

News story: Community pharmacy funding: interim arrangements agreed

The Department of Health and Social Care and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) have agreed provisional arrangements for the CPCF.

The CPCF sets out the terms for the provision of NHS pharmaceutical services in England. CPCF funding is given through fees and allowances paid to pharmacy contractors.

The arrangements will take effect from April 2019 and will continue until negotiations on the framework end.

The current funding level of £2.592 billion per year will continue.

Within this funding:

- pharmacies eligible for Pharmacy Access Scheme payments will continue to receive them
- no further Quality Payments Scheme requirements or checkpoints have been set
- pharmacy contractors can deliver a maximum of 200 medicines use reviews (MURs) in the first 6 months of the year

At the same time, the prices pharmacies are reimbursed for the products they dispense will increase by £10 million per month. The current arrangements to recover excess payments that have been in place since November 2018 will end.

Health Minister Steve Brine said:

The NHS Long Term Plan sets out a renewed vision for primary care. One in which all providers work together, making best use of their unique skills, for the benefit of patients. Community pharmacy, embedded at the heart of communities, has an important role to play.

I look forward to discussions with PSNC on how the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework can support community pharmacy's further integration into primary care networks and enable us to better utilise the skill set and reach of pharmacy teams.

Simon Dukes, Chief Executive of PSNC, said:

We are pleased that the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England expect to be in a position to begin negotiations on community pharmacy shortly, and we are looking forward to exploring

with them developments that will ensure that community pharmacies can play a key part in the developing primary care systems for the benefit of patients.

In the meantime, this interim funding arrangement will protect current funding levels for pharmacies and we welcome the £10 million monthly increase in Category M prices.