



**South Cheshire
Local
Pharmaceutical
Committee**

**Business
Continuity
Planning
Workbook**

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1 Introduction

Supply of medicines to our patients, in a timely manner, is the main reason for pharmacy as a business and the cornerstone to our NHS contract, enshrined in law.

There has been much talk for many years about the next influenza pandemic and the implications it will have on the normal daily lives of everyone in this country. With people much more mobile than ever before it is expected that the disease will spread rapidly around the country and some estimates suggest that up to 50% of the population could be affected when prevalence is at its highest.

Additionally, there are many other situations which could put at risk the continuity of a pharmacy business e.g. terrorist attack or a more natural event such as the flooding, which happened in Sheffield and Gloucester in 2007.

For many pharmacy businesses the main reasons why they can't provide their full pharmaceutical service is because someone has forgotten to bring the keys to open the door or the pharmacist is late. Circumstances we have all probably encountered at some time and have a contingency in place for.

However, there are many things which need to be in place for a pharmacy to open and operate safely and any number of reasons why they may not be functional. The Department of Health is encouraging us to think now, before an emergency situation occurs, so that systems are in place to recover business continuity as soon as possible.

Once you have worked through this book, and looked at some of the on-line resource documents, you will be able to put a business continuity plan together with the support of your staff. It will help to include them in this planning process as they will see things which you don't notice.

Having a plan isn't the end of it. You should test it as far as you are able to and you must review it each year as circumstances can change.

Whatever the emergency there are many factors which are common and needed for business continuity. The first section of this document addresses those. The second section builds on this and looks at factors relating to pandemic 'flu. The final chapter suggests some scenarios which you may help with your thinking and planning.



2 Factors which affect business continuity

1. The pharmacy isn't accessible

What will you do if you cannot get into your pharmacy? It is highly likely that your business continuity plan with key contact numbers and details is inside the pharmacy so what can you do?

Action required

You must contact the PCT to inform them of your failure to open and provide an estimated time when you will be open. You must make whatever provision necessary to open as soon as possible e.g. set up a pharmacy from alternative premises which will need RPSGB approval. Make sure that you are aware of the PCT and RPSGB contact numbers/addresses. Note them at the end of this document in Appendix1

2. The pharmacist isn't at the pharmacy when it should open

This can happen any time.

- Does someone have keys to open the pharmacy?
- Is there an emergency contact number to contact the business owner, rota team, area manager?
- Do the staff know what to do?

Action required

Ensure that staff are aware of who to contact when a pharmacist doesn't turn up or is delayed i.e. inform the PCT.

3. Communication

The most important route of communication is the telephone. Not only is this important for general communication but increasingly for internet access. If this affects more people than just your business then the mobile telecommunications network will be experiencing a high volume of calls and there may not be a route open for you.

- What will you and your staff do if the telephone lines are down?
- What will you do if the mobile telephone network isn't working?

Action required

Contact your telecommunications provider to tell them of the situation.

Name of telecommunication company used.....
Name of N3/Broadband provider.....
Contact numbers to report a fault.....

4. Electrical fault

Power failure at the pharmacy is probably the most debilitating factor for business continuity once you have gained access into the pharmacy. It affects so many things.

Restoring electricity supply

Can you fix the fault? A simple and easy cause of power failure is a blown fuse in the fuse box /tripped switch.

- Where is the fuse box?
- Do you have spare fuses?
- If you are not present does a member of staff know this and know what to do?

Generator:

- When the problem isn't easily fixed can you use a generator?
- If you already have a generator does it work and do you have any fuel?

Local Hire Centre
Contact Number

Lighting

Is it safe to open the pharmacy e.g. can patients see their way around the pharmacy sufficiently not to hurt themselves? Where do you keep emergency torches? Do they work?

Computer and IT systems

- Do you have blank labels which can be used to write labels on medicines?
- How will you record information which will need to be entered into a patient's PMR at a later time?
- Do you have a supply of the cautionary messages which must be put on medicine labels e.g. Take on an empty stomach?

Equipment

- Can any devices run on batteries?
- Do you have stock of suitable batteries?
- Fridges. Check fridge temperatures. What do you do with the stock if the maximum temperature has been exceeded? (See PJ Vol 281 18/10/08 pg 449)

Action required

Contact electricity supply company. Conduct a risk assessment on whether it is safe to open the pharmacy.

Name of electricity supply company used.....
Key contact (name and number).....
Local emergency electrician – name and contact number.....

- How will you get medicines to your housebound patients?
- Which members of staff have a bike (and can use it)?

8. Fire

- Have you conducted a fire drill with your staff?
- Have they been trained to use the fire extinguishers?
- Where are your emergency exits?
- Where are your fire extinguishers situated in the pharmacy?
- What is the extent of the damage to the pharmacy? Can you still open?

9. IT failure

IT is a key tool to running a community pharmacy business. Lack of electricity would obviously be a problem and this is covered above.

- If your PMR system fails, do you know where your backup copy is kept?
- Do you have a routine for making backup copies of your PMRs?
- Is a backup copy stored off the premises? (NB security of patient-confidential material must also be considered)

Action Required

Find backup copy of Pharmacy System. Make regular backup copies.
Remove backup from premises where appropriate.

Pharmacy System Supplier.....
Key Contact (Name and number).....
N3 contact.....

10. Community Pharmacy Buddy

Largely community pharmacists work in isolation within their own premises. In smaller villages there may only be one pharmacy in the area. In larger villages and towns there will be more.

- Do you have a community pharmacy buddy?
In times of emergency, particularly one which affects several community pharmacies in an area, it could be beneficial to pool resources.
- If you needed to contact another local pharmacy would you know their name and contact number?
- Could you contact them to work together for the benefit of patients to supply maintain a pharmaceutical service?

Action Required

Introduce yourself to local colleagues.

Pharmacy Name	Location	Key contact	Contact number



3 Pandemic Influenza

Pressures on pharmacies to continue to open during a 'flu pandemic will be great. You need to consider:

- a) Staff
How will you handle staff absence?
How many staff can you safely operate with?
Do you have anyone you can call in, in an emergency?
Will the PCT allow you to open for a reduced number of hours?
Can you pool staff with other local pharmacies?
- b) Owner/manager
What are the staff to do if the pharmacist owner or manager is ill and can't make it to the pharmacy but they are well enough to open the pharmacy?
Have you left instructions?
- c) Handling phone calls
During this time is likely that the number of phone calls you receive will increase substantially, taking staff away from the dispensary or counter. How will you handle this?
- d) Obtaining medicines
Wholesalers will be under pressure, as you are, with fewer staff to make deliveries, re-stock their warehouses etc. How can you secure a medicine supply?
- e) Repeat medicine supplies
How can you help patients obtain regular repeat medicines when they can't get a prescription?
- f) Handling the increased OTC sale demand or increased use of local MAS.
How will you ration sales if stocks become low?
- g) Some GP practices will become 'flu centres and others will see non-'flu patients.
Do they plan to do that with pharmacies in your area?
- h) Access to banking services and cash.
- i) Security and safety of staff
Demand for pharmacy services, medicines and products will be high with you having access to value resources which the public want and need.
How will you can you manage this and keep your staff safe?
- j) Supply of anti virals
It is expected that this will be managed by PCT through special centres.
Do you know where the PCT distribution centres for anti-virals are?
Do you know where to sign post patients?
- k) During the time of pandemic 'flu, the Department of Health will have the ability to invoke certain powers to enable the continuity of services to patients. You may be able to re-use returned medicines, use date-expired medicines or increase the quantity supplied against a prescription.
You need to know what you can and cannot do and, more importantly when these measures have become active. How will you ensure these actions are operational – radio? Internet?
How will you counsel patients on returned or expired medicines?

How will you assess whether this is the right thing to do?

Do your staff have any instructions?

l) Your Pharmacy Buddy

Where there is more than one pharmacy in an area you should consider one being a 'flu pharmacy' dispensing medicines for patients with flu and the other a 'normal' pharmacy dispensing the usual prescription medicines for patients without 'flu.

m) Waste collection

These will be reduced during a pandemic. How will you handle the build up of waste?

n) Will the PCT allow you supply medicines under PGDs?

o) Discuss with the PCT what services do they really want you to continue to deliver and

Action Required

Actions already contained within this document may cover some of the above situations but you must consider now what other procedures you need to ensure any disaster is 'managed' as smoothly as possible.



4 Impact on service delivery

Whatever the emergency situation that happens you are likely to find yourself working in more difficult working conditions, with fewer staff but higher demand from patients and the public. You will need to prioritise those services which you can or need to continue to deliver and stop doing others.

Having done this you will need to talk to your staff. It may be necessary to inform the PCT and it would help patients if you told other local contractors and GPs. It may be possible to work with other contractors so that as full a range of services can be provided between you all.

List of services provided by community pharmacy:

1. Dispensing- NHS and private
2. Repeat dispensing
3. OTC sale
4. Other core pharmaceutical service contract services e.g. health promotion, advice, sign posting
5. Prescription Collection and Delivery
6. Local enhanced services e.g. Minor Ailments, EHC
7. Observed consumption
8. Needle exchange
9. Sharps disposal service
10. Advice to Care Home
11. Urgent out of hour medicines supply
12. Supply of palliative care drugs

From this short list you will be able to draw up another list of key people who you will need to contact in the event that you are unable to maintain your full contractual pharmaceutical service.



5 Scenarios

1. Delayed holiday return

You are the pharmacist manager and owner of a community pharmacy in a parade of shops. You have been on holiday and turn up to the airport to catch your flight home. Your flight home is delayed for twenty four hours. You booked locums up to today but no one for tomorrow as you expected to be in work yourself.

- What can you do now to ensure your pharmacy opens?

2. No show locum

You are abroad on holiday and have booked locums to cover your absence. Your senior staff member has a list of locums with their contact numbers and a plan of who to expect each day while you are away.

On Wednesday morning your staff turn up to work. By 9.15am the locum booked hasn't arrived. Your senior member of staff rings the contact number she has. A very apologetic pharmacist answers to find they have doubled booked so will not be coming to your pharmacy today.

- What will your staff do now?
- Do they know who to contact?

3. Fire!

A piece of electrical equipment develops a fault and a fire starts. It ignites your stock of paper bags and soon smoke and flames can be seen coming from your stock room.

What are you going to do?

- Should you try and put this fire out yourself?
- Where are the fire extinguishers?
- Do your staff know your fire drill?
- Where is your assembly point?

4. Pandemic flu- Residential home closure

The country is in the middle of the first wave of pandemic flu. You supply medicines to the local forty bed residential home. The home owner rings you today to say the home is closing tomorrow because they haven't got enough staff who are well to keep it open. Residents are going to various locations depending on where the manager can place them. You supply their medicines in weekly MDS.

How are you going to ensure each resident continues to receive their weekly medicines supply?

5. Rationing medicines

Pandemic flu continues to infect the country. Your medicines wholesaler has limited stock and is only delivering every other day due to staff illness. Two prescriptions are presented at your pharmacy. Each had Epilim 200mg tablets 1 qds bid. You only have 56 tablets in your pharmacy and don't know when you will receive anymore.

What are you going to do?



6 Website links

Department of Health Pandemic flu information

www.dh.gov.uk/en/PandemicFlu/index.htm

New National Framework

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publication/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_080734

PSNC Business Continuity guidance

http://www.psn.org.uk/publications_detail.php/84/guidance_on_service_continuity_planning_for_pharmacy



7 Appendix 1 - Key Contacts

Person	Name	Contact number(s)
Pharmacy Manager/Owner		
Area Manager		
Staff members		
Other local Pharmacies		
Key PCT personnel		
Pharmacy Contracts Manager	Lee Davies	01244 650343
PCT Lead Working hours (9-5) Out of Hours	Director on Call	For CECPCT 01606 275141 01270 255141(MCFT) 01625 421000 (ECHT)
PCT IT		
CDT contact		
Care Homes		
RPSGB		020 7735 9141
Burglar Alarm company		
Electrician		
Glazier		
Plumber		
EPS contact		
Pharmacy computer PMR supplier		
Locksmith		
Gas		
Police		
Fire		
LPC Secretary	Suzanne Austin	01270 669347
LPC administrator	Alison Banks	07828 832782