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Welcome message

Dear Pharmacist,

As you will be aware, the PSI recently published revised guidance for pharmacists on [the safe supply of oral methotrexate](#).

The HSE's National Director of Quality and Patient Safety, Dr Philip Crowley has written to the PSI to compliment this collaborative initiative, and we would like to pass on to you his expression of appreciation for the pharmacy profession's commitment to evidence-based safe medication practices.

A key element in the revision of the guidance was the findings from the national survey, conducted by the HSE Medication Safety Programme in collaboration with the RCSI School of Pharmacy, to which there was a high response rate from community pharmacies.

Dr Crowley has acknowledged that this response and engagement from the profession does great credit to the pharmacy profession, as it shows their professionalism and level of interest in what we know to be an important patient safety issue.

So thank you to all for their contribution to this issue.

Flu Vaccinations 2012/2013 Update

There have been a number of recent developments regarding the planning and preparation for the influenza vaccination season 2012/2013.

Revised Guidance

As you will be aware from the email and FAQ sent to all pharmacists on 16th July, the PSI has issued [revised guidance on the provision of a flu vaccination service](#).

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) has also updated its immunisation guidelines – [the August 2012 chapter on Influenza is available here](#).

Pharmacists should ensure that they are using the most current, up-to-date version of NIAC guidelines and regularly check if these have been further updated.

HSE Extension of Patient Groups

The PSI has been informed by the HSE that for the 2012/2013 season it will be extending the patient groups for which community pharmacists will be eligible for reimbursement for vaccination and/or who can be provided with a free HSE vaccine. In addition to all those aged 65 and over, for the 2012/2013 season this will extend to all at-risk adults aged 18 and over. The aim of this extension is to increase the vaccine uptake in these high risk groups and to reduce the morbidity and mortality and the burden to the health service particularly in primary care associated with seasonal influenza.

New information materials for health professionals and the general public, including further details about the at-risk populations, are currently being developed by the HSE and will be circulated to all health professionals providing seasonal influenza vaccination as part of the HSE programme in advance of vaccine deliveries.

Vaccination Training

As outlined in the PSI's email of 16 July, a process has been put in place by the Council for the approval of training programmes and training providers. This included the approval of revised and updated [PSI Interim Accreditation Standards for Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Training Programmes for Pharmacists](#).

Two programmes of education and training are required to be approved by the Council to meet the requirements under the [Medicinal Products \(Prescription and Control of Supply\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011 \(S.I. No. 525 of 2011\)](#)

(i) refresher training for pharmacists who were previously trained for the 2011-12 season;

(ii) a full programme for all other registered pharmacists.

The accrediting body for the purposes of evaluating both programmes with respect to the PSI's Accreditation Standards has been designated as the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Dublin, Trinity College.

The content for the refresher training has to meet the requirements set out in Appendix A of the Accreditation Standards, but with a particular focus on the areas outlined in the mandatory content document available on the PSI website. The mandatory content for the training has recently been revised by the PSI Council to defer the requirement relating to paediatric and under-18 vaccination practice until 2013.

Training provider(s) are currently finalising the development of programme(s) to be evaluated by the accrediting body, with a view to these programmes being submitted for PSI Council approval as soon as practicable.

Continued Registration 2012

All registered pharmacists and pharmaceutical assistants are required to make application annually for continued registration and to obtain a certificate of registration that will be current from the date of expiry of their existing certificate. The majority of pharmacists have certificates of registration which expire on 31st December. The continued registration process for 2013 for these registrants will commence in late October, when the relevant application forms will be posted out by the PSI. Pharmacists and pharmaceutical assistants are encouraged to use the [on-line facility available on the PSI website](#) for making their continued registration application.

However, all registrants should be aware that first time registrations and restorations to the Registers of Pharmacists and of Pharmaceutical Assistants are made on a monthly basis; therefore the date of expiry of a current certificate will differ from person to person. As a result, an increasing number of pharmacists on the register now have certificates of registration which expire each month.

Therefore, it is important for all superintendent and supervising pharmacists to check the expiry dates on the certificates of registration for all registered pharmacists employed at the retail pharmacy business and keep a note of these dates, so as to ensure that all pharmacists employed in the pharmacy are appropriately registered for practise. The expiry date is printed on the certificate of registration, or alternatively is indicated on the pharmacist's record in the public register available on the PSI website.

It is particularly important for those pharmacists who are acting in the role of superintendent and/or supervising pharmacists to be in possession of a current certificate of registration, as the registration of the retail pharmacy business is contingent on their personal registrations being in order.

Involuntary Cancellation

If a pharmacist or pharmaceutical assistant does not make an application for continued registration and pay the prescribed fee, within the prescribed timelines, a process for removal from the register will begin. The PSI issues two formal notifications or reminders to these registrants, and if no application is made within the quoted timelines (i.e. 14 days after the final notification is issued), the person's name will be removed from the relevant register as an involuntary cancellation. This means that they are no longer entitled to practise as a pharmacist or pharmaceutical assistant.

In the event that the pharmacist was in the role of a superintendent and/or supervising pharmacist, the record for the relevant retail pharmacy business will also be updated to that effect. The PSI will then notify the pharmacy owner as a retail pharmacy business must have a superintendent and supervising pharmacist(s) in place in order to lawfully operate.

Voluntary Cancellation

In the event that a registrant does not wish to practise as a pharmacist or pharmaceutical assistant, it is of course open to them to cancel their registration at any time. Registrants often cancel their registration in this way for reasons of retirement or emigration, for example. If a registrant applies to voluntarily cancel their registration, they may apply to restore to the register at any time in the future. On the other hand, a person whose name has been removed from the Register as a result of

an involuntary cancellation, may apply to restore within six months of the date that the certificate of registration expired. After that date, the person must make an application as if it were a first time registration.

Check your contact details on-line

The PSI would like to remind all registrants to check that the contact details including email address, professional address and correspondence address held by the PSI are correct. Please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that we have the correct details for you. All pharmacists are strongly encouraged to ensure that the PSI has a correct and current email address to facilitate communication with members of the profession. A registered pharmacist or pharmaceutical assistant can log on the registrant online facility on the PSI website at any time and check their details. The PSI would like to thank all registrants for their cooperation with this matter and for using the online facility.

Methadone Guidance

The PSI wishes to highlight again its [Guidance on the safe supply of Methadone](#) and the provision of associated services, which was issued in December 2011, and which is available on the PSI website.

This guidance includes information on safe supply and appropriate storage, registration of new patients, multidisciplinary patient care and patient counselling. All pharmacists involved in the supply of methadone, and the provision of associated services to patients, should be familiar with the requirements which must be fulfilled in order to ensure compliance with legal and professional obligations.

PSI House,
Fenian Street,
Dublin 2
Phone: +353 1 2184000
Fax: +353 1 2837678
Email: info@thepsi.ie

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