

News from Buckinghamshire Council

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COVID-19: Accessing medicines from your local pharmacies

PLEASE NOTE: This press release is issued by Buckinghamshire Council on behalf of the Buckinghamshire Local Pharmaceutical Committee

As the UK responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, community pharmacies in Buckinghamshire are working tirelessly to ensure everyone gets the medicines they need, when they need them.

The government and the NHS have asked around 1.5million people, who are at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 infection, to stay at home for at least 12 weeks from the date they receive their letter. By now these people should have received their letter from the NHS. Local authorities will follow up with 'shielded patients' who have registered for support to get food and medicine.

It is still important for shielded patients to access their prescription medicines. If you are considered a shielded patient and should stay at home for the next 12 weeks, but need to collect your prescription medicines, the Buckinghamshire Local Pharmaceutical Committee and Government advise you to do the following:

- Firstly, please try to arrange to have your medicines collected by a family member, friend or neighbour.
- Secondly, if you still need assistance, Buckinghamshire Council's community hub page (www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/community-hub) may be able to help put you in touch with volunteers in your area who are able to make collections.
- If you still have no way of getting your prescriptions, you can ask for support from a national network of NHS volunteer responders (registered via <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>) which has been mobilised in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers will be ID-checked.

If none of these options are suitable for people, a Medicines Delivery Service is being planned. Details of this will follow as soon as they are confirmed.

By taking these steps, you will also be able to help protect pharmacies from an unmanageable increase in workload at this critical time and prevent needless queues.

Please also remember the guidance for anyone planning to approach a local pharmacy:

- If you are showing symptoms of COVID-19 -a dry, persistent cough, fever or shortness of breath - please avoid entering your local pharmacies as you would any other healthcare setting.
- Please be patient: All pharmacies are under immense pressure and working around the clock to ensure that you get what you need.
- Order medicines as normal: the medicine supply chain is good and there is no need to stockpile. If people order extra prescriptions and buy more over-the-counter medicines than they need, it will lead to supply problems.

Mayank Patel, Chief Officer of Buckinghamshire LPC said: “During this period of COVID pandemic, it is vitally important that patients who need their prescriptions from local pharmacies can still get their medicines when they need them. We are today asking those who have been advised to stay at home to consider how they will be able to access their medicines.

“The first step is to ask a family member, friend or neighbour to collect your prescription for you. If that is not possible, please contact your local pharmacy to see what other options are available to you. Please be patient as the pharmacies are taking a high volume of phone calls. If you are not in those shielded groups or self-isolating, please continue to collect your medicines in the normal way.”

Contact:

Buckinghamshire Local Pharmaceutical Committee represents community pharmacy contractors in Buckinghamshire.

<https://psnc.org.uk/buckinghamshire-lpc>

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