteers (e.g. the NPA FAQs at [www.npa.co.uk/coronavirus-updates/faqs-covid-19/](http://www.npa.co.uk/coronavirus-updates/faqs-covid-19/) contain a question regarding professional indemnity insurance cover and volunteers delivering medication).

## Appendix 1: Supporting information:

1: NPA Delivery Fact Sheet for Volunteers	<a href="https://www.npa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Delivery-fact-sheet-for-Volunteers-April-2020.pdf">https://www.npa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Delivery-fact-sheet-for-Volunteers-April-2020.pdf</a> .
2: PSNC Flow chart demonstrating overview of process of deliveries	<a href="https://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Pandemic-Delivery-Service-Overview-v1-21-04-20.pdf">https://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Pandemic-Delivery-Service-Overview-v1-21-04-20.pdf</a>

### 3: Further information resources regarding delivery of medicines based on national templates

All pharmacy premises will have their own Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for drivers and delivery staff employed by the business.

NHS national Volunteer service – will also have its own procedures to be followed the volunteers

#### NHS Volunteer service - GoodSam App:

- [https://www.goodsamapp.org/assets/pdf/Getting\\_started\\_as\\_a\\_NHS\\_Transport\\_Volunteer.pdf](https://www.goodsamapp.org/assets/pdf/Getting_started_as_a_NHS_Transport_Volunteer.pdf)

#### National Pharmaceutical Association (NPA):

- <https://www.npa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Delivery-fact-sheet-for-Volunteers-April-2020.pdf>
- <https://www.npa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SOP-Delivering-pharmacy-items-COVID-April-2020.pdf>

#### Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC):

- <https://psnc.org.uk/the-healthcare-landscape/covid19/pandemic-delivery-service/>

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