

NPA Interim Policy – Volunteers re: Covid-19

Community pharmacy is at the frontline of the NHS during the coronavirus pandemic and pharmacy teams are under huge pressure.

We welcome the fact the volunteers are generously offering to support the fight against coronavirus.

This is uncharted territory for community pharmacy. Community pharmacists have a legal, professional and ethical duty to deliver a safe, effective and confidential service to the public in line with regulatory standards set by the General Pharmaceutical Council and Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.

We urge our members to embrace the support offered by volunteers where appropriate. However, where it is proposed that a volunteer will provide direct support to a pharmacy (as opposed to accepting a request from a member of the community to provide help to them to collect their medicines), we suggest that the Responsible Pharmacist / Superintendent pharmacist firstly undertakes sufficient checks and assures themselves that the individual can undertake specific roles within the pharmacy. These may include, but are not limited to manning the door, providing security, signposting, and janitorial duties.

For roles other than a Volunteer Delivery Driver

We can confirm that NPA Members and Customers and the Volunteers enlisted will be fully indemnified by NPA Insurance Ltd against professional and public liability third party risks and claims in accordance with the Professional Indemnity and Public Liability policy it issues to policyholders.

Volunteer Delivery drivers

There is a high degree of trust put in people undertaking medicine delivery services. We are in discussion with government, pharmacy regulators and professional bodies and reviewing our position on this role.

NPAI's professional indemnity insurance will cover certain volunteers to deliver all classes of medicines and devices at the discretion of the responsible or superintendent pharmacist, subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Volunteers must read and sign the pharmacy's delivery SOP*
- 2. Volunteers must provide a valid DBS certificate*

If the above gate is passed:

- 3. Volunteers who are known to the patient only will be covered*
- 4. Volunteers who are known to the pharmacy only will be covered*
- 5. Volunteers who are known to the pharmacy and patient will be covered*
- 6. Volunteers who are not known to either patient or the pharmacy, e.g. those that are referred via an app or volunteer service, will only be covered if the responsible pharmacist or superintendent pharmacist have fully satisfied themselves that the volunteer is of good character. If they are not satisfied, the volunteer will not be covered and we will look to rely on the indemnity provided by the Coronavirus Act 2020, in the event of a situation which gives rise to a claim.*