

Government to monitor impact of coronavirus on UK medicine supply

The Chinese government continues to impose further restrictions on movement within China in response to the coronavirus outbreak, including on flight and rail travel.

To relieve potential pressures on global supply chains, suppliers have been asked to carry out a risk assessment on the impact of coronavirus on their business.

As an extra precaution, companies have also been asked to retain existing stockpiles of medical supplies, compiled as a contingency measure ahead of our exit from the EU, where possible.

There are no current medicine shortages in the UK linked to the situation in China but the UK government is taking precautionary measures to help continue the uninterrupted supply of medicines to patients in the UK.

Health Minister Nicola Blackwood said:

We are not aware of any current medicine shortages linked to this novel coronavirus, but we are putting in place common-sense measures as a precaution to help to ensure the uninterrupted supply of medicines to UK patients.

We have world-class systems in place to prevent supply problems and we are working closely with industry and partners to prevent shortages and ensure the risks to patients are minimised.

The government will work closely with industry and partners to continually monitor the impact of coronavirus on the UK supply chain and put in place measures to protect UK patients.

There is no need for the public or NHS to stockpile. This could aggravate problems elsewhere in the supply chain if they emerge.

The Department of Health and Social Care is also working with NHS Supply Chain to retain centralised stock of medical products.

The department has well-established procedures to deal with medicine shortages and works closely with the MHRA, the pharmaceutical industry, NHS England and others operating in the supply chain to help prevent shortages and ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when shortages do arise anywhere in the UK.

The NHS and wider health system is extremely well prepared for coronavirus and follows tried and tested procedures of the highest standards to protect

staff, patients and the public.

The latest information on coronavirus is available at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).