13th January 2023

**Subject: Pharmacy First is ending 31st March 2023**

Dear Pharmacy team

The contract for the **Pharmacy First scheme**, which was commissioned by NHS England, will come to an end on 31st March 2023.

This means medicines that were provided free of charge under **Pharmacy First** will no longer be supplied free. As such, you and your colleagues should be ready to manage patient expectations by explaining the change to them which may leave them feeling disappointed and frustrated.

It is the LPC’s recommendation that you ensure your pharmacy team is fully briefed about the decommissioning of **Pharmacy First** as soon as possible. You can of course continue to offer affected patients general OTC advice about their condition and sell them any OTC medication where appropriate.

Please be aware that following the decommissioning of this service your pharmacy may receive more referrals from GPs using the GPCPS referral pathway. Please take this opportunity to familiarise yourselves and your colleagues with the GPCPS service specification that can be found on the Nottinghamshire LPC website.

<https://nottinghamshire.communitypharmacy.org.uk/nhs-contract/national-services/cpcs/gp-cpcs-community-pharmacist-consultation-service/>

The Nottinghamshire LPC team want to support you through this change in any way that we can. As such, we recommend you complete the [CPPE module on ‘Dealing with difficult discussions’](https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/diffdisc-e-01) at your earliest convenience. Furthermore, if you have any specific query or comments then please email Alison Ellis secretary@nottinghamshirelpc.co.uk and she will get one of the LPC team to respond to you as soon as possible.

In summary, we would recommend that you:

**Don’t**

* Signpost patients to their GP. If they wish to complain about the removal of the Pharmacy First service then see details below.

**Do**

* Use this letter to brief the pharmacy team including locums about **Pharmacy First** finishing as soon as possible so they are able to have conversations with existing patients in advance of 31st March 2023
* Stop having Pharmacy First consultations after 31st March 2023
* Submit any unclaimed Pharmacy First claims for payment as soon as possible in April 2023
* Refer patients to their surgery if you believe that their condition requires escalation to a GP
* Give the NHS contact details below to patients who may wish to complain about the service ending:

**By post to:**

**NHS England**
PO Box 16738
Redditch
B97 9PT

**By email to:** england.contactus@nhs.net

If making a complaint, please state: ‘**For the attention of the complaints team**’ in the subject line.

**By telephone: 0300 311 22 33**

If you have any questions or queries relating to the information in this letter, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Regards

 

Rob Severn Nick Hunter, MRPharmS

Chair of Nottinghamshire LPC Chief Officer of Nottinghamshire LPC