



31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

Dear Colleague,

### **Update on plans to support access to PPE Equipment across the health and care system**

This communication is intended as an update for health and care sector providers about access to medical supplies and equipment during the current response to COVID-19.

We appreciate the challenges providers may have experienced in obtaining PPE supplies over recent weeks. An increase in demand for both PPE and non-PPE products has put the supply chain to deliver such products under significant pressure.

It is therefore important that usage of PPE equipment across the independent sector is in line with national guidance which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>.

Whilst there are stocks of PPE items in the supply chain, there have been capacity constraints in the NHS Supply Chain network. To address this, DHSC, NHSE/I, NHS Supply Chain and the Army have worked together to develop a Parallel Supply Chain (PSC) to support the normal supply chain. This is a dedicated PPE channel, and core PPE products for COVID-19 will flow through this.

The PSC will improve speed and reliability of delivery for these items, whilst relieving pressure on the established supply chain to deliver business as usual products.

In the interim period, until this new solution is fully operational, we are doing two things. First, working to provide stock of PPE equipment to wholesalers and distributors for pharmacies, GPs, dentists, adult social care providers (such as care homes), and the third sector (such as hospices). This should allow more providers to order PPE through their BAU supply chains.

Second, we have mobilised the **National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR)**. Providers who have an urgent requirement for PPE, which they are unable to secure through their business as usual channels, should contact the **NSDR** via the 24/7 helpline: 0800 915 9964 (Freephone number in the UK), and a Direct Line from overseas: 0191 283 6543

### **Required information:**

Before calling the NSDR hotline, please ensure you are able to provide the following details to the call handler:

- Name, email and telephone number of the requestor;
- Name, email and telephone number of a contact for the next **24 hours** (e.g. out of hours cover if the original requestor will be unavailable);
- Delivery address, including postcode; and named contact for receiving deliveries;
- Confirmation that your organisation is able to receive the delivery outside of normal business hours;
- Number of COVID-19 patients being treated (confirmed and suspected);
- Number of beds in your organisation (if appropriate);

- How long your current PPE stock provides cover for (e.g. <24 hours; 1-2 days, or more than 2 days);
- Which products you are requesting and in what quantity

Additionally, providers may need to consider contacting their relevant regional EPRR lead to flag urgent issues which may lead to a disruption to services.

Given the possibility of ongoing localised disruption in the short-term, providers are advised to also make contact with their local health and care sector partner organisations to explore options for mutual aid, via local redistribution of supplies to priority local services.

## **FAQs**

### **When should I contact the NSDR?**

You should only contact NSDR if you have followed business as usual processes to access PPE stock (such as ordering from NHS Supply Chain, or your usual wholesaler or distributor) and are still unable to acquire PPE stock. Please see above for the required information you will need to have before contacting NSDR.

The NSDR is focussed on fulfilment of emergency orders, e.g. orders required in less than 72 hours. We do not have access to the full lines of stock held at other large wholesalers or distributors; but we are able to mobilise small priority orders quickly.

### **I am an NHS Supply Chain customer, but they are out of stock can NSDR help?**

The NSDR has access to some pre-packed kits, similar to those delivered in the Government 'push' deliveries. At a minimum an NSDR kit will contain 100 Type IIR facemasks; 100 aprons and 100 pairs of gloves. Additional items can be requested (e.g. goggles) and if we have stock of these they can be included in your delivery.

The delivery will be shipped with whatever products can be fulfilled (e.g. partial fulfilment). The delivery will not be delayed waiting for any additional items to be in stock. Once a delivery has been shipped your order will be closed; if you still require additional items you should raise a new case through the NSDR.

### **I have contacted the NSDR hotline but they cannot tell me when my package will be shipped.**

The NSDR contains a number of functions and the contact centre is the 'front end' customer facing function. A call handler will capture details of requests on our system which will support triage of the case based on the information provided. These cases are then picked up by a case management team with knowledge of the health and care sector. This team reviews cases; follows up with requestors for any additional information required and will check requests against available NSDR stock then arrange for a package to be delivered.

Our express freight service then pick, pack and deliver the emergency package. These processes have been stood up at short notice and are not supported by sophisticated warehousing and delivery tracking software. As a result call handlers do not have visibility of the other steps in this process, or live delivery tracking information.

### **I contacted NSDR and received a package but it didn't contain everything I needed**

The NSDR is focussed on fulfilment of urgent orders. The delivery will be shipped with whatever products can be fulfilled (e.g. partial fulfilment) at the time of picking. The delivery will not be delayed waiting for any additional items to be in stock. Once a delivery has been shipped your order will be closed; if you still require additional items you should raise a new case through the NSDR; if you

received a case reference number for your previous case please provide these details to your call handler.

We are unable to keep track of items which we have not been able to fulfil against emergency orders, because we do not have a robust digital system in place to manage partial orders and to manage subsequent fulfilment and delivery. In parallel to any requests to NSDR providers should be trying to meet their needs through business as usual supply channels.

**I contacted the NSDR before but haven't received any delivery.**

At present we are receiving a very high volume of cases and are working as quickly as possible to resolve priority cases first. We are working in parallel to improve our systems so that we have better management information on cases that will ensure we are able to respond efficiently.

A number of cases logged with NSDR have not included clear indications of what stock is required, or attempts have been made to contact the requestor have been unsuccessful. Once details of cases raised are recorded they are sent to a case management team which reviews and instructs an express freight service. Call handlers do not have visibility of delivery schedules and cannot answer queries about future deliveries.

**I contacted NSDR and the call handler said there is no PPE stock/ I need to order my own PPE stock through distributors**

As the role of NSDR has flexed to respond to the rapidly evolving supply chain, the advice issued to call handlers has changed. At the time of the Government 'push' deliveries, the handling advice was that providers needed to order their own stock through BAU. Given that Government intervention is still required to support the supply chain during this time of peak demand, the latest lines call handlers should be using have been updated.

If you do receive advice to order stock through business as usual, which you have followed and have been unsuccessful with, please ask your call handler to check your case details and complete an NSDR PPE Supply Disruption form for you. The call handler will then process this information and generate a case in our internal system.

**I have placed a BAU order for more PPE stock but it will not arrive for 5 days and I will run out of stock in three days, should I contact NSDR.**

Yes, you should contact NSDR with all required information indicated above to arrange enough stock to cover the 2 day anticipated gap in stock cover.

**I don't usually require PPE; what distributor should I be contacting to place business as usual orders?**

Organisation	Healthcare Sector
<b>Alliance / NWOP</b> 0330 100 0448 <a href="mailto:Customerservice@alliance-healthcare.co.uk">Customerservice@alliance-healthcare.co.uk</a>	<b>Pharmacy</b>
<b>Phoenix</b>	<b>Pharmacy / GP Surgery</b>
<b>Mckesson / AAH Pharma</b> 0344 561 8899 Register at aah.co.uk	<b>Pharmacy</b>
<b>Williams Medical Supplies</b> 01685 846 666 sales@wms.co.uk	<b>GP Surgery</b>
<b>HenrySchein</b> 0800 023 2558 <a href="mailto:sales@henryschein.co.uk">sales@henryschein.co.uk</a> *	<b>Dentist</b>
<b>DD Group</b> 0800 585 586	<b>Dentist</b>

<a href="mailto:salessupport@ddgroup.com">salessupport@ddgroup.com</a>	
<b>Wright Health Group</b> 01382 834 557 <a href="mailto:nhsorders@wright-cottrell.co.uk">nhsorders@wright-cottrell.co.uk</a>	<b>Dentist</b>
<b>Trycare Ltd</b> 01274 885544 <a href="mailto:Mark.Hackin@trycare.co.uk">Mark.Hackin@trycare.co.uk</a>	<b>Dentist</b>
<b>Careshop</b> <a href="mailto:coronavirus@careshop.co.uk">coronavirus@careshop.co.uk</a>	<b>Social Care</b> (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
<b>Blueleaf</b> 03300 552 288 <a href="mailto:emergencystock@blueleafcare.com">emergencystock@blueleafcare.com</a> *	<b>Social Care</b> (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
<b>Delivernet</b> 01756 706 050 lee.morris@delivernet.co.uk	<b>Social Care</b> (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
<b>Countrywide Healthcare</b> 01226 719 090 enquiries@countrywidehealthcare.co.uk	<b>Social Care</b> (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)

Most distributors are open Mon-Fri, 8/9am- 5/6pm (varied); \* indicates preferred contact method.

Yours sincerely,



**Steve Oldfield**  
Chief Commercial Officer